



Lancashire SEND Partnership

Working Together Strategy

2018- 2021



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The SEND Working Together Strategy

Lancashire SEND Partnership includes children, young people and families and values the importance of everyone working together to improve services and outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

This strategy recognises that following the SEND inspection in November 2017, Lancashire is on a journey to improve SEND services and build relationships with children and young people and their families. This strategy describes the journey and how communication, participation and co-production is key. This inclusive culture will be grown within the SEND Partnership and service providers over the next 3 years.

Communication and participation can make a real difference to children, young people and their families in shaping the future of services together as partners; breaking down barriers between organisations and building stronger networks and groups within the communities in which they live in.



Feedback from children and young people, parent/carers and partners have informed the development of this strategy.

(See Appendix 1)

Working Together – the legal bit!

Within Section 19 of the Children & Families Act 2014 it makes clear that Local Authorities must have regard to:

- the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and the child's parents;
- the importance of the child and his or her parent, or the young person, participating as fully as possible in decisions relating to the exercise of the function concerned;
- the importance of the child and his or her parent, or the young person, being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions;
- the need to support the child and his or her parent, or the young person, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help him or her achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes.

The Lancashire SEND Partnership will use these principles to underpin the work that we do with children, young people and their families.

The SEND Partnership Vision

The Lancashire SEND Partnership has a vision for the future.

Although there is a great deal of work to be done and we know we are not there yet, we have high aspirations and share a commitment to achieve change.

ONE Vision for the future

- We are passionate about planning for and meeting the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities;
- We work together, as equal partners, who understand and listen to each other;
- Our highly regarded services are child centred, accessible and responsive;
- Our children and young people are supported to achieve their potential and ambitions, as valued members of the community.

The SEND Partnership Values

We share these values as the basis of our work together to support children and young people.

Inclusion: Belonging and involvement

Integrity: Honesty, trust and fairness

Respect: Value, regard and reliability

When we use these words, we mean that they will guide the way we behave towards each other, so that we create a culture of understanding as the foundation for excellence.

Effective communication is key to embedding these values. Through engagement events with children and young people and parent/carers the SEND Partnership has defined the following promises.

The SEND Partnership Promises are to:

- Actively listen and respond to everyone's views.
- Be open, honest and clear in our communications with each other.
- Talk directly with each other and provide opportunities to talk privately.
- Plan meetings together.
- Explain what is happening and the next steps.
- Understand individual needs and how they affect people's lives.
- Understand better the challenges everyone faces and provide support.

Who is this strategy for?

This strategy is for everyone!

It outlines the SEND Partnership plans for communication and participation with children, young people and their families and how we do this between organisations that provide services, help and support including voluntary, community and faith sector partners and local businesses.

The co-production partners covered by this policy are those represented by the SEND Partnership Board and the agreed representatives of Lancashire's SEND parent carers, children and young people. It is important to have strong, inclusive, representative structures to support effective co-production work.

Sustainable, representative structures need to be in place to ensure that co-production is embedded and resourced in the future and this strategy supports this process.

We aspire for children, young people and parent carers to be fully involved. Influencing discussions and decisions, not just about their own individual support but also in strategic planning, decision-making and commissioning.

NB: Within this document "partners" refers to all public, voluntary, community and faith sector organisations and to parent/carers.

COMMUNICATION

How will we communicate together?

Communication is sharing of information by speaking, writing, or using some other medium. Effective communication is a two way process which involves how we send but also receive messages.

Good communication involves all of the following aspects:

- Listening
- Time
- Clear and concise
- Friendliness
- Confidence
- Empathy
- Feedback
- Open-Mindedness
- Respect

Everybody communicates in many ways. The SEND Partnership recognise that communication should be within safe confidential environments and acknowledge that families have busy, active and often challenging lives, therefore communication needs to rise to the challenge of modern life.

With this in mind it is important to communicate in various methods to provide opportunities for all to receive timely and relevant information and feedback on their experiences and views. We will do this through:

- Local Offer website
- FIND Newsletter
- Email groups
- Social media
- Face to face meetings
- Events & conferences
- Schools & Colleges
- Engagement events
- Any other future methods
- Parent/carer engagement and forums
- Children and young people's engagement

PARTICIPATION

Co-production Model



Best understanding of:

- a) My own needs
- b) My preferences
- c) My own resources
- d) My networks and community

Expertise in:

- a) Needs, causes and evidence
- b) Assessment or diagnosis
- c) Services and treatments
- d) Systems and entitlements

This participation model demonstrates how working together with partners we can improve the outcomes and lives of children and young people in Lancashire.

The Lancashire SEND Partnership needs to work co-productively in the here and now; we need to understand what is working well and use this to continually improve and progress.

The Lancashire SEND Partnership will work towards full co-production over the next 3 years at all levels:

- an individual level for each child, young person and their family in schools and colleges with health and social care partners
- at a management level to help shape and improve individual services delivered to children & young people with SEND
- at a strategic level to develop the direction of services and ensure the public pound is spent wisely

We will encourage and promote co-production with our partners, schools and colleges to deliver and plan for future services in a co-produced way.

How do we get there?

1. Communication model



The SEND Partnership has developed a model to manage communications across Lancashire. This model provides a two-way communication process through the Local Area Partnerships and greater accessibility to senior practitioners for children and young people and their families within their local areas. Parents will be able to provide feedback information into this Local Area Partnership through the local area parent/carer forums and groups but also through face to face engagement events run throughout the year.

