

# PACC AGM & Autumn Conference 2017

'Developing SEND Provision  
in Shropshire'

## Participation Report



SHROPSHIRE **P**arent  
**A**nd  
**C**arer  
**C**ouncil

Charity No. 1150180

# **PACC's Aims and Objectives**

## **Our Aims**

To create a community of Shropshire parent carers

To provide information about issues that affect them

To provide opportunities for Shropshire parent carers to influence decisions that affect their families, and to contribute to developing services.

## **PACC AGM & Autumn Conference 2017 Developing SEND Provision in Shropshire 10th November**

The PACC Autumn Conference 2017 provided an opportunity for Shropshire parent carers to work in partnership with Shropshire Council to improve and develop local education provision for children and young people with SEND, following the provision of funding from Central Government for this work.

The conference opened with a presentation from Enable Supported Employment Services, looking at how young people with SEND can be effectively prepared for employment and other aspects of adult life. Julia Dean the Shropshire SEN Team Manager then provided an overview of the existing education provision for children and young people with SEND in Shropshire, along with details of the local SEND population. Finally Jonathan Wilding from FWL Associates, who has been contracted by Shropshire Council to develop their SEND Provision Strategy in partnership with families and SEND practitioners, presented some possible options around developing SEND provision in Shropshire.

The afternoon session was spent in discussion about what improvements or additions are needed to local SEND education provision to improve outcomes for young people with SEND. This included;

- Identifying gaps in SEND education provision locally
- Identifying what improvements are needed to existing SEND provision locally and where

## **PACC AGM & Autumn Conference 2017 'Developing SEND Provision in Shropshire'**

- 09.30am                   **Registration and refreshments**
- 10.00am                   **Welcome**
- 10.05am                   **PACC AGM**
- 10.45am                   **Tracey Newell - Senior Employment Officer, Enable**  
*Preparing Young people with SEND for Employment*
- 11.30am                   **Julia Dean - Service Manager SEND, Shropshire Council**  
*SEND Provision in Shropshire*  
**Jonathan Wilding - Consultant, FWL Associates**  
*Developing SEND Capacity and Provision in Shropshire*
- 12.30pm                   **Lunch**
- 13.00pm                   **Table top discussions;** *What improvements or additions are need to Local SEND education provision to improve outcomes for young people with SEND? This might include; Identifying gaps in SEND education provision locally and identifying what improvements are needed to existing SEND provision locally and where? The discussion will look at each educational stage; Pre-school 0-6, Primary, Secondary, Post 16. Everyone will be given a chance to contribute to discussions at each table – 15 minutes at each table*
- 14.00                       **Feedback**
- 14.15                       **Close of conference**





# Presentations

## Tracey Newell - Senior Employment Officer, Enable

*Preparing Young people with SEND for Employment*

### Supported Internships:

Helping Students Take the First Steps Towards Employment



<http://www.paccshropshire.org.uk/cd-content/uploads/files/Supported%20internships%20Enable%20nov%202017.pdf>

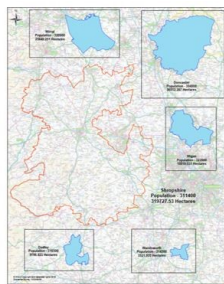
### Inclusive Apprenticeships



<http://www.paccshropshire.org.uk/cd-content/uploads/files/Inclusive%20Appreticeships%20Nov%202017.pdf>

## Julia Dean - Service Manager SEND, Shropshire Council

*SEND Provision in Shropshire*



Shropshire context

<http://www.paccshropshire.org.uk/cd-content/uploads/files/Supported%20internships%20Enable%20nov%202017.pdf>

## Jonathan Wilding - Consultant, FWL Associates

*Developing SEND Capacity and Provision in Shropshire*

Strategic Review & Development Plan - High Needs Provision

Jonathan Wilding  
FWL & Associates



<http://www.paccshropshire.org.uk/cd-content/uploads/files/High%20Needs%20provision%20Strategy%20-%20Nov%202017%281%29.pdf>

## **Table top discussion**

What improvements or additions are needed to local SEND education provision to improve outcomes for young people with SEND? It was suggested that this might include;

Identifying gaps in SEND education provision locally

Identifying what improvements are needed to existing SEND provision locally and where?

