

CITY COUNCIL - CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LEARNING

SEN AND DISABILITY SERVICES IN SOUTHAMPTON: OVERVIEW

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The City of Southampton Strategy sets out the vision that Southampton will be a city in which it is good to grow up. Southampton City Council, Southampton City PCT and their partners, through the Children and Young People's Trust, have set 10 priorities for realising this ambition over the period 2009 – 2012: see box one.

Box One: Children and Young People's Plan 2009 – 2012

1. Every child and young person will be given the opportunity to have the healthiest possible start in life and be supported to make healthy lifestyle choices.
2. Support, challenge and empower parents and carers to give children and young people the best start in life.
3. More of our children and young people will be kept safe from abuse, domestic violence, bullying and harassment.
4. Improve outcomes for key groups of children and young people, especially children in care and care leavers and children and young people with complex needs and disabilities.
5. More of our children and young people will enjoy, engage with and achieve well at school.
6. Support the transformation in educational attainment and outcomes for children, young people, families and communities by investing in new infrastructure and school buildings.
7. More of our children and young people will engage in positive activities and far fewer of them will be involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.
8. More of our young people will successfully achieve the right skills and qualifications for their future economic independence.
9. Reduce significantly the number of children and young people living in poverty.
10. Develop and adopt new ways of leading, managing and organising services to support the delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan, with the fullest possible participation of children, young people, parents and carers.

- 1.2 There are 558 children and young people with statements of SEN living in Southampton (273 in Southampton special schools, 222 in mainstream schools, 40 in non-maintained placements and 14 in Hampshire special schools) and approximately 700 children and young people with disabilities, SEN, learning disabilities and complex health needs known to the city's specialist health and social care services. The City of Southampton vision and the ten priorities of the Children and Young People's Trust that underpin it have specific relevance for these groups of children and young people and the services delivered are aimed at improving their outcomes through:

- Early identification and intervention
 - Improving experience for children, young people and their families through clear, accessible information about services, transparency in decision making processes, streamlining assessments, participation and feedback
 - Building capacity through partnerships
 - Raising expectations and achievement, narrowing the gap
- 1.3 The City has adopted a model of locality working, designing and delivering services around three localities, with the common assessment framework at its heart. Services for children with learning difficulties, SEN, disabilities and complex health needs are strongly linked into this structure as illustrated in Appendix 1.
- 1.4 The SEN teams at Tier 2 (Educational Psychology, Specialist Behaviour Team, Speech and Language Schools Assistants, Emotional Wellbeing Development Workers) are organised around localities/schools. At Tier 3, more specialist services (e.g. CAMHS, JIGSAW integrated disability service, Specialist Teacher Advisors, Portage) provide a City wide service but work closely with locality teams at Tier 2. The numbers of children/young people supported by these services are illustrated in Appendix 2.
- 1.5 The following is a summary of how services to children with learning difficulties, SEN, disabilities and complex health needs have developed in response to both national drivers and local need.

2. Development of an integrated disability service across the PCT and Local Authority

- 2.1 In 2007, the Council and PCT officially launched the JIGSAW Service which brings together specialist health and social care services for children/young people with learning disabilities and/or autism under a single management structure. The service brought together and redesigned four teams: social work team for disabled children; Specialist Health Care Team (Community Nursing Team); Intensive Intervention Team for children with severe challenging behaviour and Westwood Bungalow (health residential respite unit for children with learning disabilities). Significant elements of the new service included:
- a broadening of the eligibility criteria to take account of the child's disability in the context of their family circumstance
 - integrated working between the social workers and nurses, in particular integrating the assessment processes so that children/young people are assessed through a single integrated process
 - changing the function of Westwood Bungalow from a respite unit to a resource centre focussing on early intervention for many more children and families
 - a stronger focus on earlier intervention
- 2.2 As a result there has been an increase in the numbers of younger children being supported and more extensive family support. Broadening the eligibility criteria has also meant that the service has been able to support a number of young people with moderate learning disabilities who would have previously not

received services which might have led to them being placed in local authority children's homes, out of city placements, foster care, civil secure units or sectioned to psychiatric units.

- 2.3 As part of the development of integrated disability services, the Community Children's Nursing Service has also been brought under the single management structure.
- 2.4 In addition to the JIGSAW service, Southampton has also brought together health and social care equipment (adults and children) into a Joint Equipment Store (using a S75 NHS Partnership Agreement).
- 2.5 The city has a history of strong joint commissioning arrangements with joint processes for formulating, agreeing and funding special packages of care or special placements for children/young people with exceptional needs (the Multi-agency Resource Panel).
- 2.6 There are strong links with schools with recent developments including a dedicated school nursing post for children with learning disabilities to work across JIGSAW and the school nursing team and a key worker system designed by JIGSAW and the Heads of the Special Schools to aid development and communication.
- 2.7 Joint working with CAMHS has also been strengthened through the development of a specialist nurse post in CAMHS for children/young people with learning disabilities.