There will be three SEND Local Area Partnerships that will work with children and young people and parent/carers to identify and address issues locally and where necessary escalate up to the Central SEND Partnership Team and ultimately the SEND Partnership Board. The Central SEND Partnership Team will provide support to the Local Area Partnerships and ensure learning is shared and consistency is maintained across Lancashire.

The SEND Local Area Partnership Team will be crucial in identifying local needs, gaps in services and work with voluntary, community and faith sector partners and local businesses to provide much needed support to children, young

people and their families with SEND in Lancashire. (See Appendix 2 for Terms of Reference).

2. Create spaces for change

We will work together to:

1. Create opportunities for providing good quality, simple information that everyone can use so that children and young people with SEND and their families are able to make decisions.
2. Support children, young people and their families to communicate their views in the way they want to, and to be involved in decisions about the way they want to do this.
3. Make sure there's good information about participation available and useful tools in place to support participation.
4. Create opportunities and supportive confidential spaces for people to share their views.
5. Celebrate and share success.
6. We will support practitioners and parent/carers to encourage children and young people to practise and develop decision-making skills.
7. Involving children, young people and their families in planning, designing and reviewing services so that services are designed with those who will use them.
8. Making sure we share information between services to inform good practice.
9. Provide feedback so that people can see what happens as a result of their participation; our feedback will be timely.
10. Ensure parent/carer and children and young people representation throughout the SEND Partnership.

APPENDIX 1

Children & Young People

Children and young people were asked for their views about how people have communicated with them. They gave examples of their good experiences of communication which they called “TOPS” and examples of bad experiences which they called “PANTS”.

TOPS	PANTS
Keep on time	Don't lie
Wanna be heard not just listened to	Don't twist a young person's words around to fit your own narrative
I want to be involved in all meetings about me	Don't make promises that might not happen
I would like time to talk to professionals and staff at hospitals	Don't talk to me in a condescending way
Talk directly to me	People saying my name wrong
Educate yourself more on a variety of disabilities to have a wider understanding for everyone	Finishing college before everyone else and getting longer off
Be more adaptable in the way you teach, not everyone learns the same way.	Promised to a football match (that didn't happen)
Explain to me what's going on and the next steps	Don't swear
Honesty	Bad support at school, teachers are evil
Don't treat us different	Job centre staff are hard to understand
Have a children's area	I got mocked by peers
People understand me more in college and I feel I get spoken to like an adult rather than a child like I was at school.	Some staff at school aren't helpful.
I had one to one support at mainstream school which really helped me....they told people if I was struggling to understand.	People don't seem to care about disabled people, particularly in work placements.
Staff at the youth club really listen to me and help me have a voice.	Teachers said I didn't listen but I felt they didn't listen to me or understand how to engage me.
Talking/sharing about my disability is good.	There are members of staff who make it difficult to understand (transition officers).
Some staff in school are helpful.	Bad changes kept happening such as larger classes with noisy students and hours of support being cut.
Always know you have someone to talk to if I'm worried.	

Always had a carer support through school that helped me to be confident.	
Great support at college.	
Meeting new people.	

Parent / Carer Experiences

When we asked parent/carers about their experiences of communication they told us about some of the problems and what would make it work better.

- Communication needs to be accurate, current, transparent and easy to understand
- Local Offer needs to be a one stop shop
- Need an appropriate response
- 2 way communication
- No jargon - endless acronyms
- Better signposting & ready information for parents
- Telephone, email and letters
- Parents need to feel valued, respected and listened to
- Good communication both pre and post diagnosis - not just leaflets
- Organisations need to learn from feedback - it may sound negative, but needs to be said - open and honest
- 5 minute call to "check in"
- Consistency in information
- Signposting
- Preparing us for meetings - what to expect, what it's for and who will be there
- Use a variety of communication methods - social media, podcasts, text, email
- Simple, accessible language, relevant
- Continuity - someone who knows your story
- Frontline staff need clear and consistent message for families across Health/Social education
- Information available and kept up to date
- 2/multi-way communication
- Don't know who to speak to in SEND, Don't get passed on to other people
- Feed back in both directions - meaningful communication.
- Co-ordinator/navigator of services

APPENDIX 2

SEND Local Area Partnership Team: Terms of Reference

Purpose

The purpose of the SEND Local Area Partnership Team is to:

- Network within their local areas – and proactively engage schools, sports centres, local councils, police etc
- Be visible, accessible and build relationships with local parent/carers
- Be visible, accessible and build relationships with local children and young people (CYP)
- Identify local needs.

Role

The role of the SEND Local Area Partnership Team is to:

- Act as a visible senior level Lancashire SEND Local Area Partnership Team to facilitate a two-way communication system from parent/carers and CYP within their local areas to the SEND Board and back again.
- Review feedback information from engagement events and via parent/carer or CYP forums, resolving issues at a local level wherever possible.
- Continuing with engagement events throughout their local area (North, South or East) with parent/carers and CYP.
- Participate in quality audits of education, health & care plans (EHCP)

Reporting structure

The group will report directly to the SEND Central Partnership Team and SEND Board. The SEND Central Partnership Team will provide support to the local teams and also disseminate learning and maintain consistency across Lancashire.

Membership

Membership Category	Minimum Requirements	Name of Representative
Young Person Rep	1	
Parent/Carer Rep	1	
Designated Clinical Officer	1	
SEND Locality Manager	1	
Social care rep	1	
Special School rep	1	
Child & Family Wellbeing Service rep	1	

Meeting Administrator:

PA/Admin to the Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) for each locality.

Tenure of Membership

To be reviewed after one year.

Frequency of meeting

The group will meet on a monthly basis.

Attendance by Non-Members

Invitations may be extended to non-core members, where their input or advice supports the discussion taking place at the meeting.