



Better together for Children...



Walsall Council

January 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

Inside This Issue

1. Children & Families Bill 2013
2. Working in partnership to make a difference for children in Walsall
3. What have we done so far
4. Plans for January – March 2014
5. What is an Education Health & Care Plan
6. The Local Offer
7. Draft 0-25 SEN Code of Practice
8. Having a voice
9. SEND on You Tube

The Children & Families Bill 2013 aims to: Improve outcomes for all vulnerable children/ young people and their families; develop joint multi-agency responsibility and working; give parents/carers more choice and control and ensure flexible local approach to identifying and meeting needs.

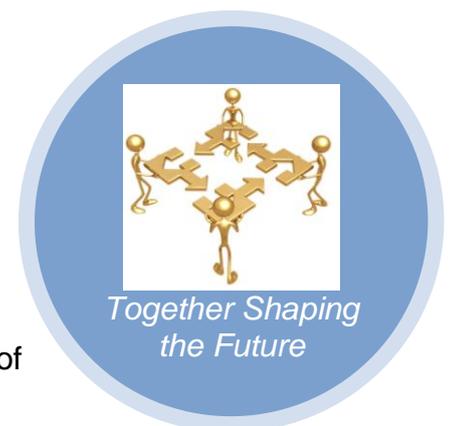
View the [Children and Families Bill](#)

Working in Partnership to make a difference for children in Walsall

Walsall will develop a multi-agency strategy to deliver:- single assessment, a single plan (education, health and care – EHCP) for children who need it; personal budgets linked to single plans; improved parent/carer engagement; synergy with developments in the New Relationship with Schools and other early help or specialist services.

In 2013 key areas of work were identified:-

1. Develop a multi-agency joint strategy for SEND
2. Development of a draft local offer 0-25
3. Development of a single EHCP and a single assessment
4. Development of engagement across all these strands of work (of parents and of young people themselves) and development of 'engagement' materials
5. Development of a team around the schools model of working
6. Review of Local Authority Special Educational Needs/Inclusion Services
7. Review of schools provision
8. To ensure links with other service areas and other pieces of work in all we do, so that children and families receive a better service and children achieve better outcomes



From May – July 2013 four Task and Finish Groups undertook this work and we now have an SEN Strategic Working Group made up of members from across all agencies who will take this work forward.

What have we done so far?

Produced a vision statement for Joint Policy and Strategy for SEND aged 0-25 (2013-2018)

Parents have developed a Participation Charter and we will implement this over the next twelve months

Produced a draft single education, health and care plan (EHCP) ready to be piloted. We are currently collating feedback in order to revise.

We are developing a multi-agency single assessment model (by March 2014) that will lead to the EHCP

Identified the key features of the Team Around the Schools approach and will document the operational steps: roles, responsibilities and protocols during a trial period September to December with Darlston and one other school or Cluster.

A Walsall Workshop on 'whole life planning' was held on 17 December to stimulate thinking amongst the wider group of stakeholders

Plans for January – March 2014

Further work on engaging stakeholders, particularly parents/carers. The different parent engagement groups will merge.

Produce a draft multi-agency SEND policy and strategic plan 0-25 to go to Partnership Boards.

To trial the single plan with 3 children and young people

Map out the process for an integrated, single assessment process

We will develop the option of personal budgets for those who are eligible.

We will review SEN services to ensure they are ready for the reforms, appropriate to our statutory duties and offer best value

We will review provision to ensure a match to needs and sufficient places; addressing any gaps we find.

To develop Local Offers and commission a parent group to review and evaluate

What is an Education Health and Care Plan

Parents nationally have said that the statutory assessment process takes too long and that getting a statement of special educational needs feels like a fight. It is generally agreed that the whole process is too bureaucratic and focused on resources rather than the child. The government's solution has been to develop a multi-agency plan that is child-centred and quicker to produce. This will replace the current Statement of Special Educational Needs from September 2014.

The Education, Health and Care Plan will describe what outcomes we all want for your child/young person, what support is needed to achieve these outcomes, who will provide the support and when the support will happen. For children and young people who meet the criteria for a statutory assessment of SEN the Education, Health and Care Plan will also include all of the information which is currently held within the statement. The Education, Health and Care Plan will have the same legal status as a statement of SEN.

