

**Minutes of the Education SEND Group Meeting held
9.30am Thursday 1st December 2022 MS Teams**

Member Category	Member Name	Institution	Attended (Y/N/ Apols)
Primary Heads/SENCOs (5)	VACANCY		-
Primary Heads/SENCOs (5)	Jacque Nicholls	Dickens Heath	Y
Primary Heads/SENCOs (5)	Emily Hume	Damson Wood	Y
Primary Heads/SENCOs (5)	Fiona Edwards	Windy Arbor	N
Primary Heads/SENCOs (5)	Nicole Fowles	Coleshill Heath	Y
Primary Heads/SENCOs (5)	VACANCY		-
Secondary Heads/SENCOs (5)	Nick Halligan	Park Hall	Apologies
Secondary Heads/SENCOs (5)	VACANCY		-
Secondary Heads/SENCOs (5)	Tom Beveridge	Alderbrook	Y
Secondary Heads/SENCOs (5)	Kerry Thompson-Moore	Alderbrook	Apologies
Secondary Heads/SENCOs (5)	Mark Hooper	Arden	Y
Secondary Heads/SENCOs (5)	VACANCY		-
Special School Head (1)	Donna Luck	Merstone School	N
Special Academy Head (1)	Trevor Scott	Castlewood School	Y
Primary Governor (1)	Lynda Mackay	Knowle Primary Academy	Y
Secondary Governor (1)	Charlotte Shadbolt	Heart of England	N
Special School Governor (1)	Alison McWilliam	Merstone School	Y
Teaching School Rep (1)	Andy Simms	Hazel Oak School	N
PVI Rep (1)	Lisa Whitehouse	Tender Years Nursery	Apologies
College Reps (3)	Jan Gormley	QA College (Assistant Principal)	Apologies
College Reps (3)	Rosie Herbert	Hereward College	N
College Reps (3)	VACANCY		-
SENDIAS Rep (1)	Hazel Clarke	SENDIAS	Y
Parent Carer Voice (1)	Steph Freeman (SFr)	Parent Carer Voice	Y
Parent Carer Voice (1)	Heather Delaney	Parent Carer Voice	N
Chair of SSSAB	Louise Minter	Streetsbrook Nursery & Infant	Apologies
Chair of Forum	Antoinette Fisher	Dorridge Primary	Y
Chair of Finance WG	David Lewis	TU Representative	Y

Officers (attend as required)

AD Inclusion and Additional Needs	Tim Browne	LA	N
Head of 0-25 SEND Service	Charlotte Jones	LA	Y
START Manager	Amanda Hana	LA	Y
Team Manager SISS	Paula Thompson	LA	Y
Principal Education Psychologist	Jane Sowter	LA	Y
Operations Manager, 0-25 SEND Service	Deborah Carpenter	LA	N
Head of Inclusion Service	Michele Sadler	LA	Y
Team Leader School Place Planning	Ann Pearson	LA	Y
Early Years Service	Lisa Morris	LA	Apologies
Head of Commissioning for Learning	Steve Fenton (SF)	LA	Y
Accountant (Children's Services)	Ian Murray	LA	N
Specialist Assessment Service Manager	Claire Howell	Health Representative	Apologies
Commissioning Manager	Jamie Rynberk	LA	Y