The discussion looked at each educational stage; Pre-school 0-6, Primary, Secondary, Post 16.

All those who attended the conference were given a chance to contribute to discussions at each table – 15 minutes at each table.

## **Summary of Discussions**

Inevitably the discussions were wide ranging and included comments on the curriculum and culture in education settings as well as physical provision.

### **Pre-School 0-6**

When considering the Early Years sector, the feedback focused on the need for settings to have the skills and understanding to support young children with SEND. This reflects that Early Years settings are more readily available throughout the local area and is in line with the 'Preferred Provider' approach recently implemented by Shropshire Council. The Oswestry area was identified however as an area where further Early Years provision is needed.

Feedback suggested that Early Years providers should be key in identification of SEND and the provision of early intervention activities, such as occupational therapy, speech and communication work and the development of social skills. This requires the sector to have strong links with these service providers and for early years staff to have a good understanding of local support pathways.

It was also highlighted that the sector needs to have an understanding of what happens next for the child and their role in preparing them for that transition. Moving away from each education stage working in isolation and recognising that they are part of a bigger process that works to support the child effectively through each stage of their education.

There was some discussion on the need to involve parent carers in Early Years activity and PACC would specifically highlight the importance of staff understanding the emotional impact of diagnosis / identification of SEND on parent carers. The experience of families at this stage in their journey is crucial to defining the relationship they will have with services and 'the system' in the future. If settings can deliver a supportive and understanding approach this will do much to develop resilience and the ability to consider achieving positive outcomes as the child grows.

### **Notes on discussion;**

- ASD specific equipment for Settings (ear defenders, weighted blankets, sensory area)
- All staff Makaton trained and Baby Signing taught to parents – can be used during melt downs/as an alternative to speech. Normalises non-verbal communication.
- Social stories for all children.
- Inclusion for SEN children in all activities – not left out of nativity/trips.
- Educating the whole setting/school to be inclusive – including other parents
- Intensive behaviour intervention available in any setting.
- There is a lack of SEND Early Years Provision (Nursery & Childminders) in Oswestry.

- SEN training for all staff, including lunch time and volunteers.
- Training around Pathological Demand Avoidance
- Social skills training – at early years stage
- Early intervention is key
- When expertise is available, child copes in EY setting, and they don't get EHCP even though EY setting know that they won't cope in Primary without one.
- Transition support EY to Primary
- Train staff re a specific child's needs in advance of them going into a class
- Key worker to be identified for passing on info between staff (not necessarily TA)- too often issues happen due to poor communication

## **Primary Stage**

While the discussion about the Primary stage also identified the need for staff who were well trained in SEND interventions and had a good understanding of SEND issues and processes, there was increased discussion about the availability of good provision and choice.

The 'Preferred Provider' was highlighted by parents as an approach they would like to see implemented at this stage – with specific settings being identified and supported as key providers for children with SEND.

The lack of provision for those children who cannot cope in mainstream settings but for whom Severndale is not suitable was stressed in discussions. Parents felt that hubs linked to existing settings could meet the needs of these children, but were concerned that steps were taken to ensure that the issues that happened with the Kettlemere Hub did not happen again. For some parents, the situation at Kettlemere has reduced their confidence in the effectiveness of Hubs. TMBS was highlighted as a good model, with families valuing the fact that this was a specialist provision with satellite hubs and which offered a very person - centered approach. There was a discussion about the need for an Autism specific school in the local area but it was also recognised that one setting serving the whole county brings its own challenges.

Choice was also an issue for parents of children with Learning Disabilities and complex needs and feedback was received about the current lack of choice for these families, with Severndale being the only option for many. Parent carers present expressed a preference for being able to access primary education closer to their homes and in their own community. The ability to access shared placements between mainstream and specialist setting was requested as was greater collaboration between mainstream and specialist settings in Shropshire. It was felt that while specialist support is needed for many children there was also a need to ensure inclusion happened and that children were known in their own communities.

