



Better together for Children...



Walsall Council

JULY 2014

Children's Services – Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Changes for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities from September 2014

Walsall prepare for changes as outlined in the Children & Families Bill

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Welcome to our 4th newsletter giving you updates about our preparations for the changes to services for Children & Young People with special educational needs.

Following successful training events in June we now have 200 staff across Education, Health and Social Care who have completed training. We will be running further training events in October and an ongoing SEN training programme will be developed.

We will be offering events for school SENCo's in the Autumn Term to discuss completing the Family Conversation included in the new single assessment request. There will also be regular SENCo Forums and a course for new SENCo's.

We will be updating parents/carers at the Parent/Carer Forum on 9 October 2014



Website Update

A group of parents joined us at the EDC in June to give their ideas on how they felt our website should look. After looking at a number of other authority websites, ideas were gathered in order to take this forward to improve the way that we display information.

We are currently looking at the option of joining up with the Adult services website, this will be extremely beneficial for children going through transition as all information will be based in one area.

When the website is up and running, we will be asking for your comments and feedback.

Walsall Council Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust
 Children's Services
 Education Health and Care Plan (0-25 years)
 Date of Plan
 This plan belongs to
 I prefer to be called:
 My date of birth is:
 MY PLAN
 Health, Family & Relationships, Community, Education & Training, Social Care, Independent Living Skills, Travel Skills, Employment

My child has a statement – what will happen at the next annual review?

If your child has a Statement of Special Educational needs it will be converting to an Education Health and Care Plan. The government has given Local Authorities 3 years to complete these conversions.

The SEN Team has started to work with schools to detail how this will be done. The school will inform you if the next Annual Review will be a conversion review or not. They will be starting with the special schools.

If it is to be converted the school will appoint a key worker to help gather any extra information that was not known at the time the statement was written that may be required for the new plan

You will then attend the annual review to see the new plan layout and the information contained in the plan. There will be a discussion about the progress your child has made from the last annual review and targets that need to be set for him/her to work towards over the next year.

It is important that your views are heard and included, so it is important you and your child attend the review.

If you are not told there will be a conversion review, please do not be concerned. There will continue to be an annual review of the statement. We have 1400 statements to convert over the 3 year period.

Local Offer update.....



All Services are currently compiling their draft Local Offer

We are currently looking through the Local Offers that have been produced for some services. Over the summer holiday these will be placed on the Family Information Services website.

- Keep a look out for these draft Local Offers and let us have your comments. If you feel that something is missing from the service local offer please let us know
- Local Offers should be clear, comprehensive, transparent, engaging and have accessible information about support and opportunities available for children and young people and their families

Local offers will be added/updated as they become available.

A working group has been set up to Develop the Local Offer for SEND who will be making sure that information supplied meets statutory requirements, will make sure parents are consulted on the draft local offers and will publish feedback in light of changes being made.

Parent Consultation Feedback

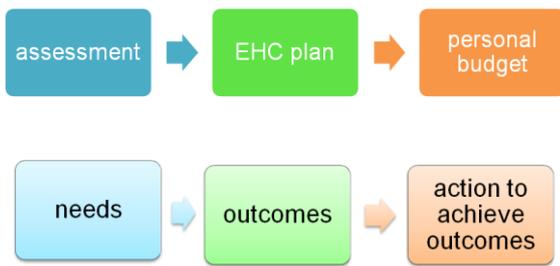
 "You Said"	 "We will"
Parents want more focus on helping Children/Young People become independent.	We are working on developing universal services to include children with SEN and disabilities which will help independence. In addition where children have an EHC plan or SW assessment ways in which independence can be promoted should be planned for in line with the child's age and development.
Parents stated they needed overnight accommodation on site in hospitals so they can stay with their child.	All parents can be resident on the Children's ward, there are beds available to sleep next to your child.
Parents stated that there was a need for staff in schools and other services like the Police/Hospitals to have specialist knowledge and skills.	A training programme for the A&E department was implemented to increase awareness of Autism and Makaton. Training is available to all health employees on request. It is recognised that further training is needed for all services that work with children who do not have specialist knowledge in Special educational needs.

Children & Families Bill Myths

There is a large amount of speculation and myths around the SEN reforms. Below are some of the speculations that are **NOT TRUE**.

- 1. Myth – Fewer children and young people will get an Education, Health and Care plan than get a statement of special educational needs** – The legal criteria for an Education, Health and Care plan will be the same as the current criteria for a statement. If a child currently has a Statement of SEN, unless there is evidence that their needs have changed, they should be entitled to an EHC plan.
- 2. Myth – After a child turns 16 a parent CANNOT be involved in decisions about their child's support** – Young people can continue to have their parents involved as much as they want. The difference is, when a person with an Education, Health and Care plan turns 16 years old, they have the final say (subject to a young person's mental capacity). A parent will not automatically be involved in the process. E.g. the right of appeal to challenge an LA's decision to the SEND Tribunal will be the young person's no longer the parents.
- 3. Myth – All parents and young people with a plan will be able to access direct payments.** – All parents and young people will be able to request a personal budget where an EHC plan is in place. A personal budget is an amount identified by the local authority as being available to secure particular provision that is specified, or proposed to be specified, in the EHC plan. Once identified parents and young people can then request that some or all aspects of the personal budget be converted into a direct payment, but the local authority, and the education provider where relevant, must agree to this and have significant discretion about what they agree to.
- 4. Myth – All young people who have the new Education, Health and Care plans in school will have a plan until they are 25** – An Education, Health and Care plan will continue only for young people who choose to stay in education or training. For most young people this will be to go to further education (college), or to get an apprenticeship.
- 5. Myth - My child's statement will end on 1st September 2014** – from September 2014 there will be a transitional period (up to 3 years) during which statements can be transferred into EHC plans. A statement will remain valid until an EHC plan has been developed, or is agreed to be no longer necessary.

Personal Budget update



Note: a personal budget MUST be linked to actions in the EHCP My Plan

Eligibility – who can have a personal budget? A child or young person with an EHCP (My Plan)

- They are always linked to assessment (they are not intended for everyone with special educational need or disability (SEND))
- They are always linked to an agreed outcome for the child/young person
- To achieve the outcome, we need to do something different or additional to what we usually do (there is an exceptional/additional need that we have all agreed we need to address)

Communication Plan

A communication plan has been developed across Education, Health & Social Care. The communication plan describes how we will communicate with and involve parents, children and young people, schools, social workers, health professionals and other key stakeholders about the continued development, implementation and delivery of the SEND multi-agency strategy.

Communication Objectives –

We aim to ensure that:

- All work plans and reports are delivered on time
- All information and feedback (you said, we will) is communicated when information becomes available in a clear and prompt way and at regular intervals
- Cross cutting information has shared general elements and is consistent in form, standards and frequency
- Communication always invites a response from stakeholders and responses are always summarised and fed back to all stakeholders
- At the end of the project all stakeholders have a good understanding of what has been agreed and what will happen next
- All stakeholders feel they are being engaged with in an honest and meaningful way
- All external communications are co-ordinated to maximise accurate, fair and balanced media coverage

We hope the information provided in our newsletters is useful to you, however if you still have a question that you do not have the answer to please:-

e-mail senconsultations@edu.walsall.gov.uk

Our next newsletter will be sent out in September 2014 when the changes will be in place. We are keen to learn how the new process is for parents. If your child therefore receives an Education, Health & Care Plan in September, or your child's statement is converted to an EHCP please let us know how the process was for you.