

## Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities Investigation

### How effectively are these children and young people safeguarded?

To ensure that all disabled children within the District are safeguarded from abuse and neglect.

- Children and Young People with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) are provided with the same level of protection and there is a clearly understood expectation that Bradford Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) procedures will be followed in respect of all children in the District. The Children's Complex Health or Disability Team provides assessment and care management services working closely alongside mainstream services. This Team works to the same rigorous standards and procedures using the Children's Services Improvement Framework (CSIF) as a monitoring mechanism. The team provide additional specialist skills to ensure the protection of this vulnerable group of children.
- The BCSB and the Disabled Children and Young People Strategy Group have undertaken a review of the recommendations contained within "Safeguarding Disabled Children: a Resource for Local Safeguarding Children Boards".
- A joint time-limited working group has been established to undertake
  - a) a review of recommendations within the guidance
  - b) identify, share and encourage good practice and
  - c) identify (if necessary) what additional action and resources are required.
- The working group will also coordinate the action plan from "Our Fun Club - review of lessons to be learned", an independent report commissioned by BSCB following safeguarding concerns at LA provision for LDD young people.
- Specific training is delivered by single agencies: for example whole school training in safeguarding children with disabilities being delivered in four special schools in the last 12 months. During the same period BSCB has delivered inter-agency training in this subject to over 100 staff.
- As part of the special school reorganisation, work is underway to improve the consistency of the child's experience as he/ she moves between schools and /or settings. Agencies have given a particular focus to any activity that involves direct physical intervention, including moving and handling and Team Teach. Agreed training programmes have been developed and are being rolled out across the district so that there will be a "bank" of consistently trained trainers.
- Services have been developed in conjunction with "Hearing the Child", a service commissioned from Barnardo's, to ensure that the views and wishes of disabled children and young people are heard and considered.
- An Empowerment Group has identified a number of key concerns disabled children and young people have regarding their safety, including a need to focus on stopping bullying. The group are designing a DVD that can be used to raise awareness in schools and other settings. Work has been undertaken within the residential respite Units to ensure a proactive stance to prevent bullying. A District wide co-ordinated response will also be undertaken through links with the BSCB Anti Bullying Group.



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### Evaluate the effectiveness of approaches to improving educational achievement? Examine the relationship between services and schools.

Universal and targeted approaches includes clearly articulating SEN policy/strategy into plans for development so that the monitoring of impact and evaluation through the SEN Strategy Group concentrates on key objectives:

- To develop inclusive practice.
- Raise awareness and confidence of staff.
- Develop strategic approaches in meeting the needs of C&YP with SEN LDD.

Providing an annual cycle of advice, support and training on: understanding and using data effectively (including P Levels); managing the learning process and planning effective provision; supporting schools effective self-evaluation.

Wider activity includes: developing and delivering a programme of Continuing Professional Development; delivering and Implementing National Strategies Programmes relating to inclusive practice; provision of a range of specialist support services; and promoting a high level of delegated SEN resources to schools.

As a result of these approaches:

- The majority of C&YP have their needs met in mainstream schools. 0.99% (836) pupils are educated in special schools and 0.05% (44) are placed out of district.
- Needs are identified early, assessments are timely, statement procedures increasingly effective as evidenced by low tribunal activity. Numbers of statements are reducing, with a higher percentage of new statements in early years, indicating early identification of need.
- OfSTED reports of schools in 2006/07 indicate 63% were good or outstanding, 31% satisfactory in relation to SEN/LDD judgements on the provision and progress made.
- Data indicates that when context is taken into account using RAISE online information pupils in Bradford Primary Schools at both School Action (SA) and at School Action Plus (SA+) or Statemented (S), do well in comparison to similar pupils nationally. The figures at SA+ or S are slightly better than those for SA, but both groups have done well. At SA in 78.3% of schools, pupils achieve a Contextual Value Added (CVA) score in line with or better than, National CVA figures. At SA+/S in 80.8% of schools pupils achieve a CVA score in line with, or better than national CVA figures.
- The same overall picture exists for secondary schools, however this time SA pupils have done slightly better than SA+ or S pupils.
- At SA+ in 82.2% of schools, pupils achieve a CVA score in line with, or better than national CVA figures. At SA+/S pupils in 78.6% of schools, pupils achieve a CVA score in line with, or better than national CVA figures.



