

# SEND Reforms Torbay

June 2015 (No.6)

*Including: Early Years, SEN, Local Offer Survey, Parents Forum, Transitions, Personal Budgets, Mental Capacity, Adults Learning Disability, SENDIASS, New Literature, Early Help*

## Education, Health and Care Plans - Guidance for Parents and Carers

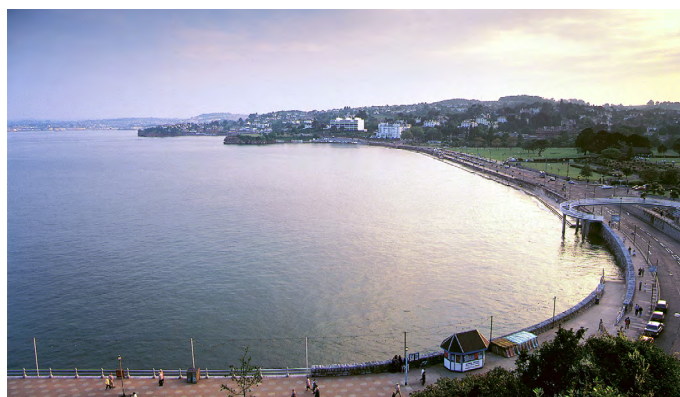
Booklet available now please contact the SEND team on 01803 208274 or email [EHCP@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:EHCP@torbay.gov.uk). You can download a copy from [www.torbay.gov.uk/sen](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/sen).

### Introduction

We are approaching the end of the first school year since the SEND reforms were implemented. Moving from Statements of Special Educational Needs to Education, Health and Care Plans has been a challenging process for the SEN team, schools and other professionals (as detailed later in this newsletter). With so many changes being introduced, we mustn't lose sight that our long term aim must be to make the best use of our resources to improve outcomes for children and young people.

We understand that families can find our processes challenging, it is our aim to provide a seamless approach to planning for children and young people, working in partnership with families to make the process of assessment and support as stress free as possible. We need to ensure that we are listening to young people and their families and ensure that their views and wishes are reflected in what we do. There is a long way to go but the work that has been put in place over the last 18 months has begun to have a significant impact for families in Torbay. We need to keep the momentum going!

*Jacqui Jensen,  
Assistant Director, Children's Safeguarding*



## Early Years / SEND Reforms

### Early Years - Special Educational Needs and Disability

It has been a busy year for all of us working in the field of Early Years SEND. The focus of this academic year has been 'to be prepared' in light of the changes in the Code of Practice and 'early identification' of needs in the pre-school population.

#### Preparation

Two colleagues and I, from the Early Years and Childcare Advisory Service, run half termly forums for the SENCOS in each of the private, voluntary and independent early years settings (which includes childminders) in Torbay. Settings started off their preparation for change in the summer term (2014), by writing their SEN Information Report for the Council's Local Offer. We continued in the Autumn Term with a focus on early identification of vulnerable children and SEN, using the council's Child's Journey document. This was followed by a session in November exploring the changes in the Code of Practice (2014) and the roles and responsibilities laid out for early years settings. We invited Matt Gifford and Dorothy Hadleigh to walk us through (a) Torbay's Local Offer on the Family Information Service website and (b) reinforce the process of making a request for an Education, Health and Care Plan needs assessment.



### Outcomes

To date the sector has identified 103 children aged between 2 and 4 years of age as having specific needs. Referrals have been made steadily throughout the year, resulting in children receiving timely interventions from a range of services, such as Portage Home Visiting, the Early Years Advisory Teacher, Educational Psychology, Paediatricians and Speech and Language Therapy. I have been working with the sector to establish clear, evidence-based, targeted support for individual children. So far, we have identified 32 4 year old children who have SEN Support or who have gone on to have an Education, Health and Care Plan in readiness for starting school in September. As a sector, we are in the midst of transition planning with families, schools and pre-schools.

We can confidently say that all of these young children's needs have been identified early and they will be able to enter school with plans of support in place.

And so the cycle continues into a new academic year. This summer, early years settings will be encouraged to review their SEN Information Report for the Local Offer. We now have a few settings in Torbay, who have achieved Makaton Friendly Status, as a kite mark of their inclusive practice and a trend that is set to increase in the year ahead. The Early Years sector in Torbay demonstrates commitment and care that we can be proud of.

