

**EDUCATION SEND GROUP
REPORT TO FORUM
FOR PRESENTATION
AT FORUM ON 7 October 2020**

Date of Virtual meeting: 16 September 2020 - Brief Summary of Items Discussed

Louise Minter and Antoinette Fisher were elected as Chair and Vice Chair for a further term.

- **Matters' Arising** – A number of outstanding items were discussed, including training for school staff to respond to violent incidents; support for very young children, possibly through a 'nurture' approach; the legal situation around presumption for mainstream as opposed to specialist education or EHE; infant schools' need to have up to date ASQ information from Health and SAS waiting times, which have fallen extremely behind due to Covid restrictions on carrying out assessments. These items will be kept under review until resolved.
- **Solihull Equipment Policy (Paula Thompson)** – PT sought schools' sign-off to a Policy drawn up by the LA. However, there were a number of queries around ownership, insurance and storage and PT agreed to take some answers back to SSSAB.
- **School Place Planning for HN (Ann Pearson)** – A range of additional provision is being developed for opening over the next three years, including secondary SEMH intervention at Tudor Grange, expansion of places at Reynolds Cross, an ASD ARP at Mill Lodge, two SEMH ARPs in north Solihull and a further SEMH provision and special school expansion are in focus. Forward Education Trust has been appointed to run the ASD free school which will be located in a new build on the Bosworth Wood site.
- **Assistant Director Update (Tim Browne)** – TB talked through his findings of Solihull's current education offering and his vision for the future. Improvement plans include focusing on putting young people and families at the heart of everything, removing operational barriers to improve performance and putting key strategies in place against which success can be measured. The HN Recovery Plan has been reshaped, with the addition of a Strand to resolve the backlog of Annual Reviews and the HT Reference Group will be reconvened shortly to ensure schools are a key part of the consultation process. Focus must also be given to improving Ofsted judgements, addressing the increase in exclusions, EHE and EHCPs and improve outcomes at Early Years and Post-16. Members welcomed TB's vision and looked forward to working together to bring it to fruition.
- **SISS Update (Paula Thompson)** – The team's current emphasis is on supporting transition and the return of children to schools, with additional capacity to support children struggling with anxiety and more challenging behaviours.
- **Education Psychology Update (Dr Halit Hulusi)** – A range of support measures have been implemented during the Covid period, including each school having a non-traded named EP (March-August), a family phone line, which will continue indefinitely, critical incidence support and work with Solar around bereavement and school return. 64% of schools have already committed to buying the traded service, with capacity to increase this further. The service has secured funding from the Youth Endowment Fund to target youth offending behaviour. Work is ongoing to get EPs into early years for early intervention.
- **START Team Update (Paul Crulley)** – A number of difficulties continue to hamper the team's compliance with the 20-week EHCP assessment process time. These include the increasing number of applications from schools and parents which have not adhered to the graduated approach; the poor quality of some applications and the number of schools saying they cannot meet need. PT and HH will support a drive to ensure the graduated approach is followed and members called for schools that say they cannot meet need to be challenged. A process to improve the Annual Review programme is being implemented and this will form a key Strand of the HN Recovery Plan.

Full minutes of the meeting can be requested from Ali McWilliam amcwilliam@solihull.gov.uk

LM/AMc
24.9.20