

# DERBY'S SEND

## LOCAL OFFER

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### Local Offer User Group Notes

Meeting Tuesday 20 September 11.30am-1.00pm

#### Attendees:

Amanda Allsop, Catherine Omara, Sally Morton,  
Charlotte Dolman (CD), Dan Marson (DM).

#### Actions from previous meeting on:

##### Health and Wellbeing

- A link to Mencap was added to enhance the understanding of the GP's register to enable annual health check for learning disabilities.
- More information in general was needed about annual health checks so Derbyshire NHS Healthcare Trust hosted 2x free online information sessions on 12th September.
- DM said the Mencap leaflet will be added to annual review information too.
- The Community Short Breaks webpage needed updating to manage parent carer expectations. DM reported back from Social Care who said they were about to retender Short Breaks provisions so access to the service will be quicker.
- Following on from discussion about finances, DM also reported schools have been developing their own support for living links which can be linked to the Local Offer website. **ACTION: DM to pool from Special School Heads.**

##### Parent Carer Support

- The Support Services for parents was sectioned in half to accommodate more direct links to financial services. One member noted the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) was missing. **ACTION: CD to update.**
- DM investigated whether coffee mornings were available at all special schools. Coffee mornings. Members said it would be more helpful if schools scheduled coffee mornings regularly rather than an ad-hoc basis so they could plan their time. This would be useful to parents wanting information before their child started at the school. Whilst themes were good, time should be available to have open discussions on any topic as well. **ACTION: DM attending an all SENCO meeting**
- The newly developed annual review toolkit is to include aspects of travel and health. DM elaborated on this and is sending through to members for feedback. **ACTION: DM**



## Review of [EHC assessments and plans](#) webpages

DM gave an overview of how these webpages were structured then discussion was had on each of the EHCP sections under the following headings:

### What is an education, health and care plan?

- Members thought something should be mentioned before going straight to EHCP. The Graduated Response is not mentioned under this heading. **ACTION: CD to add link to Graduated Response section.**

### How to request an EHC needs assessment?

- Members said the green button linking to 'Request an EHC needs assessment' is confusing. This button takes to a landing page that also includes a form for other Local Authorities to use. DM explained technically it can't be done differently. Consider additional help text to explain how to progress **ACTION: CD to look at wording.**
- Members also said they would like information on how to get help from elsewhere other than SENDIASS. Suggestions were IPSEA, Contact, Special Needs Jungle. **ACTION: CD to add links to the above organisations.**
- DM asked if parents had made use of webchat from Action for children [Parent Talk - Support for Parents from Action For Children](#) – this is free for parents to use.

### What to expect during an EHC needs assessment?

- Members comments ranged from 'Quite high level' 'Aspirational' and 'Do parents want more practical info?' Parent carers needed more support on what they need to bring to an assessment. **ACTION: DM to revisit this introductory paragraph.**

### Weeks 0-6

- Members want these weeks named to describe what happens. E.G. call this "Information gathering", What is supposed to happen? This gives the timescale but not the activity. What should parent carers expect from your officer within this time frame? **ACTION: DM & CD to discuss.**
- Members want this sentence removing: We will ask you about your hopes for your child as they get older. **ACTION: CD to delete.**
- Members discussed how those with complex medical needs could be fast tracked. **ACTION: DM to ensure triage process for those with complex medical; needs is reflected in the content**
- It was acknowledged that Year 6 is a difficult phase, parent carers must continue to apply through school admissions if they are going through the assessment process but don't yet have an EHCP, and that this is not an ideal process.
- Members felt the link to [SEND Tribunal](#) link should be replaced with a friendly pathway, maybe to mediation? It was agreed to use this link - [What to do if you disagree with our decision?](#) **ACTION: CD to link**



## Weeks 6-16

- It was discussed that an assessment always involved an educational psychologist but not necessarily any other new professionals.
- Graduated approach means that professionals should already be involved at point of EHC assessment so they should be able to contribute. Members thought the Graduated Response could be highlighted here as parent carers won't necessarily get other services. **ACTION: DM to provide updated wording for bullet points in this section**