**For more information visit:**

[www.torbay.gov.uk/senearlyyears](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/senearlyyears)

*Judith Thomas*



## Torbay SEN team update

An update from the team responsible for managing the new EHCP process

What's going well?	What regular challenges do we have?
<p>Families have given us feedback that the face to face meetings with the SEN Officers are really valued and help to support them through the EHCP process</p>	<p>Failing to receive advice for assessment within the statutory timescales</p> <p>Due to the large numbers involved, conversions and Requests for Statutory Assessment (RSAs) are booked on a tight schedule. If advice is delayed, then work carries forward to the following week and sets back the overall timescale</p>
<p>Families have given feedback that their views are being reflected in the Education, Health and Care Plans</p>	<p>Meeting the 14 weeks conversion timescale. The sourcing of complex information required to convert a statement to a plan is reliant on the timely receipt of detailed, relevant information</p>
<p>87% of statutory assessments have been completed within the 20 weeks deadline</p>	<p>Annual review paperwork is often sent after the statutory 2 weeks deadline has expired</p> <p>The depth of information provided for annual review paperwork is often insufficient to complete the task.</p>
<p>130 Statements have been converted to EHCPs since September 2014. We aim to use the school summer holiday period to focus on meeting our own target of 298 conversions within the year Sept 14 – Sept 15</p>	<p>Managing the increase in the new RSAs. Last year we received 111 new RSAs between Sept 13 and Sept 14. In the 9 months since Sept 14 we have so far received 133 RSAs. We estimate that we will have a 50% increase in new RSAs compared to last year (by Sept 15).</p>

## Torbay SEN

Since September 2014, the SEN team has been working on the task of converting the 900 statements of SEN to Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs). The team has until April 2018 to complete all of the conversions.

### Staff responsible for new Requests for Statutory Assessments, Conversions and Complex Case Work

- **1** Senior SEN Case Officer
- **2.6** FTE\* SEN Case Workers
- **2.2** FTE\* Education Health and Care Coordinators

### EHCP Stats

#### New requests for statutory assessment

- **20** weeks – the statutory period to complete a request for assessment and issue an EHCP.
- **133** requests for statutory assessment have been received since September 2014.
  - ▶ **40** requests for assessments agreed and EHCPs issued of which 87% were completed within the statutory period.
  - ▶ **69** requests for assessments agreed and EHCPs in progress.
  - ▶ **3** requests for assessments agreed but the family left the area.
  - ▶ **14** requests for assessment turned down
  - ▶ **7** decisions pending on whether to proceed with assessment.

#### Conversions from Statements to EHCPs

- **14** weeks – the amount of time to convert an EHCP following an annual review.
- **298** – Our target number of conversions for this school year.
- **130** statements have been converted to EHCPs since September 2014.
- Only approximately **25%** completed within the statutory timescale.

## Local Offer: Survey Results/Feedback

Many thanks to those who completed the Local Offer survey in March and April this year. The full survey results, which included a response to comments received, are viewable at [www.torbaydirectory.com/family](http://www.torbaydirectory.com/family), (select Local Offer).

### Main Messages

- The clear overriding point (reflected in the low response rate) is that not enough people know about the Torbay Local Offer
- The Local Offer is well laid out and fairly straightforward
- Need to focus on Work/Preparing for Adulthood section

	Parents/Young People		Professionals	
Number of responses	5		32	

	Parents/Young People		Professionals	
	No	Yes	No	Yes
Have you visited the Local Offer website?	2	3	3	34
Can you find the SEND services that you use on the Local Offer website?	0	5	5	32
Was it easy to find the services you were looking for?	2	2	3	29
Is the information on your service up to date.	n/a	n/a	2	31
The Local Offer should be easy to understand and jargon free. Do you think the Torbay Local Offer website achieves this aim?	0	5	1	30
Do you think we need to improve the way the Torbay Local Offer website looks?	4	1	30	5

Alongside the survey, members of PHAB Club, Torquay (<http://phabtorquay.info/>) took the time to complete a similar evaluation of the Local Offer. The results are pretty positive with some useful recommendations for improvements. To view the feedback and response please visit [www.torbaydirectory.com/family](http://www.torbaydirectory.com/family) and select Local Offer.

### Next Steps: Publicising the Local Offer

The clear message from the survey is that we need to make more people aware of the Torbay Local Offer and how to access it. To support this, a Local Offer flyer is being printed and made available to professionals to share with families. If you would like some flyers (available at the end of June), please email [SENDreforms@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:SENDreforms@torbay.gov.uk) or telephone 01803 206297. Posters will also be printed and we will work with the Family Information Service and Communications teams to publicise the Local Offer on the Council's Twitter feed and Facebook. Other options for raising awareness are also being planned.

We will be measuring the hit rate of the visits to the Local Offer home page to check whether we are succeeding with encouraging people to use the site. Since September we have had approximately 1700 visits to the home page. Users will continue to be able to provide feedback on the quality of the Local Offer using the contact email address on the main page. Services can be reviewed by visiting <http://healthwatchtorbay.org.uk/> - there is a link to this at the foot of every page.

