

# SEND Joint Commissioning Group Bulletin for Families, July 2021



## Group Membership

Richard Watson, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Strategy and Transformation Ipswich and East Suffolk, West Suffolk and North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Groups– Chair

Chris Martin, Commissioning Director, Children, Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Autism, Essex County Council

Jane Kinniburgh, Director of Nursing & Quality, Hertfordshire & West Essex ICS

Tricia D'Orsi, NHS Alliance Director Castle Point & Rochford and Southend CCGs

Katrina Farrall, Treasurer/Vice Chair Essex Family Forum

Ralph Holloway, Head of SEND Strategy and Innovation, Essex County Council

Sarah Garner, Programme Director Joint Commissioning SEND (Essex)

Shivaun Aveston, Transformation Lead, Essex Alliance

The Joint Commissioning Group was established in September 2020 setting out a programme of work to achieve the outcomes set out in the Written Statement of Action (WSOA), following the Special Education Needs Disability (SEND) Inspection findings in 2019. As a result of the findings it was determined that a joint WSOA was required because of significant areas of weakness in the local area's practice.

### Main areas for improvement include:

1. The joint commissioning arrangements between partners
2. Long waiting lists and variation in waiting times for assessment
3. Over-identification of children with moderate learning difficulties
4. Information included and needed within Education Health Care Plans

Southend & Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Groups are also our partners and are associated with unitary authorities within one of our STP areas, therefore responsible for their own WSOA.

### What is SEND

*A child or young person has special educational needs and disabilities if they have a learning difficulty and/or a disability that means they need special health and education support, we shorten this to SEND.*



- Children, young people and their families should experience equitable access to a consistent, high quality range of educational support, health services and specialist provision, appropriate to their needs and circumstances.
- Commissioners will share a common, accurate view of need across the county and use this to jointly commission consistently high quality services, which are accessible across the county.



**Therapies:** The Essex Therapies project web page is live and contains all the information, surveys and webinar dates for the project – the page contains information for parents, schools and professionals, and will be the central point for all engagement and information sharing for the duration of the project.

The web page can be accessed here:

<https://www.thebalancedsystem.org/commissioners/essex-project/>



### Qb Test and ADHD

Following on from last months update, funding for this project was agreed for the Mid South Essex Partnership and commissioners are now developing a mobilisation plan and meeting with providers to build the QB Test into the pathway. West Essex are also planning to pilot also, whilst North East Essex already offer the test where appropriate within their ADHD care pathway.

### SEND Information, Advice, Support Service (IASS) training for health professionals

Are you a health professional working with families that have children or young people who have/may have Special Educational Needs or a Disability?

The Essex SENDIASS is a confidential and impartial information, advice and support service on issues related to special educational needs and disability. It is free and easy to access.

SENDIASS are asking you to fill out this short survey to help plan and deliver training for health professionals. It will also help us to gauge the knowledge that frontline health professionals already have and where there may be gaps in the knowledge of SEND Law, so that we can ensure we address this within the training that we deliver. Give us your views <https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/send-strategy-and-innovation/2fbc5674>. The survey closes on the 16th July.



### Family Resource Packs

All drafts of the remaining sections will be completed by the end of June for feedback from parents and professionals with the intention of having finalised content to progress to the design stage by end of July.

### Equipment

A full report of our survey findings will be presented in July. Early findings have already been presented, the main themes were long assessment waiting times and communication/navigation issues with a very complex equipment process. A real positive was the great relationship many of our families reported having with their therapists and health professionals.

**Parent/Carer Coffee Mornings** There will be some virtual coffee mornings coming up in July to strengthen our parent/carers feedback and share the work Essex Family Forum are doing. For any of your parents interested

[Parent Events and Training Opportunities - Essex Family Forum](#)



Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) have recently submitted an **Expression of Interest** for funding over 3 years to help local services attempt innovations to their pathways for providing autism diagnostic assessments and post-diagnostic support to children and young people. We will keep you updated on the outcome of our submission which is expected in July.



The **Good Beginnings** 10 week course is now open or parents/carers of early years children (aged 5 or under), who have autism or social communication needs. Please go to the to [Good Beginnings Course - Essex Local Offer](#) to find out further details. Do make sure your teams know about this early help offer.

### [East of England Neurodevelopmental Disorders Network](#)

The first meeting of the East of England Neurodevelopmental Disorders Network took place in June. The Regional Autism Network is a group of multi-agency professional stakeholders working collaboratively to improve outcomes for people with Autism, their families and carers, in the region. The Network will identify clear priorities and objectives relevant to national and regional need which will then be taken forward for action locally. The Network is co chaired by the regional representative of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums.

We will keep you update here with any relevant areas of work .



We may all be different but  
we have the same smile



## The Multi-Schools Council

### Kierran Pearce, Multi-Schools Council Lead Essex

The Multi-Schools Council is designed to break down negative perceptions towards children with special educational needs and mental health difficulties. This is done through the power of children's voices and we help support them to make a difference in areas they feel are important to them. The heartbeat of the council are the multi-school meetings that happen across 9 different areas in Essex, three times across the academic year. There are currently 362 schools signed up to us split across the 9 different strands. We are also working with schools in Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Thurrock and Southend. In addition to the meetings we go into schools raising awareness with both children and staff on areas such as autism, ADHD, SEND, mental health and resilience. All of our workshops are designed with young people.

The children choose focus topics on things that matter to them and from September 2021 the next areas of focus will be **keeping active, racism and animal cruelty**. Projects will be designed around these topics as well as continuing to break down perceptions. In order to better support the voices of children we also have ambassadors who work as role models and volunteers building on the ideas in their local communities and working with different sectors. A fantastic example of this has been our ambassador's involvement in the North East Essex Neurodevelopmental Pathway. Our ambassadors gave ideas on the idea of a relatable logo for this pathway, which resulted in the fantastic logo you can see on our page – drawn by the brilliant Kim, who has a visual impairment, but never say's no to a challenge!



Three of our ambassadors have since gone on to sit on the interview panel for the new care Co-Ordinator role linked to this pathway, designing their own questions, and interviewing different people for the role. Both elements here gave true autonomy to the children in designing their own ideas and is an example of true co-production.

Some of our standout projects that are currently on-going include a **Multi-schools album** based around the idea of kindness and acceptance. We hope to release our first song from this album in the summer term, which will be the official theme tune for the Essex wide TPP approach. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of July Essex schools will be holding a **Green day** to show their commitment in tackling the issue of global warming and pollution. Schools will be showcasing their work on this issue as it was one of our previous hot topics chosen by the children two years ago. In the summer break a group of children and volunteers will be climbing **Mount Snowdon** to raise awareness and funds that can go towards more community based projects – to support us please follow the link here <https://gofund.me/7b5f2b51> .

We are always on the look out to work with more schools and within 4 years we hope every Essex school/college will be signed up to us if you can help in anyway please do. We are also looking for more inspirational children across the county and beyond who wish to challenge negative perceptions, if you know of any please put us in touch! The best way to keep up to date with our work is by using the following channels;

<https://www.multischoolscouncil.org.uk/>

The Multi-Schools Council Facebook page

@the\_multischools\_council – Instagram page (run by our ambassadors)

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0\\_-ecSEnuHQpqpFRT4UoQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0_-ecSEnuHQpqpFRT4UoQ)