Item		Action
1	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>Apologies recorded in the membership table above.</p>	AF
2	<p>Review Previous Minutes (28.09.22) & Outstanding Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous minutes were stated as accurate. • AF referred to concerns around how full the ARP's are and the SEMH provision in the North, AF asked if this has been concluded as it didn't read like it in the previous minutes? • CJ shared that in the Head Teacher Partnership meeting, figures were presented from all of the ARP's in terms of their capacity and these will be shared with everybody with the partnership slide deck. • CJ is currently working on the process of gaining evidence and information around the ARP's. They will be looking at their annual reports and internal processes and will work on pulling all the information together. • CJ - Jamie Rynberk is a new specialist commissioner who will be pulling this information together. He will introduce himself later in the meeting. • AF – The SEND Notional Budget was brought to Forum earlier in the week. SF stated that he will model it and bring it back to Finance Group and EdSEND in the new year. • AF asked CJ for an update on the High Needs Task and Finish Group. • CJ shared that this was part of the Headteacher Partnership meeting where actions being taken were presented to the Headteacher Reference Group. • CJ has asked collaboratives to look at the proposals and look at where any gaps are. It is a continuing conversation but there is a clear direction from the LA in terms of the actions which will be put in place. CJ will ensure the presentation is circulated to EdSEND members. • AF asked LM to bring her question from the SGA as it fits in with what CJ spoke about. • LM explained that the SGA is the Solihull Governors Association which gives non chair governors chance to find out what is happening. One governor shared the following message – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘They have described the alarming increases in cases which is impacting the system, is there any part of the health service looking at why there is this increase COVID apart?’ ‘We know changes in the atmosphere have impacted on the increase in the number of children in schools with inhalers, is anyone studying this? The reasons for the rise in autism and complex needs?’ ‘Can we please put money in at the early years stage, where you can help stem the escalation of problems with smaller children before they turn adolescent and can be a danger to others and themselves?’ • LM asks if there is any research being done that will help us from a scientific point of view? LM asks for some advice or asks if anyone knows where to take this? 	<p>AF</p> <p>CJ</p> <p>LM</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CJ asks LM to send the governor message to her so she can provide a formal health response. • CJ states that there is lots of national research on-going around the rise in anxiety and behaviour issues, but nothing has been published yet. • CJ attended a meeting with health colleagues who are looking into what they could be doing in terms of early help and integration. • CJ will talk to health colleagues about how they can ensure the wider groups are aware of what is happening across the system. 	
3	<p>EHCP Team Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing – currently recruiting for a Case Worker and two Case Officers for maternity leave cover. • Currently in transition phase and working on transition reviews – • Nursery 2 to Reception • Infants to Junior School • Year 6 to Secondary School • Schools were asked to submit transition review paperwork before October half term. There are around 70 annual reviews which have not been received back – these are getting chased. • Statutory deadline of February 15th to finalise transition plans naming schools. • Schools/Colleges have been asked to submit transition annual reviews for Year 11 and Year 13 pupils by Christmas, so they can work towards the 31st of March deadline. • Drop-in sessions have been arranged for parents and schools. This will be in the SEND newsletter. • Parent drop-in sessions will be held on January 20th 10am-1pm and March 20th, 1pm-4pm at the Loft in Chelmsley Wood. • Social Care and Education Psychology will also be attendance, and AH has asked Health if they would like to also attend. • School drop-in sessions will be held on March 22nd from 2pm to 4pm. • Schools and parents are welcome to come and express any concerns or ask any queries face to face. • There has been an increase in parents contacting the team stating parts in Section F of their children’s EHCP’s aren’t being provided by schools. In addition, schools are telling parents they can’t provide some part in Section F. • AH states how EHCP’s are a legally binding document, therefore what is in Section F must be provided by schools. AH asks that if schools are having trouble providing or implementing parts in Section F, they contact the EHCP team not the parents first. This is because parents can take legal action against the LA and schools and that process has a very tight turnaround which is more difficult if issues aren’t already known and understood. • Consultations will start being sent to schools for next phase placements. AH reiterates that schools are responding to Section F and deciding if they can deliver what is in the EHCP. • Section A is for parents to express their views and opinions, this is not the section schools will be providing a response to. 	AH