## Personal Budgets pilot

We are currently exploring new enquiries and monitoring our existing Personal Budget as well as creating a feedback form to help us to establish better ways of handling requests.

To date Torbay Special Educational Needs Team has had 5 Personal Budget enquiries:

- 1 up and running
- 2 starting in September
- 1 awaiting further information
- 1 declined

A personal budget has been agreed for a young person with social, emotional and mental health difficulties who will shortly be moving from primary to secondary school. The budget has been used to replace Thrive with a form of therapy that reflected the interests and wishes of the individual concerned. In this case, Thrive was not having a significant impact and would not be available at the secondary school, so it was an opportunity to try something else to meet the young person's SEN. Drama-therapy has been put in place to take away the dependence on the Thrive work and to explore social, emotional and health difficulties more thoroughly, including anxiety relating to the move to a new school. The support will continue into secondary school and will be provided through Social Care for the summer holidays.

## Parents Participation Forum

The Torbay Parents Participation Forum (PPF) is a voluntary organisation that was first established in February 2009 as part of the Government programme 'Aiming High for Disabled Children', and continues, within the Children & Families Act 2014, to be an important organisation to support parent/carers to have a voice in how services for disabled children are shaped and delivered locally.

### What we do:

- Encourage wide membership which is open to interested professionals in addition to parents/carers.
- Provide information about national and local SEND related issues, consultations, events and activities via e-bulletins, Facebook and our website;
- Work in partnership with service providers in reviewing and developing provisions, services, policies and practices to ensure the needs of children with SEND are met (including the Local Authority, Health and other organisations that provide services within Torbay);
- Collect feedback on services that local families already use and suggestions about services they would like to use in the future, to enable us to offer feedback, advice and challenge to service providers where necessary;
- Organise and facilitate free local events for members to attend which include a 'market stall' of local providers alongside local and/or national speakers. Over the past year we have organised and run:
- 'Fair Play Day' – a closed 'Fun Fair' session for SEND children and their families which allowed us to recruit new members and promote and encourage participation
- SENDIASS Event - this provided an in-depth explanation of the national SEND reforms (presentation by CDC) and how these reforms were being put into practice within Torbay. All presentations were videoed and are available on our website via youtube.
- Influencing Health Services – Co-production Event – this focused on CAMHS and service restructuring and included input by the CCG, Healthwatch, CAMHS Service Manager and CAMHS Family Forum.

If you have any further queries about the PPF please visit our website [www.torbayppf.org.uk](http://www.torbayppf.org.uk) or email us at [info@torbayppf.org.uk](mailto:info@torbayppf.org.uk)



## Transitions work

Torbay Children's Services in partnership with Adult services have come together to form the "Torbay Transitions Group Panel". The aim of this group is to allow Young People who may need or will need an adult service to be referred to a panel of managers to discuss the case early and plan the transition to the appropriate service, or to advise where it should go if the case does not meet the criteria. A number of meetings have been held and the panel is up and running with most key participants involved. A Terms of Reference and referral form will be circulated in due course. Once signed off, the meetings will be held at the Integrated Youth Support Service at Parkfield building, initially monthly but will eventually be bi-monthly.

## Mental Capacity Act Training

Nicky Griffin (Mental Capacity Act Lead) held a session in May on the Mental Capacity Act for parent representatives and professionals who are likely to have some involvement in the Education, Health and Care Plan process. The training was extremely well received and feedback has indicated that this should be rolled out to a wider audience. Our intention is to arrange a future 'mop up' session for those who were unavailable to make this date. Once completed, we will be working with Nicky to plan a follow up session. Feedback taken from the event will be used to help plan how staff are supported to meet their responsibilities in this complex area.

Some representative comments:

- A huge subject made understandable, with all the salient points made useful. Thank you!
- Very helpful but feels like just a starting point need to develop more
- Need processes in place to make life easier – don't miss things
- Improved knowledge, still a lot to learn
- More training please
- Please visit [www.torbay.gov.uk/mentalcapacity](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/mentalcapacity) for further information.

