

WSOA

Note of WSoA Review Meeting

Local Area:	Torbay
Date:	5 th February 2024
Venue:	Tor Hill House, Torquay

Present:

Emma Brown	DfE Case Lead for Torbay (Chair)
Sarah Basham	VCU Case Lead
Mark Tucker	SEND Adviser (NHSE) for the South West
Nancy Meehan	Director of Children's Services
Penny Smith	Chief Nursing Officer, for the ICB
Lincoln Sergeant	Director, Public Health
Hannah Pugliese	Head of Women & Children's Commissioning
Kelly Givens	SENDIAS
Hannah Baker	Head of SEND, Torbay Council
Matt Gifford	Business Intelligence Manager, Torbay Council
Tina Tozer	Head of Children's Commissioning, Torbay Council
Natalie Archer	Project Manager
Joanna Williams	Director of Adults and Communities, Torbay Council
Sharon O'Reilly	Deputy Director Adults Social Care, Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust
Rachel Setter	Divisional Director of Learning & Partnership Hubs
Tracey Field	Head of Commercial Services, Torbay Council
Becky Thompson	Divisional Director for Safeguarding, Torbay Council
Apologies:	
Anne Marie Bond	Chief Executive, Torbay Council
Beverley Mack	Children's Alliance Director, Children & Family Health Devon
Stuart Heron	Headteacher, Mayfield school
Sharon O'Reilly	Deputy Director Adults Social Care, Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust
Su Smart	Deputy Director of Commissioning – Out of Hospital
Melanie Walker	Chief Executive, Devon Partnership Trust
Rachael Williams	Divisional Director of Education & SEND, Torbay Council
Emma O'Connell	Children's Alliance Deputy Director, Children & Family Health Devon
Karen Roofe	Co-Chair SEND Family Voice Torbay
Becky Box -	Co-Chair SEND Family Voice Torbay

Update on any Actions jointly agreed at the end of the last meeting – deep dive into Joint Commissioning.

The local area provided a detailed response to the follow up points from notes taken at the Deep Dive review on the 27 September 2023, in relation to each area

of weakness. This can be found on Page 31 of the “Torbay WSoA Overview for DfE Monitoring Visit 2024 02 05 v2.00”

General update on progress or areas of significant impact

- The key areas of progress as highlighted in the above report include the revision of the governance arrangements to focus on 5 priority areas. Local Area partners have brought together elements (such as the new inspection framework, the safety valve agreement and the WSoA) in alignment with the SEND strategy.
- Each of the priority areas has a chair from across the LAP, and includes membership from each partnership group, including education. This has distributed leadership across the partnership and strengthened links between partners.
- There was evidence of ongoing progress in the implementation of Graduated Response, embedding Quality Assurance, the roll out of Autism Education Training in secondary schools and increased collaboration with children, young people and their families e.g. SEND Youth Forum. CYP views are becoming more positive in feedback (see p13 of the WSoA data dash)
- There are indicators that data relating to exclusions and suspensions will have improved in 2023 due to careful tracking of SEND exclusions on a case-by-case basis.

Follow-up:

- *We are interested in the breadth of activity that resulted in the governance reset. Is there an updated Self-Evaluation framework that also sits behind this this revision?*
- *How does the new governance structure allow for escalation of “wicked issues”?*
- *SEND fatigue was named as a factor for parents and carer’s experience. Can the variety of strategies employed to increase engagement and hear the voice of CYP and families be used to also demonstrate impact?*
- *As the WSoA remains in place until the next Ofsted/CQC inspection, we have requested further evidence of how the WSoA is directly aligned with the 5 priorities. A mapping diagram will help to demonstrate how they interact.*
- *Overall, the evidence of impact against the 8 areas of weakness is acknowledged as an area for development. There can be a significant lag between gathering evidence of improvement due to the actions taken, and the subsequent improvement to the experience of CYP and families. Evidencing impact succinctly and clearly across the areas of weakness is a priority as the partnership looks forward to the next Ofsted/CQC inspection.*

WSoA Actions/timescale check

RAG rating is based on impact seen by CYP and families.