At this stage parent carers started to place more emphasis on the need to provide real opportunities to develop life skills and confidence. There was discussion about creating environments that allowed this to happen, such as kitchens, café's etc.

## **Notes on discussion;**

- More proactive early help needed
- Effectively trained support needed
- Person centered approach and choice of education for SEND children wanted
- Geographically, if Severndale type satellite schools are going to be put in place (which is great) will consideration be given to a satellite in Shrewsbury?
- Better support when moving from Primary to Secondary
- Needs better social support in preparation for the future
- A good SENCO can make all the difference
- Lack of consistency between schools – some get it, some don't
- Only Severndale if mainstream fails in Shropshire – no choice

- Where do higher functioning YP go if they can't cope in mainstream?
- Kettlemere – in principle would be good but needs to be delivered as promised. Concerned however that the criteria maybe too narrow – eg be able to get GCSE – not all mainstream CYP would be able to do that
- Need to focus on improving emotional mental health
- Need satellites around the county
- Preferred Providers for Primary?
- Specialist TAs needed
- Shared placements that offer community inclusion
- Lack of choice – one extreme or the other
- Greater links between mainstream and specialist needed
- Resource to teach Road Safety/Life skills (washing/cooking)/Self- care (personal hygiene) needed
- After school provision is poor – this could be improved if CYP went to school closer to home
- Primary school don't seem to know what to do
- Keep being told there is 'plenty of time' re assessment and support being put in place – the timescale for accessing support needs to be better
- Year 1 & 2 diagnosis Pathways are an issue – takes too long and there is no help while you are waiting
- Specialist ASD primary school needed – but how do you cover the whole county?
- Parents have lost confidence in Hubs
- Expand TMBS model – small groups and children treated with respect at core, by specialist staff who understand the issues
- More focus on cooking and resources to support this
- Concentrate on YP's interests to develop concentration skills/key skills
- Going back to learning through play-for a lot of CYP with SEND this is still important even when they leave Early Years settings
- Primary often geared towards girl's strengths – boys need space and practical activities
- Quiet space to reduce sensory impacts – gardening areas
- Social skills groups – hubs within school
- Important to be educated in your community – builds friendships
- Not being able to access specialist support close to home is a problem
- Need satellite centres but also need integration
- More space available in school for chill out/one to one
- Option of Shared Placement – specialist and mainstream



- A model house where life skills/role play can be learnt
- School shops/business where students learn skills and co-operate with peers
- Class sizes are often too big
- Lack of willingness to explore issues and reasons behind them e.g. poor behaviour – what is the trigger
- Unit would help but how are they going to manage admissions and provide coverage for whole county?
- Those schools with good reps become swamped, which then dilutes the effect
- Monitoring of schools – check they are doing what they have agreed to do – how will this happen?

## **Secondary Stage**

Parent carers highlighted that as young people enter the secondary stage of education, opportunities to socialise with their peers become even more important, but if a young person attend Severndale or a school out of their community, this is really difficult to achieve. Long journeys can become more difficult as a child gets older and this can affect learning.

It was felt that there needs to be greater personalisation at this stage, building on a young person's strengths as well as addressing areas of challenge. Settings need to be structured so that there is greater flexibility and creating additional space within settings could enable this to happen.

Many of the comments made in the discussion about the primary stage, about the lack of choice, especially for those with Severe Learning Disabilities also applied at this stage.