**Please help!** - We have created a Mental Capacity page on the Local Offer. Please help us to link organisations and groups who offer support relating to this area by emailing their details to: [SENDreforms@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:SENDreforms@torbay.gov.uk)



## Adults Learning Disability

On the 11 May 2015 the Adult Community Learning Disability Team went through a redesign of assessment and care management services for people with a learning disability. The changes are designed to deliver key outcomes which are:

- Improved access to mainstream services for people with learning disabilities
- Enhanced support to mainstream services to enable them to meet the needs of people with learning disabilities
- Timely specialist intervention for people with learning disabilities
- Support to ensure the continued development of good practice, and oversight of quality and safety

The social care staff from the Community Learning Disability Team have moved to the mainstream health and social care Zone teams. In the next few months, Learning Disability nurses and Primary Care Liaison Nurses will also be moving to the Zone teams. To help people get used to the new arrangements there is a Learning Disability Support Unit which includes:

- Lead social worker for Learning Disability
- Lead Nurse for Learning disability
- Learning Disability Health and Social Care Coordinator
- Senior Practitioner Social Worker (temporary role).

This small team will be working closely with the learning disability health professionals including behaviour support, clinical psychology, clinical psychiatry, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists etc.

All the people who were using the team and their families were sent a letter which explained what would be happening and told them how to get in touch with the right team for their care and support. The number people can ring to find out more is 01803 219700. They will then be directed to the most appropriate team to help with their enquiry.

Learning Disability continues to take an active role in the development of the SEND reforms and the team is currently engaged in work to develop the transitions pathway.

## SENDIASS News

Special Educational Needs & Disability Information, Advice and Support Service

Independent information, advice and support for parents/carers, children/young people

Since its formation in September 2014, staffing levels have changed from 1 full-time + 3 part-time staff to 2 full-time members of staff (Marianne Lewis & Kelly Givens).

The service is being well used, from Sept 14 to end of April 15 we had 147 new enquiries, which now includes enquiries from young people as well as enquiries from parents/carers and professionals, covering a wider range of issues across education, health and social care in relation to SEND from those who have initial concerns about possible SEND right up to those who have EHC Plans in place.

In addition to being able to meet clients in their own homes or accessible community locations, we now also have our own private office space at 11 Castle Road, Torquay where clients can arrange to visit us.

Following recent interest and LA training in relation to the Mental Capacity Act, we have added a new information & Advice webpage on 'Capacity to make decisions', which includes a link to some excellent free e-learning modules from SCIE (Social Care Institute of Learning).

There is no complicated referral system. Parents/carers or young people can self-refer or professionals can refer by simply calling or emailing us with clients contact details, providing they have the clients consent to do so.

Our contact details are:

Phone number: 01803 208239

Email : [info@sendiasstorbay.org.uk](mailto:info@sendiasstorbay.org.uk)

Website: [www.sendiasstorbay.org.uk](http://www.sendiasstorbay.org.uk)

## Leaflets

Available Now (please contact the SEN Team on 01803 208274)

- Education, Health and Care Plans – Guidance for Parents and Carers
- Local Offer flyers

Available Shortly (will advise when ready)

- Personal SEN Budgets
- Local Offer posters

## Useful links

SEND Code of Practice

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

Torbay Local Offer

[www.torbaydirectory.com/family](http://www.torbaydirectory.com/family)

Mental Capacity

[www.torbay.gov.uk/index/yourservices/education/sen/sendreforms/mentalcapacity.htm](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/index/yourservices/education/sen/sendreforms/mentalcapacity.htm)

Council for Disabled Children:

Local Offer - SEND

[www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/resources/cdcs-resources/information-for-children-and-young-people-on-send-reforms](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/resources/cdcs-resources/information-for-children-and-young-people-on-send-reforms)

### Easy Read Guides:

SEND Reforms

[www.mencap.org.uk/EasyReadGuides](http://www.mencap.org.uk/EasyReadGuides)

## Contributors

**Diane Graham** - General Manager  
Sensory Services and Learning Disability Services

**Dorothy Hadleigh** - Head of Service SEND

**Hannah Spencer** - EHC Coordinator

**Judith Thomas** - Advisory Teacher for Inclusion

**Marianne Lewis** - SENDIASS

**Matt Gifford** - SEND Project Manager

**Parents Participation Forum Steering Group**

**Peggy Seddon** - Senior SEN Officer

**Steve Bellworthy** - Practice Manager  
Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS)



## Early Help

We believe that children and families need to be heard when they first ask for help to minimize adverse experiences for them. For many children and families, their needs will be met through services available within their everyday routines such as Schools or Children's Centres, GPs or Youth Centres and projects.

When the level of need is more complex and involves two or three needs that require several services to work together, then an Early Help Referral should be completed and submitted to the Early Help Service.

To get advice and information and to check whether an Early Help Referral is already in place for a child please contact us using the details listed below.

Email: [earlyhelp@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelp@torbay.gov.uk)

Tel: 01803 208525

[www.torbay.gov.uk/earlyhelp](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/earlyhelp)

We will be covering the links between Early Help and SEND in more detail in the next newsletter.