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AH asked that consults are returned within 15 days to ensure the EHCP team are meeting their legal deadlines. This timeframe still applies during the Christmas holidays, which may be a challenge for schools. • ARP's and Special schools will also be receiving consults where they will respond if they can or cannot meet needs. • AH states that if these settings can meet the needs of more children than they have space for, then there will be an allocation meeting where they decide what children will be allocated those spaces. • Questions – • TB expressed the pressure schools are feeling due to the volume of consults they are receiving. TB shared that he is receiving 10 consults from Birmingham in one day, which puts great pressure on his SENCo to get them back within 15 days. • AH understands the pressure schools are under and asks that as far as possible schools prioritise Solihull children. 	
4	<p>High Needs Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule of Payments to Post-16 Colleges and Independent and Private Schools - • Numbers for college placements are largely stable year on year and the spend is commensurate with the previous two years. • The major placements are across Hereward and Solihull College and there are a small number very expensive placements including Glass House and Queen Alexander College (QAC). • Schedule of Out of Borough (OOB) payments – • The number of placements is static – running around 150 pupils. • New placements are running at 50 pupils, which is about a third turnover each year. • The average cost varies and is influenced by small numbers of pupils attending high-cost placements. • Running at around £6.6 million. • The average cost per place averages around £46,000. • Age profile – the infant phase continues to be small numbers, however there is a shift from secondary age and a rise in Post 16. • HNB Monitoring Statement - • Forecast this year – on budget. The budgets this year have been re-worked to align them with historic spend. • The major variances include - £900,000 on alternative provision. This relates to restructuring costs and the move of Summerfield to the Daylesford Site conversion to an academy. • Independent Schools show a variation of £2 million. SF stated that one of the goals in the commissioning strategy is to create in borough provision to reduce the spend on out borough. • The opening of the new autism school should have an impact on the number of OOB placements. • Top-up funding for Solihull schools - £620,000 increase. • Heading towards a £3.5 million overspend against the grant. This will mean a cumulative £16.5 million overspend. • Spend Position from the current forecast to 2019/2020 – • Other SEN - £800,000 difference which is a 75% budget change – this includes funding and arrangements for pupils who have no provision. 	SF

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% increase - £1.7 million increase in alternative provision. • £1 million pound investment in AP over the last 3 years. • Post 16 – up by a £1 million in 3 years. • Top-up funding for OOB schools – half a million. Which is a 33% increase. • Top-up funding for Solihull schools – 50% increase at £3.5 million. • Special School purchase places – £1.1 million which is a 20% variation over 3 years. • Over the last 3 years there has been an increase of spend by £6 million, with only a £4 million increase by the government. <p>• Questions –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AF asks SF when the opening date is for Summerfield is on the Daylesford site. SF confirmed this it is due to open in January 2023. • NF referred to the increase in school top-up funding. NF asked SF if there is any correlation in the last 12 months as the EHCP service has strengthened? NF comments on the increase of top-up funding she has identified in school. • SF replied stating this is something he can look into, unlikely to be about the rate of issuing plans, probably due to a combination of increased number of plans and the assigned banding level of the plans. 	
5	<p>Additional Needs Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CJ states that the draft report of the Additional Needs Strategy first year was due to be shared, however this has been delayed until the new year as the parent carer and child and young person survey has been extended to the 10th of December. • There is a parent, carer and children and young people survey out. There have been 100 responses from parents and carers and 90 responses from children. • CJ shares that they do not feel as though they have reached enough parents and carers to make a judgement call. CJ is hoping to receive a greater representation from parents and children. • CJ asked if schools could share this with their parents and children. • CJ recognises the need for balance between the work that has been done across education, health, and social care in terms of the improvements, whilst also recognising that there are new challenges including the increase in the level of need and pressures on the system • CJ will write the annual report and have that ready to be shared for the new year. • The survey will be shared in headlines and in the SEND newsletter. <p>• Questions –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SFr will be offering support to parents who may require help filling out the survey due to additional needs or not having social media or access to the internet. • SFr shared that it has become apparent that parents are not aware of the Additional Need's Strategy and Solihull Parent Carer Voice and that this varies between schools. • SFr reiterated the importance of schools sharing this information with parents as this will support all the work the group are doing. 	CJ