## **Notes on discussion;**

- Lack of choice in provision for SLD children
- Good schools are often oversubscribed but have excellent practice and are 1st choice for SEN families. Could they be funded and resourced to provide outreach/consultancy service
- Some schools are failing SEN pupils and not held to account
- Preparation for transition is still not happening early enough
- Personalised curriculum needed that is interests/strengths based
- Placement are needed more local to where YP lives – inclusion in local community becomes more important as a teenager
- Many children spending their time travelling and not learning, tired on arrival due to long journey
- Money/time/resources wasted travelling between sites constantly – e.g. Severndale at Mary Webb
- Flexibility for start/finish times due to sensory issues with noise/crowds would be helpful
- Ed Psych assessment not in depth enough – assess at home as well as school
- Getting it wrong – more severe effects on mental health as a teenager



- Smaller Secondary settings are needed
- OT programmes/small intervention groups should be delivered regularly via hubs
- More specialist training for all staff at Secondary stage
- More support/resources for SEN children with PSHE and social skills

## **Post 16**

At this stage parent carers feedback focused on the need for more options to be available for young people, especially with a focus on independent living skills which will support the young people in adulthood.

There was felt to be a lack of post 19 provision for those with Learning Difficulties in particular, to enable YP to continue learning, strengthen their life skills and increase their employability.

More vocational opportunities are wanted and parent carers would like to see colleges developing greater links with potential employers. The development of social enterprises at Post 16 settings would also enable YP to experience work type environments in a supportive way.

There was particular concern about the impact on YP emotional health and wellbeing at this stage, due to a lack of timely decision making, a lack of flexibility and a focus on academic success.

## **Notes on Discussion;**

- LEA needs to fund up to 25 years – most end at 19yrs
- Independent living skills must be prioritised
- Decisions take too long for our YP
- Eng/Maths/Science levels too high for most of our YPs – don't set them up to fail
- Give Ofsted greater powers to discipline schools and enforce good practice in schools that don't practice full inclusion
- Many ASD children develop anxiety in secondary schools because of lack of flexibility, which carries on to Post 16
- Replace some lessons for more vocational courses
- With academies comes an emphasis on passing exams being the only measure of success
- Some YPs are finding few options to go onto in Shropshire even with an EHCP
- Lack of emotional/social support for children who are high functioning to fulfil their high aspirations
- More diverse and holistic provision to cater for the individual
- Look at child's strengths earlier on – better IAG needed
- What happens to children without EHCP?
- Entry level courses seem to be disappearing – what alternative progression routes available then?
- Issue with looking for businesses who are willing to take YPs on, in current economic climate

## Summary

The focus of the event and subsequent discussion started off by considering current provision and potential gaps. In response to this there is a clear message from Shropshire parent carers that there needs to be greater choice available to them and increase opportunities for children and young people with SEND to be educated in their own communities. However, it is also clear that while the level and location of provision is important, the quality of the provision is seen as even more important. At all educational stages, the feedback from parent carers focused on the outcomes that they wanted to see for their children and concerns over issues that are currently perceived as preventing this happening. Achieving good outcomes can be addressed by creating additional provision but only if this is accompanied by the right ethos, skills and understanding.

In principle, there is support for the creation of Hubs throughout Shropshire, to enable children and young people with SEND to be educated closer to home.

If hubs are created then the preference is that these are places where specialist interventions are provided, by specialist staff and are not just an extension of any mainstream hosts. Flexibility and person-centred approaches are seen as key to the success of any additional provision.

There is also support for the creation of specific provision for children and young people who are unable to cope with mainstream but for whom Severdale is not suitable. The idea of an ASD specific school was welcomed by many parent carers but there was also caution about having one provision for the whole local area and how that would work in reality? These concerns should be carefully considered given the issues raised by parent carers who attend Severdale, about the lack choice for children and young people with Learning Disabilities due to having only one in county provider for this cohort.



## Summary of Feedback from Delegates

Has this event helped you to feel more connected to other parent carers?

Yes	20 out of 22	No	0 out of 22	No Change	2 out of 22
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Has attending this event helped you to feel more supported?

Yes	18 out of 22	No	1 out of 22	No Change	3 out of 22
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Has attending the event increased your knowledge of services and SEND systems?

Yes	20 out of 22	No	0 out of 22	No Change	2 out of 22
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Has attending the event made you feel more able to participate in decisions that affect your family?

Yes	19 out of 22	No	1 out of 22	No Change	2 out of 22
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Has attending the event provided you with an opportunity to influence the design of the service?