3. Development of SEN Services

- 3.1 SEN Services are delivered through the Education Psychology Service, a Specialist Behaviour Team, Emotional Wellbeing Development officers, Speech and Language Schools Assistants, specialist teacher advisors and the Portage service. There is a strong focus on early identification/intervention and building capacity through strong partnerships with schools and early years settings to raise expectations and achievement.
- 3.2 Southampton's Education Psychology Service has for some years been acknowledged as a national leader on emotional literacy and emotional well-being. Specific achievements have included:
 - over 70 Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA) employed in schools
 - the establishment of the role of the Emotional Well-being Development Officer
 - SEAL now in place in the majority of schools in the city
- 3.3 The Local Authority is intending to further develop this work through its Targeted Mental Health in Schools (TAMHS) project in 2010/11.
- 3.4 Support to schools also includes the SENCO training programme which was introduced in 2007 to develop the skills of SEN teams in schools and directly led to the successful joint bid to the TDA to run the accredited SENCO training

course with Hampshire and the University of Winchester. The City holds an annual SENCO conference focussing on key issues.

- 3.5 In addition the City has recently appointed a Virtual Head-teacher for Children Looked After in recognition of their additional needs and in order to ensure that appropriate educational support is targeted to meet their needs through multi agency working.
- 3.6 There is a strong commitment to inclusion and support to local settings through utilisation of the specialist resources available within special schools and the City Council. In 2009 the Council undertook a review of the organisation and delivery of outreach services from its special schools to support children in their local mainstream provision and is in the process of formulating service level agreements which will set out the services to be commissioned from the schools and the impact/performance measures that will be delivered. This will enable good practice to be shared with mainstream schools and more inclusive provision to be supported. The delegated funding formula for SEN has also been reviewed to ensure schools receive the appropriate level of funding to meet the needs of children with SEN.
- 3.7 The City Council has recently embarked on a major review of its SEN school places. The SEN review which commenced in Autumn 2008 will result in the establishment of six new learning centres at six mainstream secondary schools focused on specific areas of SEN (Phase 1 currently under development). The second phase of the review encompasses a review of the provision for young people with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties (BESD), physical (PD) and profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) and those requiring short stay schooling. It will also ensure that the needs of those young people can be met in post 16 settings. Decisions about the future shape of the provision are expected by the end of this year.
- 3.8 In terms of post 16 provision, specialist personal advisors for young people post 16 years are being integrated into the SEN team. The local authority is working with the Young People's Learning agency to establish a protocol for funding specialist provision for young people with LDD entering post 16 education. The protocol will enable the local authority to integrate planning for young people with LDD across secondary and post 16 years until the academic year 2012. The funding for specialist post 16 education remains with the Young People's Learning Agency.
- 3.9 There is a strong commitment to supporting children in early years settings as demonstrated through the reconfiguration of SEN funding to facilitate children being supported in their local settings and the development of the Early Years Review Group, supported by early years support teachers, which ensures early identification and support for young children with SEN.

4. Parent and Service User Experience

- 4.1 In line with the Aiming High agenda, Southampton is developing strong parent/carers participation in the development and delivery of its services.

- 4.2 There already exists a strong and well embedded Parent Partnership run by Mencap. In addition to this and as part of its Aiming High development programme, Southampton has established a parent forum (with 15 members) which will act as a parallel group to the Children and Young People's Disability Strategy Group advising on strategy and policy, such as transition policy and short break provision. This February the forum will be running the city's fourth annual "Family Matters" conference for parents and carers of children with disabilities and special educational needs in Southampton, which, in addition to providing information and advice about local services, also provides an opportunity to consult parents/carers on key service development issues. For example, the 2009 conference informed the commissioning plans for short breaks.
- 4.3 Links with the City Council's participation team are also being established to strengthen the involvement of children and young people.
- 4.4 Considerable work has also been undertaken with the Children and Young People's Information Service to improve the accessibility and range of information about services and activities for families of disabled children and young people. This will include specific information about the increased range of short breaks that are being developed as part of the Aiming High programme and a register of families which will be used to mail-shot key information about services and events.

5. The Future

- 5.1 Southampton has made significant developments over the years in its services to children and young people with SEN, disabilities and learning disabilities. It is responding to the challenge laid out in Aiming High for Disabled Children, as well as the Government Strategy for the education of children with SEN and disabilities "Removing Barriers to Achievement" and the Lamb Inquiry.
- 5.2 The challenge now is to go one step further in exploring the opportunities for further integration (across SEN and disability services) and driving up standards to ensure that services are delivered in the most effective and efficient way to meet local need. To this end, the City Council and PCT have recently commenced a joint commissioning review of Disability and SEN Services which is due to complete in June 2010. The review will have a particular focus on improving outcomes and improving performance against the following national indicators:
- NI54: the new disabled children services indicator which will measure parental satisfaction with services
 - NI110: more participation in positive activities
 - NI50: emotional health and wellbeing
 - NI104: the SEN/non SEN gap – achieving key Stage 2 English and Maths
 - NI105: the SEN/non SEN gap – achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths
 - The strong performance on NI103: SEN (statements issued within 26 weeks) will be maintained

5.3 Plans to further develop services to achieve greater integration across SEN and disability services reflect the city's ambition to build on achievements to date and continually improve services for children and young people with learning difficulties, SEN, disabilities and complex health needs. Our strategy is underpinned by the standards we have set that require services to be of high quality, integrated, timely, person centred, contributing to the narrowing of the gap between the achievements between those with learning difficulties, SEN, disabilities and complex health needs and those of their peers and respond to individual need.