6	<p>SEND Inspection Framework/Peer Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a paper attached to the agenda – ‘SEND LA Inspection Framework Paper Sept 22 – HWBB’. • CJ shared that there has been confirmation from CQC and Ofsted that the inspection framework is now finalised. This will start in the Spring of 2023. • The framework is in line with their consultation with very few amendments. • Solihull was inspected in first year of the initial inspection, so Solihull are expected to have a SEND Inspection sometime in 2023. • The change to the inspection framework includes a grading to each local area on how the needs of SEND children are being met. • This grading ranges from wide-spread failure, inconsistent practice, and good outcomes. • In addition to looking at SEND children, they will also be looking at children in AP’s. • Greater inspection focuses on the accountability and responsibility of health, education, and social care. The inspection team will include a social care inspector. • Inspection activity will be based around children and families and their experience and views on the LA, schools and health. • On the 17th and 18th January, a peer review team will come to Solihull and carry out a 2-day inspection readiness review. 	CJ
7	<p>Annual SISS Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SISS report was attached with the agenda. • The report informs the group on the work carried out last year and includes an evaluation. • SISS survey responses mainly came from inclusion managers, parents and SENCOs. • PT is pleased with the positive feedback for the Autism team. • The report includes feedback and areas to improve. • Reporting to parents has improved due this being carried out directly to parents not through schools. • SALT feedback wasn’t as good due to gaps in staffing; however, a new model of working is being embedded. • Within the report there is a report for the Virtual School work carried out and a report from Refresh which includes some case studies. • This year SISS have been commissioned by the Virtual Schools for LAC. • The High Needs Report has not been included in this report as it is a separate report. This will include some case studies. • Questions – • NF – When the extra commissioning was done for LAC with the Virtual Schools was it taken out the existing team? Or did they recruit to add additionality to create support for LAC? • PT confirmed it was additionality. 	PT
8	<p>Inclusion Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance – • There are currently 450 children with attendance which is 50% or less. • This number is fewer than last year. 	MS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are around 5500 children currently into this school year showing as persistently absent with attendance less than 90%. • 2/3 of those children either have SEN or are on free school meals. • The Inclusion team are working with schools to improve their tracking and monitoring of attendance. • 2 development work shops have been held this term and they will continue to take place over the rest of the academic year. • Working with SOLAR to develop sessions which focus on anxiety and mental health related issues which are affecting attendance. • MS asks the group to feedback if there is anything they need support within schools in terms of attendance. • Exclusions - • There have been 40 permanent exclusions this year so far. • Dramatic increase compared to last year which was 46 for the whole year. • Many of these exclusions are a result of challenging behaviour including violence to children and teachers. • The Saturn provision for permanently excluded children is currently full and has a waiting list, but there is capacity at Solihull Academy on the main site. • EHE – • Identified 40 children who are EHE but haven't received much education over the last few years. • Inclusion are working with families to get those children back into education. • There are around 300 children who are EHE this year. • Questions – • EH - Thanked MS as her school has formed a good relationship with their Inclusion team member. • EH states that the High Needs Team and the referral process is helpful for exclusions. • EH shared that the High Needs Team have said no due to struggling with capacity and asked if there could be some more capacity put into the team? • EH asked if the Violence Reduction Training was put into action in schools? • CJ stated she would be happy to go away and look into the Violence training. • SFr asked what can they do to support schools before it gets to exclusion stage? • JN suggested carrying out some case study work looking at previous children and experiences which may help support schools learning and identify solutions. • MS agreed that looking at the journey of children which lead to exclusions would be valuable. • PT states that capacity in the High Needs Teams is an issue and they must prioritise the work they are doing which means some cases have to wait. • PT shared that they are recruiting for new positions within the team. • MS to meet with JN, EH, PT, TB, and MH to look at case studies in the new year. • HC shares that SENDIAS would also be happy to be involved in the work around exclusions. 	<p style="text-align: right;">CJ</p> <p style="text-align: right;">MS</p>
9	<p>Delivering Better Value (DBV)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solihull are the second highest group of 55 LAs with the level of overspend. • The DBV programme questions how we can continue to meet the needs of children financially sustainable way going forward. 	CJ

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lot of work taking place with the DBV team, this has included case study sessions looking at where improvements can be made and how it can be addressed. • There will be surveys and questions going out to schools to look at these challenges. • In January the council will be given the opportunity to bid up to £1 million funding to come up with projects, programmes, or provision to try to reduce the high needs deficit. • CJ referred to the slides in the Module 1 Output presentation attached with the agenda. • The slides identify the average costs and total expenditure forecast looking at the number of children with EHCP's and their provisions. • Slide 6 identifies that by 2025 the cumulative deficit will be £45.8 million pounds, which is higher than the incoming budget received for the year. • CJ states we are seeing a general increase in EHCP numbers across the age range and a general increase in EHCP costs. • Questions – • AF – When will you know when the BID has been successful? • CJ – The BID will be put in in January and the Delivery Better Values team is working with Solihull to create the business case with hope the BID will be successful by the new financial year. • JN – What profile of child are we targeting for The Heights? • CJ – The Heights will be for children with a diagnosis of autism, who can assess differentiated curriculum and have associated mental health issues (withdrawal or behaviour). • CJ is having conversations with The Heights SEND lead ensuring the balance of the cohort is suitable. • TB shared concerns regarding the profile of children described for The Height being like the children currently in the ARP's. • CJ confirmed that ARP's will be consulted with and if they can meet needs, then children will be placed there first. If ARPs cannot meet needs, then they will look at The Heights and the independent sector – as this is where the benefit of The Heights is expected to be seen. 	
10	<p>SENDIAS Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENDIAS is a very small team with HC and three part-time staff. They are currently recruiting due to staff leaving. • Since the 1st of September SENDIAS have dealt with 460 enquiries, which has quadrupled in comparison to the same period in 2016. • Since September they have had 142 cases. • Due to capacity 4 cases went to a solicitor or an independent advocate and 7 cases had to close as there was no capacity for key meetings. • 35 of the initial enquiries should've converted to cases since the 1st of September, however there has been no capacity. • They have attended 3 out-reach events since September, 52 meetings with families. • The bulk of the tribunal work SENDIAS do is around no to assess, and content and placement appeals with EHCP's. • SENDIAS have their Christmas event on the 10th of December. 135 children are booked to see Santa. 	HC