Yes	14 out of 22	No	3 out of 22	No Change	5 out of 22
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Rating of venue

Poor	0 out of 22	Good	4 out of 22	Very Good	18 out of 22
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Rating of refreshments

Poor	0 out of 22	Good	6 out of 22	Very Good	16 out of 22
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Rating of organisation of the event

Poor	0 out of 22	Good	2 out of 22	Very Good	20 out of 22
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Suggestions for improving the day;

Water on tables (mentioned by two people); Not reading out annual report – too much detail; For others to be respectful to speakers and those of us listening, and not talk whilst somebody has taken the time to attend and present at these events; Longer chance for parent carers 'say'; No – it was very well organised, interesting and informative; Some things were rushed, so more time needed; Attendance from Health and Social Care sectors; More professionals who are associated with our children attend; Lot of information to remember. The supporting knowledge sheets are very helpful; Parking – expensive and difficult to find spaces (mentioned by 2 people).

## **Additional feedback about the development of SEND provision in Shropshire**

As in discussion during much of the feedback provided via the event evaluation forms highlighted issued that related to the quality of the provision and other system that support SEND rather than the actual physical provision itself. All feedback provided has been shared below but has been separated into comments relating to the physical provision, i.e. capacity, location, physical resources etc, comments relating to the quality of provision in terms of practice and comments related to information provision and working with parent carers.

### **Comment relating to physical provision;**

- Severndale have the majority of say and monopoly of children with severe/complex needs.
- Gap in provision for health needs Post 16 where there are no educational issues or social care needs but no educational needs.
- No provision if child doesn't have an EHCP. For those who don't meet the criteria, there is little or no support.
- Would like to be kept informed about development of Primary Hubs (mentioned by two people)
- There is a need for a school that supports children that don't meet the remit of Severndale but struggle in Mainstream.

### **Comments relating to practice within provisions;**

- Having to 'fight' for EP assessment
- Delaying providing support rather than providing it at point of identification of need
- Need to look at key specific individual needs rather than diagnosis or possible diagnosis.
- I think the gaping holes in professionals understanding of the 3 elements of EHCP is shocking – still viewed as an education plan.
- Social care knowledge and legislative framework in general is poor for both professionals and parents.
- Supporting young adults to pursue career opportunities in arts design and can develop as professional artists, and sell their work. This links in with supporting students when they finish residential college to remain in the area, maintain valuable adult relationships which are critical to their continued well being and mental health.
- More proactive approach to support – not wait and see if they cope/fail!
- More early help
- More holistic support
- Recognise that some don't cope in mainstream, although mainstream ability.
- Recognise that some children may be academically able but need emotional/social support
- All departments need to communicate with each other, LEA , CAMHS , Social Care



### **Comments relating to information provision and working with parent carers;**

- Parent should be kept involved every step of the way when there is any change to support child's learning (academically and socially)
- I have only found the support externally from school – parent led support groups e.g. PACC. School SENCO has not signposted these organisations to us.
- Information about services remains poor or not available. Continue to find out through word of mouth from other parents/ or digging around.
- Annual EHCP reviews – what support are parents & children given to prepare for these in terms of more than a blank 'All About Me/Us' form and phone number for IASS/PACC
- Joint professional and parent carer training to share understanding of each others perspectives
- Attendance from CAMHS at these sort of events would be helpful
- More information on organisations/support groups made available at nurseries/ primary schools/secondary schools
- Listen to parents concerns earlier.
- Positive to see there seems to be positive changes and provision in Shropshire – fingers crossed.
- Currently too piecemeal. Very difficult to see the big picture, especially as services are so fragmented. I'm concerned that parents are still not being listened to . Jonathan (Speaker) was saying things parents have been feeding back for years.
- Interesting to see progress for the future, as it helps parents of younger children to understand the system.
- Need to have better consultations with parents and see us as experts on our children, not hindrances.

**PACC would like to thank all the speakers, SEND practitioners and parent carers who attended this event and participated in these discussions**