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### What are service users' views of the quality and availability of specialist services, including CAMHS?

To be confident that the involvement of disabled children and their parents is an integral part of service planning, informed by the Participation Strategy for the District and, to ensure that innovative communication methods are employed to enable the voice of the child to be heard, the following developments have taken place:

- The Disabled Children and Young People Strategy Group (DCYPSG) is undertaking an audit of groups of parents of disabled children to coordinate parental involvement across partner agencies within the District and will form the basis of a database. The group is also planning a large stakeholder event (to involve parents and children) for March 2008.
- The Disabled Children Information Service regularly seeks feedback from parents as to the shape of services. These views are collated into an Annual Report which informs service plans across all agencies. In addition the service seeks parents' views on specific projects - most recently, on children and on playground facilities. Each service has a participation champion; at a local level these champions ensure the involvement of parents and children in service planning. The Empowerment Group and the Health Advocacy Group are regularly consulted and have provided feedback on anti-bullying and children's rights and are linked closely with the DCYPSG.
- Short Break Family Placement Schemes have involved parents, service users and Link Carers in staff interviews for a number of years. Regular consultation evenings are held, the most recent being in respect of Fees. The twice yearly newsletter is used; this resulted in changes in priority criteria.
- The Health Advocacy Group commissioned by the tPCT which works with young disabled people have raised issues in terms of the need for professionals to treat them with respect and demonstrate clearer communication has had a direct impact in terms of supporting clinicians to communicate effectively with young people and their families about sometimes highly complex and personal issues. Findings were presented to senior managers within the tPCT with a view to influencing future service planning.
- In relation to CAMHS, a recent consultation included 7 young people with LDD on the development of counselling and associated services. This identified a need for some children to receive more support and that young people would like a service where they can drop in, which has a range of facilities and is easily accessible in terms of location. These views will influence the Healthy Minds Action Plan. Ensuring that young people can influence the development of specialist CAMHS has also been identified as a priority for our CAMHS participation work, which is supported by a participation worker employed by Barnardo's. Children's Social care have a designated link worker in each of 4 sites who provide a gateway into CAMHS.
- The SEN Strategy Group ensures parents are consulted within reviews of a range of specialist services including Educational Psychology and Learning Support Service. Audit Commission latest survey shows that satisfaction with this service has improved from 2006-2007 and is above Bradford average and nationally for Support Services.
- A consultation is currently underway regarding local implantation of extending short breaks services following the publication of "Aiming High - Better Support to families with disabled children". A current carer has been commissioned to gather the views of fifty families randomly selected from the Disabled Children's Register.



## Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities Investigation

### What progress has been made with the reorganisation of special schools?

Education Bradford undertook a review of provision in 2002/3 for pupils with SEN. The key recommendations were to retain and develop further designated specialist provision (DSPs) and to undertake a reorganisation of all existing special schools.