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions – • SFr offered support for the Santa event. HC thanked SFr and said she was grateful for her help. 	
11	<p>Parent Carer Voice Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Figures for November – • Social media followers are 2871 • Membership of 697 – mainly people who don't access social media • 1798 direct contacts with families • Facebook media reach of 37064 • Coffee mornings have taken place and evening meetings have been held for those who can't make daytime meetings. • The SEND careers event was attended by 160 young people and families. • SFr shared that a key issue which has been pointed out is that there is not a team within Solihull which is based around English being an additional language. Schools would also appreciate support with this. • MHST teams are not doing what it was originally doing in terms of it being active and supportive. This is having a knock-on effect in schools. • Sfr stated that they have attended the ICB board to advocate about parents, families and young people and will be attending their ICB meeting in January. • A new support group has been funded and set up. These are specifically autism support groups for autistic adults and parents/carers. • The Healthy Parent Carer course starts in January. It is a 12-week course. 	SFr
12	<p>Inclusions Audit Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JN states that there has been lots of work around the inclusion audit tool. • 7 schools are piloting the audit tool to identify how useful and relevant it is, and whether it is appropriate to be sending out. • There is a deadline of the 14th of December to submit their audits back to Paula. • The audit tool includes - pupil data collection setting, a section on school culture, questions on quality provision and questions around leadership and management. • JN hopes the tool kit will be supportive and useful in helping schools analyse where they are and to identify key areas for development. • The tool pulls through key actions so at the end of it there is an action plan which schools can work from. 	JN & NF
13	<p>SAS Update –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CH Not Present for update 	CH
	<p>Introduction from Jamie Rynberk –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JR introduced himself to the group as Commissioning Manager. JR has 31 years' experience in schools, including mainstream, SEN and the FE sector. • His role will focus initially on the ARP's and the ARP provision, particularly with a focus on quality assurance. • JR has started putting together a range of documents to support everyone to ensure that quality assurance is robust. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JR will also be looking at Post 16 provision/transitions and would like to explore what their opportunity's currently look like. • JR will be visiting schools in Solihull. • Questions – • JN refers to quality assurance and asks JR if part of that process will include looking around and ensuring the appropriate children are placed in the provisions for what they are intended for? • JR responded stating that he would like to take a holistic view in terms of quality assurance but would like to visit and be pointed to where these issues are. 																
	<p>Dates of future meetings:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>EdSEND</td> <td>9.30am</td> <td>Monday</td> <td>06-Feb-23</td> <td>Teams</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EdSEND</td> <td>9.30am</td> <td>Thursday</td> <td>23-Mar-23</td> <td>Teams</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EdSEND</td> <td>9.30am</td> <td>Thursday</td> <td>06-Jul-23</td> <td>Teams</td> </tr> </table>	EdSEND	9.30am	Monday	06-Feb-23	Teams	EdSEND	9.30am	Thursday	23-Mar-23	Teams	EdSEND	9.30am	Thursday	06-Jul-23	Teams	AF
EdSEND	9.30am	Monday	06-Feb-23	Teams													
EdSEND	9.30am	Thursday	23-Mar-23	Teams													
EdSEND	9.30am	Thursday	06-Jul-23	Teams													