The following are amber rated actions:

Pillar 1 (JC) : 2A.3, 2A.4, 2A.5, 2B, 2C

Pillar 3 (Culture): 7A
 Pillar 4 (Joint Working): 8C, 9A, 9B
 Pillar 5 (Graduated Response): 11 A.2, 11B, 12 A.1, 12A.2

There are three red rated actions:
 Pillar 5 (Graduated Response): 11F, 12B, 12C

- Follow-up:*
- *How does the board monitor progress in the areas of the WSoA that are yet to be fully embedded?*
 - *Have those areas rated red been escalated at board level and is the board aware of the current WSoA RAG?*

Support received in this reporting period (see p11-13 Monitoring Report)

- Follow-up:*
- SLIP for 2023/24 has concluded. New package underway for support in Joint Commissioning and Graduated Response.

Progress on the WSoA Strands

ASW 1	The lack of a suitably ambitious SEND strategy based on robust self-evaluation, and open co-production, and with the buy-in of all services across education, health and care and that includes measurable criteria for success.
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- See p16 - 17 of monitoring report:
- The SEND Strategy has been co-produced and is embedded in the 5 improvement priorities.
 - Quality standards for AP also co-produced and embedded with providers.
 - More schools are engaging in multi-agency meetings.
 - Impact has been seen in reducing the number of exclusions and suspensions for children with SEN support at Primary phase and in suspensions at Secondary Phase.
 - Some evidence of CYP “at risk of exclusion” case conferences being effective – due to needs being brought forward earlier than previously.

- Follow-up:*
- *Exclusions for CYP with an EHCP - can the success seen in reducing exclusions for SEN support be replicated for those with EHCPs?*
 - *Autism in schools programme – with the review scheduled in March 2024, what is the impact on CYP and families?*

Area 2	The deep cultural issues leading to weak co-production and the inability of children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers to be equal partners in strategic and local decision-making.
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- See p14-15 of monitoring report:
- Overall a strong sense of improvement in this area.

- “SEND is everyone’s business” is one of the priority areas and has been established to continue the culture strand of the WSoA.
- The second participation survey had just been returned (by the date of the review) and was included in the WSoA data dashboard.

Follow-up:

- *How can the PCF be supported to develop their role and capacity?*
- *Do KPIs in the ‘Everyone’s Business’ action plan have clear baseline data, against which progress can be tracked, and impact demonstrated?*
- *Follow-up on any further analysis of results of the participation survey.*

Area 3	The lack of joint working between services, which prevents area leaders working collaboratively to secure more consistent outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families.
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See p20 of monitoring report:

- Joint working is now becoming established with the multiagency strategic board and independent check and challenge group. Recent changes to the governance groups have been made to extend this across the partnership.
- The participation officer has been focused on ensuring that CYP voice is heard.
- There is evidence of growth of increasing CYP participation
- DCO has increased hours with more oversight of individual cases.
- Communication analysis shows an increasing number of parent carers and CYP are engaged in SEND related issues in Torbay

Follow up:

- *To see evidence of how CYP and families are benefitting from increased joint working across the local area partnership, including how assessment of need has improved since inspection.*
- *Evidence of schools increased commitment to joint working – how can the impact of this be demonstrated?*
- *How is Parent carer confidence being supported by better communication and early intervention?*
- *Has the co-production charter been reworked and published?*

Area 4	The variability in the implementation of the graduated response, leading to slow identification, high levels of exclusion, some poor inclusive practices, and inequitable access and experience of the system across education, health and care.
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See p22 - 25 of monitoring report:

- There has been identifiable progress with the next steps meetings that follow a “no” to assess and some data to support the efficacy of this approach.
- Some changes to the EP team model and training offered to schools.
- Family hubs are being seen as a one stop shop and increasing familial engagement.
- There has been progress with rolling out MHSTs to 74.4% of the eligible school age population.
- Although not on track, there has been movement (downward) in the trajectory of number of EHC plans produced.

