SEND and Inclusion Strategy for 2019-2024

Implementation Progress Report No. 1, January 2020

west sussex county council

children first

Introduction

In collaboration with a diverse range of stakeholders, the County Council worked to agree the core vision and key priority areas that will drive our ambition for improving provision for our children and young people. The SEND and Inclusion Strategy for 2019-2024, which arose from the analysis of our data and the feedback from our stakeholders, sets out our vision, strategic priorities and key activities for our work. The over-arching strategy is underpinned by detailed plans against each priority, enabling stakeholders to be informed and challenge the progress we are making. We are committed to enabling, challenging and supporting all schools to be inclusive so that best outcomes are achieved for all pupils and agreed to share our progress on a termly basis. This is the first termly report and covers the period September to 31st December 2019.

Project Management

The SEND and Inclusion Strategy for 2019-2024 was signed off by the Cabinet on 5th December 2019.

The project mobilised during the autumn term and key documentation was signed off by the Education and Skills leadership team, which included:

- The Project Initiation Document, which sets out the purpose and scope of the project, the project structure and how it will be governed.
- The Implementation Plan.
- The data dashboard populated with the baseline data.

The business cases for the project team were approved and recruitment is progressing.

The Project structure is set out below:

The SEND and Inclusion Strategy Board met for the first time on 17 December 2019 and its terms of reference were approved.

Workstreams

Project activities will be delivered through a number of workstreams. The following provides a summary of the current workstreams that have been identified.

SEND Offer

A task and finish group (TFG) has been established to initially focus on the development of the development of resources to support schools and settings to provide appropriately support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. This will include a whole school document to highlight the support that should be 'ordinarily available' in all mainstream settings and a more detailed SEND resource. Research into what is available and used in other local authorities has been undertaken and this was shared with schools, settings and local authority officers at the first task and finish group workshop on 19th November 2019. The workshop gave a very clear steer as to what was required and work is underway to develop the concept of an interactive web-based tool, which will be subsequently shared and reviewed at the next workshop in January 2020.

Culture for Inclusion

Two of the four SEND Advisors have been recruited. Further interviews are ongoing. These are key role in ensuring that the desired cultural changes across West Sussex takes places and that there is a consistency.

The first of the therapeutic thinking to behaviour management introduction workshop was held on 14th November 2019, with the next due on 9th January 2020 and a further one in March 2020. Following the introductory workshops, schools and settings will be invited to engage in a series of 3-day training courses to support the process of embedding a Therapeutic Approach into their professional development programme, school development and policies.

A task and finish group (TFG) has been established to initially focus on the development of a whole school self-evaluation Inclusion tool. Research into the existing local authority tools has been undertaken and there is general agreement that the development of a West Sussex resource would enable all parties to have a clear understanding of what inclusive practice looks like on a strategic and practical basis. Work to develop a set of common inclusion statements and examples of how the statements can be evidenced will continue in the January 2020 Inclusion workshop.

Setting Definition and Contracts

The SEND school place planning officer role was filled in September 2019. Considerable work has been undertaken to establish the baseline position in relation to SEND place planning data to ensure that the project can report accurately on progress going forward.

A SEND place planning tool has also been purchased and is currently being populated with data. The software will help the authority plan SEND places more effectively going forward using the same methodology as mainstream place planning. A Section 106 policy for SEND has also been drafted to ensure that the local authority can plan appropriately to support any increase in the number of learners with SEND that arise from future development.

Data Dashboard and MI

The key measures (SMART) against which the progress will be measured have been agreed. The baseline data has also been sourced and published (attached to this report) and is effective from September 2019. Targets have been proposed, but still required Steering group sign off. The key measures and targets for the culture of inclusion will be determined by the workstream TFG.

A SEND setting descriptor document for contract purposes have been drafted. This will assist with the process of ensuring that all SEND settings have contracts in place (independent and maintained). The process and resource for ensuring adequate Quality Assurance is in place for all settings against the contacts is being discussed.

Progress is being made with respect to the provision of the 84 additional SSC places and 104 additional special school places. The special school places are on track for delivery in September 2020 although it should be noted that a proportion of these places are already taken due to pent up demand. Visits to schools who have expressed an initial interest in SSCs have been arranged and feasibility studies are in progress for delivery by September 2021 (note that the Chichester and Horsham nursery places were delivered in September 2019).

Transition Management

Work not due to commence until September 2020.