- Planned closure of 10 special schools and establishment of 6 new generic co-located special schools (agreed 2003)
- Closure of Temple Bank School (2004) and establishment of interim provisions.
- Deaf review undertaken, recommending closure of Thorn Park and establishment of a co-located Centre of Excellence for Deaf Children and DSPs.
- Plans to identify capital funding via BSF and conventional capital funding streams.
- Temporary Governing Bodies in place and Heads designate appointed for 6 generic schools.
- Staff assimilation partly completed and kept under review.
- Adjustments made to update pupil places in line with local needs and demands.
- Transformation budget in place.
- Recommendation from Education Policy Partnership to council to establish a special school for pupils with severe Communication and Interaction Difficulties and a school for pupils with SEBD.
- A funding bid for two Designated Specialist Provision establishments for LDD and ASD submitted for 2008-2011 to support the overall range of SEN provision.
- Progress towards a range of inclusive provision on mainstream campuses for visually impaired pupils and for hearing impaired pupils.
- An interim consultant (Dec 2007-March 2008) commissioned to put in place a broad, strategic and operational working plan to take forward the next steps of special school reorganisation.
- There has been a revision to the timescale for the implementation of the special schools reorganisation. Currently the position is that the opening of the primary and secondary schools may be staggered between September 2009-2010.
- Discussions took place in November 2007 between the Council and EB to review and agree way forward for the strategic direction, management of reorganisation and delivery of the implementation plan.
- Statutory procedures for the reorganisation of provision for hearing impaired pupils are expected to take place during 2008.
- Throughout this interim period, EB continues to provide advice, support and challenge to special schools and mainstream settings in meeting the needs of children and young people with SEN to sustain school improvement.



## Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities Investigation

**What opportunities are there for these CYP to make a positive contribution? What opportunities are there for Children and Young People not accessing social services to participate and make a positive contribution? Obtain theirs and parent/carer views.**

Planned opportunities for those C&YP with Special Education Needs (SEN)/LDD, including those who are not accessing Social Services, are essential to ensure that effective support is provided to improve personal development and well being.

- C&YP participate in annual reviews and transition planning. Over 90% of children participate within their SEN reviewing processes. All children who are in receipt of respite looked after Short Break Services receive an independent review; 94.44% of children are actively involved within this, underpinned by the use of specialist communication materials.
- C&YP and parents/carers have access to impartial information, advice and guidance through the Parent Partnership Service and support is provided to assist them in making formal representations and complaints.
- C&YP are able to develop a range of secure and positive relationships through the development and implementation of a range of initiatives within schools including the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) resources, used as a tool to support the Spiral Curriculum. C&YP are given opportunities to participate in the life of the school through e.g. school/class councils.
- Pupils have access to mentoring, including peer mentoring through e.g. Paired Reading and Buddy schemes; enabling them to build positive relationships.
- In partnership with Barnardo's, the Youth Service has developed a Peer Education Programme - whereby disabled young people have been trained to offer a training programme to non-disabled young people in Youth Centre Units across the district. The aim is to raise awareness and challenge discrimination amongst non - disabled young people attending Youth Service provision in order to provide inclusive and safe spaces that allow disabled young people to fully participate and positively contribute to the operation of the units. The same group are creating an Inclusion mark for best practice with young people with LDD for Youth Centre Units across the district.
- Bradford Youth Service has employed a part - time LDD Inclusion Worker to support LDD young people into universal youth work provision across the district.



## Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities Investigation

### What is the commissioning strategy for services for Children and Young People with LDD? How does this relate to the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework? What is the strategy for the recruitment of carers?

The Strategy for LDD with the Bradford District is to ensure that all services are inclusive and that any necessary additional and specialist support is assessed and provided in a timely manner.