## By week 16

- It was discussed how best to support parent carers preparing their views for a draft plan. Are there other ways to capture views? Some may struggle using paper? How about a recording? Could we link to [Understanding your child's needs](#) here? Where do young people's views come from? school? **ACTION: DM to update wording to explain how parents can provide their views**
- Members want an example of the plan uploaded. **ACTION: CD to link pages and upload a plan template.**
- DM suggested uploading Jane Hutchby's 'A short guide for parents by parents' **ACTION DM to provide guide for upload and template.**
- Members want the last paragraph headed 'If we decide to draft a plan' elaborating with next steps. **ACTION: DM & CD to discuss.**
- Discussion moved to where parent carers can find a comprehensive list of all schools. The list needs updating then can there be a link here? **ACTION: DM & CD to review schools directory.**
- There was wider discussion about the special school environment/world. Encourage to visit school like you would be for college. Is there a checklist for parents to ask school? Is there a virtual tour? Is there a coffee morning? A schools marketplace? SENDIASS has a [good checklist](#). [St Andrew's Future Fair](#) was also discussed. **ACTION: DM & CD to look at creating a checklist with support from members.**

## By week 20

- Again, it would be useful to see example of a plan. **ACTION: CD to upload a plan template.**
- Parents want to see more weight on the provision and the outcome of the plan, that is most important to parent carers.
- Can there be more input from health? It's very fragmented, not just community paediatrician but other voices need to be heard. DM is picking this up as part of wider work to improve quality of plans.
- Again change the link from tribunal to [What to do if you disagree with our decision?](#) **ACTION: CD to link**

## Education, health and care plan annual reviews?

### What is an annual review

- Members discussed the reliance on schools to talk about Preparing for Adulthood. Why year 9 and above?
- Members want this sentence removing:  
If your child is in year 9 or above, the annual review should have a focus on transition, preparation for adulthood and independent living. **ACTION: CD to link deleted**



- Should there be something before the meeting? Training with schools on their 'musts' in the code of practice. How child's view gathered, updated guidance, audits to sit in an observe the process. **ACTION – DM developing a school toolkit Reviewing an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) - Schools' Information Portal (derby.gov.uk)**. Training also being developed and will be shared with the group for feedback.

#### Who will be invited?

- Members discussed using different language for the bullet point social care representative if relevant. This representative could be from Umbrella or a community group. **ACTION: DM & CD to discuss.**
- Also how does the meeting happen? Via zoom? Can parent carers choose their preferences, time of day? **ACTION: DM & CD to discuss adding information about the parent preference for the way the meeting is held.**

#### What to expect during the meeting?

- Need to make it clear that parent carers can bring someone along, partner, advocate, support person. **ACTION: DM & CD to add in wording**

#### After the meeting

- Members discussed letter notification of plan being updated or not – so parents can appeal. Plans should sustain through a key stage, maybe need a date on the template.
- DM discussed new IT system to chase reviews being booked or updated.
- DM shared Annual Review Toolkit for all schools and gave an overview of its contents. **Action: DM to share link with user group and ask for views Reviewing an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) - Schools' Information Portal (derby.gov.uk)**

#### Phase transfers

- Member discussed the difficulties around the school application deadline 31 March and not knowing where post 16 provision will be.
- The green button 'Search for schools' directory needs reviewing. **ACTION: DM to update.**

#### What to do if you disagree with our decision?

- Members was a link to advocacy for parents who can't represent themselves.
- It needs a link to SENDIASS - Support to parents' section.
- Add SEND team email not just phone number. **ACTION: CD to update.**

#### AOB

- **ACTION: Members to ask other parents to join the group, especially those with Primary aged children.**

#### Next meeting:

- CD to look at dates in the autumn for the next meeting.
- Next meeting to focus on **Personal Budgets** and **Short Breaks**.
  - Group members to review these sections in advance of meeting.