If your child has an Education Health and Care Plan, there could be opportunities for you to have more choice and control about what support services your child receives through Personal Budgets.



A personal budget must be used for something additional that is needed so that the child will achieve the outcome identified in the plan.

Most children and young people will however have their needs met through the local offer (this is what they receive from the services they use).

The Local Offer

The purpose of the local offer is to enable parents and young people to see more clearly what services are available in their area and how to access them. The offer will include provision from birth to 25, across education, health and social care and should be developed in conjunction with children and young people, parents and carers, and local services, including schools, colleges, health and social care agencies.



All Services are currently compiling their draft Local Offer

In November 2013 we held four parent/carer consultation workshops to gather views about the local offer of services here in Walsall.

We invited a sample of parents from our database to attend one of these workshops held at Manor Farm Community Centre, Darlaston Town Hall, Alumwell Children's Centre during the daytime and The Crossing at St Pauls during the evening.

- We asked parents what were their priorities
- What are services like for you?
- what's tops, what's pants and any bright ideas they had
- We asked where would you look for the information on the Local Offer
- What should be in the Local Offer?

Feedback from these sessions along with sessions held by Health, Schools and Adult services are currently being collated and we will report their views in our next newsletter in March 2014.

All services are currently compiling their draft Local Offer, these will be collated and we will shortly commission a parent group to review existing service offers and evaluate the content.

Schools' Local Offer – SENCo's have currently received training on producing a school local offer. The school offer must say:-

- How SEN is identified, assessed and provided for
- How the school evaluates its effectiveness and evaluates pupil progress
- Name and contact details of the SENCo
- Information about the expertise and training of staff and how specialist expertise will be secured

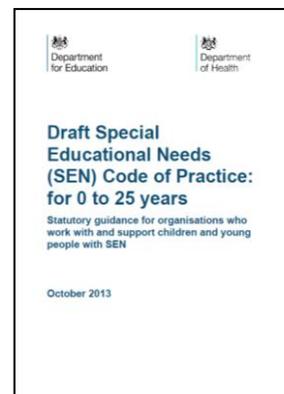
We are in the process of putting together a frequently asked questions leaflet to give your more information on the local offer, Education, Health and Care Plan and personal budgets.

Draft 0-25 SEN Code of Practice

The government has released a draft version of both the 0-25 Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice and regulations for consultation. These set out the detail of the proposed new SEN legal framework within the Children and Families Bill that is currently in Parliament.

The draft documents contain sections on:

- Appeals
- Assessment and plans
- A children's appeal pilot
- Approval of Independent Educational Institutions, Independent Schools and Special Post-16 Institutions
- The Local Offer
- Mediation
- Personal budgets
- Children remaining in special schools not in receipt of a plan
- SEN information
- SENCO regulations



There is also a document covering the transition to education, health and care plans and the local offer from the current system of statements.

The consultation ran from 4 October 2013 to 9 December 2013. Public feedback is currently being analysed and information will appear soon.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/special-educational-needs-sen-code-of-practice-and-regulations>



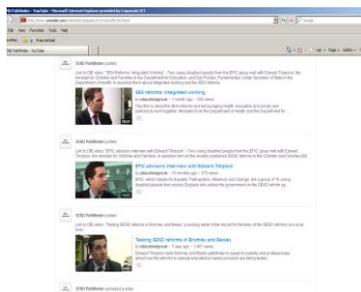
Comments are invited from parents/carers, agencies on any of the work done or currently being undertaken.

We have a number of parents/carers who have expressed an interest in working with us to review and implement changes, if you would like to take part please contact us.

Help us improve our information and communication. Can you find the information you need about our services? Please let us know where you look and where you would like to find updates on future developments.

Please send your comments to:- senconsultations@edu.walsall.gov.uk

SEND on You Tube



A new SEND Pathfinder YouTube channel has been created. This channel seeks to compile and link to relevant videos from across the SEND reforms and, in particular the SEND Pathfinder areas.

[SEND Pathfinder - YouTube](#)

Look out for our next Update in March 2014