

8. Schools Forum Impact Report on 0-25 SEND Statutory Assessment Team



PROGRESS REPORT

Feedback to Schools Forum: 19 June 2019

Questions asked for consideration:

1. Has the agreed business case for 0-25 Statutory Assessment Team affected the service requirements and extended duties and additional responsibilities set out in the Code of Practice 2015?
 - (a) SEN 2 data
 - (b) Tribunal update
 - (c) Portal

2. Has the agreed business case ensured continued/improved focus on co-production, parental participation and parental involvement in assessment and monitoring of EHC Plans?
 - (a) SEND Audit
 - (b) Questionnaire
 - (c) Annual Reviews

3. Has the agreed business case developed relationship with the FE sector?
 - (a) 0-25 SEND Officer allocation
 - (b) Post 16 Briefings

People involved:

Penny Whitell and Blanche Gibson

Agreed Business Case

In June 2018 Schools forum agreed to the proposal set out in a business case for the 0-25 SEND team. This resulted in the additional allocation of £171,395 from the High Needs Block to employ permanent staff. 2 temporary 0-25 SEND officers were made permanent and new posts were created; 1.5 Caseworker Administrators and an Annual Reviewing Officer. The permanent 0-25 SEND Officers took up their positions from September and October 2018 respectively; this created a vacant 0.5 0-25 SEND Officer post which has recently gone to recruitment. The Casework Administrators started in the middle of October 2018. The Annual Reviewing Officer was recruited in March 2019.

Demand

There are now approximately 2060 children and young people in Plymouth with a statutory plan. At the time of the original business case there were 1911. In the academic year 2017/2018, 118 assessments were agreed. In the academic year

2018/2019, **110** assessments have been agreed so far. With 3 months of the academic year remaining the end of year figure, is likely to be close to 150.

Impact

The increase in the number of students with an EHCP increases the number of annual reviews, the number of plans to be amended, the number of requests to go to panel and the number of cases the team are working on at any given time.

SEN 2 Data

The impact of having 2 new Casework administrators is starting to be reflected in the SEN 2 data. As the caseworkers did not commence in their posts until the end of October 2018, and then had an induction period, this is not reflected in the data from last year but is starting to be evident in this year's data.

January – December 2018 SEN 2 data reported that 47.5% of statutory assessments were completed within 20 weeks.

January – May 2019 figure is currently at 54.9% a comparable increase of 15.5% over 5 months, indicating SEND 2 data for the year should be an improvement from last year. (See SEND Steering Group Report *EHCP 20 week timeliness: analysis* March 2019 for further information)

Tribunals

In Plymouth during the 2017/2018 academic year there were 24 cases lodged with the tribunal service. In 2018/2019, there have been 7 so far, however there has been an increase in Global Mediation requests and 'Way Forward' meeting requests, which are carried out *before* parents go to tribunal, having permanent staff has increased the opportunities to resolve any disagreements before getting to this point. (see SEND Steering Group Report *0-25 SEND Team Way Forward Meetings, Mediation and Tribunals* April 2019 for further information)

Portal

The 0-25 SEND Team have worked closely with the strategic commissioning team on the new Portal for EHC requests for assessment. All requests have been coming through the portal since September 2019. The next stage is to develop the assessment process online, for example through advice being submitted. Having permanent team of Caseworker staff has enabled the team to continue to develop the Portal as glitches and issues are found within the system.

SEND Audit

The SEND Audit started in April 2019 after research, including visits to observe the Torbay model. The SEND Audit group is made up of: SEND Manager; Social Care Manager; Designated Medical Officer; Senior Educational Psychologist; Parent Carer Voice and 0-25 SEND Team Manager. The group meet every 4-5 weeks to discuss a recently finalised EHCP, which includes health and social care elements. Sharing the outcomes of the Audits with the 0-25 SEND Team is easier and more helpful with a permanent staff group who are able to take these into consideration and develop a way forward.

Questionnaire

The 0-25 SEND Team carried out an analysis of the assessment process, which included considering the new SEND Tribunal Powers for Health and Social Care. A questionnaire was developed and distributed at the end of the autumn term 2018 to review the existing statutory assessment process in Plymouth and consider ways to improve the process, for example what could help extending the role of Assessment Coordinator. (see SEND Steering Group Report *0-25 SEND Team Assessment Questionnaire Analysis* April 2019 for further information). The outcomes and suggestions from this piece of work will now be taken forward with a permanent staff group who understand the current processes and are considering the statutory assessment process through workflow planning.

Annual Reviews

The Annual Reviewing Officer has been in post since March 2019. They have joined the Annual Review Working Group and have a plan going forward on developing the portal for the submission of Annual Review paperwork. It is still early stages, but the Annual Reviewing Officer has over the last couple of months focused on year 11 and Post 16 Annual Reviews, ensuring all are read to ensure there is a planned transition. They have subsequently followed up any requiring further information with the Caseworker team and school/settings. The Annual Reviewing Officer is working on developing a system to monitor annual reviews and subsequently identifying likely high cost placements.

0-25 SEND Officer Allocation

With permanent 0-25 SEND Officers in post, it has provided the opportunity to develop relationships with secondary schools, special schools and post 16 providers to support transition for students with EHCPs to FE settings. There is now an Officer allocated to each special school to support Y11/12/13 and Y14 transition requests, Officers are working closely with the Careers South West staff who are also allocated to these schools. Officers have also been allocated Post 16 settings and have developed relationships, supporting settings to provide relevant and appropriate information to the LA.

14-25 Network Briefings

As a result of having permanent 0-25 SEND Officers and their allocation to Post 16 settings, the 0-25 SEND Team have attended and provided training to the three 14-25 network briefings this academic year. Supporting secondary schools and Post 16 providers with an understanding of the decision making process within Plymouth, regarding funding and assessment for Post 16 students with SEND, training on annual review paperwork, and outcomes training.

| Next Steps |
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| Workflow Planning – Business Support are carrying out a thorough analysis of the processes within the 0-25 SEND Team, to streamline and help with data collection visibility. |
| Review of Post 16 funding requests, monitoring and agreement process over the summer. |
| SMAP review of processes and format |

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30/05/19