Follow-up:

- *Impact of family hubs in increasing earlier identification*
- *Parent carers have reported: that schools are not meeting need early enough. What progress can be evidenced in this area?*
- *What is the impact of the GR on schools consistency of approach?*
- *How far have the SEMH and GR toolkits been developed?*

ASW 5

The poor range of opportunities and choice for children and young people with SEND when they reach 16 or transition to adulthood.

See p26-28 of monitoring report:

- Overall good progress with NEET figures
- Greater choice cited for CYP regarding AP
- Transition focus widened from SEND to include young carers, care experienced etc

Follow-up:

- *Has the long-term vision for becoming an adult been developed/rolled out? (see p28 monitoring report)*
- *What is the progress towards increasing the number of pupils with SEND going onto L2 and L3 qualifications?*

ASW 6

The wide variances in the quality of EHC plans caused by weaknesses in joint working, fair access and the timeliness of assessments.

See p28-30 of monitoring report:

- Overall good evidence of progress and impact monitored through:
 - Three themed audits have taken place on EHCPs.
 - Multiagency data dashboard under construction based on the quality of plans (Invision 360)
 - DSCO is in post and putting in place a flowchart relating to SC contributions to EHCPs.
 - SEND tracking meetings enable better understanding of the lived experience of CYP and families.

Follow -up:

- *20 week statutory timeliness – does the local area understand the reasons for the decline in the % of plans completed on time? How many are over 30 week wait, and are there any that wait longer than 52 weeks?*

Area 7

Poor joint commissioning arrangements that limit leaders' ability to meet area needs, improve outcomes and achieve cost-efficiencies.

See p14–15 of monitoring report:

- DCO has increased hours within CFHD which enables more engagement with EHCP processes.
- Support is available for CYP and families while on ND and S< waiting lists.
- SFVT are actively involved and co-ordinating the pilot on "Autism and us"

Follow-up:

- *Has the JC model been updated- what is the impact of this?*
- *How has Violet the SEND van had an impact in increasing parental confidence and increasing consistency?*
- *Is parent and carers feedback on the support given while on waiting lists collated? How can support be extended to help those on a waiting list to “wait well”*
- *How will feedback from the Autism and Us pilot be utilised?*

Area 8	The lack of impact and of resilience to sustain improvement of recent initiatives due to low capacity in area teams.
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See p4 of Monitoring Report

- Increase in capacity for DCO and DCSO posts
- Widened remit for EP service with training offered to schools

Follow-up:

- *Situation with recruitment in S<, EP and SEND team and impact this has on statutory responses*
- *The new governance priority areas – the impact of this in sustaining further improvement across the partnership.*

Conclusion and summary information

It is clear that the partnership has grown in strength and there is an open and transparent approach towards improvement in Torbay. The sense of collective responsibility for children and young people with SEND in Torbay is strong and the need to continue having challenging conversations is acknowledged. Evidencing impact is now where the focus should lie, to enable ongoing improvement through a shift in parental confidence seen as a result of the work of local area partners.

We note the following from the report, and it is worth highlighting that:

*Professionals within these partnerships value each other's expertise, perspectives, and contributions however, we are reaching a pinnacle part in our improvement journey, in which we need to start seeing impact. To improve our communication as a partnership, we need to create a safe and supportive environment where we provide constructive feedback and collectively problem-solve **how we ensure impact is felt as soon as possible.** (p5 monitoring report)*

Agreed actions/support following this meeting

Action	Who	When
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DfE appointed SEND advisor to support on the “so what” questions, with a deep dive in 6 months on an agreed area for further development (Suggest July or September?) 	EB to work with partners	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep dive for the next review – partnership to consider which area of focus to be prioritised for this? 	Torbay Local Area Partnership	End of March

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping diagram to demonstrate to interaction between the WSoA and the 5 priority areas 	Torbay Local Area Partnership	
Date and venue of next meeting		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See above – Torbay Council Office 		