- The Disabled Children and Young People's Strategy Group (DCYPSG) has responsibility for determining and driving forward this strategy inter-agency response to children with LDD and reports directly to the CYPSP, It has been reconstituted with new terms of reference and stronger partner agency representation. The commitment by the LA and the tPCT to a joint commissioning unit is outlined in the CYP Plan. The District has adopted a Prevention Strategy which reinforces an inclusive approach for all children, with an emphasis on early intervention. An Early Support Coordinator has been appointed.
- Choice amongst service users is actively promoted and there has been a growth in the use of direct payments and home support arrangements, with a significant take up of the latter from families from South Asian communities. Work is ongoing to investigate how we can introduce the use of individualised budgets within Children's Services.
- The strategy implemented by EB to reduce reliance on statements and delegate funding to schools has proved successful, and meets the ambition to enable Head teachers, Governors and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) to make early decisions about curriculum and support arrangements for children who experience barriers to their learning. It was referred to by the Education Policy Partnership (EPP) as a "remarkable success story" (EPP minutes, 08.02.2007).
- A Strategic Framework of Commissioning Outcomes for the development of an appropriate model of health provision to support EB and the Council's SEN and BSF programmes is in the final draft consultation phase. Service outcomes and performance indicators will apply to all children and young people with disabilities and / or complex health needs across all educational settings. The "Integrated Working Guidance -Threshold of Need & Intervention" addresses the needs of disabled children. Draft protocols for staff to clarify lead professional and key worker roles with disabled children, using a team around the child approach are being developed. An inter-agency children's learning disability behaviour panel has been piloted as an effective model of early intervention and support.
- A range of short break family based schemes are in place to ensure flexibility. A fees and allowances scheme has been introduced. A small fee paid carers' scheme is in place for children with more challenging behaviours and complex health needs, supported by adapted houses. The numbers of children waiting for a service has reduced from 40 to 4. The District was short listed to become a pathfinder Authority for short breaks through "Aiming High for Disabled Children" a second stage application has been submitted.
- As a result of changes to Inland Revenue requirements the sitting scheme has been developed so that sitters are now employees of the Council funded through additional resources. This initially led to a number of sitters to withdraw, it is anticipated that new sitters, and particularly from South Asian communities, will soon come forward.
- The tPCT is committed to providing safe care as close to home as possible for children and young people with LDD and are working to develop and commission this provision.



## Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities Investigation

### How effective is transition into adult services, into Education, Employment and Training, including work-based learning? Obtain Children and Young People's views.

Effective transitions to adult services are key to ensuring that young people with learning difficulties and disabilities are fully prepared and provided with the appropriate packages of support as they move into adulthood. Young people with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities have been identified as a group with traditionally high NEET within the Bradford District, reflecting the national picture. The numbers of LDD moving on into learning from Year 11 have increased year on year but not as quickly at the whole Year 11 cohort.

- An LSC funded study looked at the factors underpinning the success rates of LDD young people remaining engaged in EET destinations. This informed the LSC Pathfinder project, the aim of which is to improve transition for this group through better collaborative working. This project is in the early stages, but includes the formation of collaborative structures and the commissioning of small scale action research which aims to offer practical models of working that improve transition for LDD learners. This project has an event "Better Transitions" planned for January 08.
- All young people in Bradford with LDD have a named PA who works with them, and who records and tracks their progress to transition on the CORE+(CCIS) data base. These PAs work in all Bradford schools, colleges, work based learning providers and from the Connexions Centres in Bradford and Keighley as well as from a range of community and youth centres. The PAs work with a number of alternative education providers, as well as with post 16 opportunities, building many links to help support a young person in transition.
- Careers Bradford's Special Needs and Vulnerable Young People's Team regularly consult with young people using a variety of mechanisms.
- Children's Social Care has protocols in place with adult services. As a result, all young people in receipt of social care services will have a transitional assessment and plan in place prior to their 18th birthday, and a dedicated Independent Reviewing Officer is in place to further support this work.
- A district-wide transition group has been instrumental in drawing up guidance to schools, advice to parents and a Transition Plan format for all pupils with statements in Years 9 and above via a collaborative partnership across mainstream and special schools. FE colleges, work-based learning providers, the PCT, the LSC and the Local Authority.
- A further pilot project in Bolling Special School is developing young disabled people's abilities to advocate for themselves, using a model of person-centred planning. This work is being expanded into a second Special and Mainstream School.
- Transition Health Clinics ensure that parents and the young person have information about adult services and Health surveillance is undertaken at the Paediatrics final clinic appointment for each young person. A priority area for development is to review and improve transition planning between primary and secondary with health care services.

