

<b>Committee:</b> Safeguarding Sub-Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 10/02/2020
<b>Subject:</b> Special educational needs and disability (SEND) – Update	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children’s Services	<b>For Information</b>
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## **Summary**

Since September 2018, the Safeguarding Sub-Committee has received reports on the progress of the special educational needs and disability (SEND) work in the City of London (COL) following the SEND local area inspection in March 2018.

One of the key expectations of the Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3) and the SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years (2015, Section 3), is that there is joint working across education, health and social care and other key partners. Also expected is participation and engagement of children and young people and their parents and carers, on an equal basis, in the identification and assessment of their needs, and also in the planning, design and review of services at an individual and strategic level to meet their needs. This way of working with children and young people and their parents and carers is referred to as ‘co-production’.

Progress on the work to co-produce services with parents and carers was reported to the Committee in February 2019. This included that a representative from the City Parent Carer Forum (CPCF) was co-chair of the SEND Programme Board and that a Co-production Working Group had been established. Progress on the work to engage and ensure the participation of children and young people was reported to the Committee in May 2019.

This report gives a further update on the work with parents, carers and partners, and with children and young people to co-produce and develop services that best meet their needs, and how this will inform the development of the SEND Strategy 2020–2023.

## **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the report.

## **Main Report**

### **Co-production Workshop**

1. In October ‘Inclusive Solutions’, an external company, facilitated an interactive workshop to explore how the COL, partners, parents, carers, young people

and children with SEND can work together to ensure excellent services that best meet their needs.

2. Seven parents and carers attended the workshop along with partners from Education, Schools (Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School and the Independent Schools sector), the City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Targeted Health Outreach, Social Care (Children's, Adult Social and Early Help), Commissioning, SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS), Prospects (commissioned by the COL to provide information, advice and guidance on education, employment and training options), Commissioning, Safeguarding, Events and Production, the Barbican and the Museum of London. Events on the day meant that a Ward Councillor, colleagues from Open Spaces and the COL Police were not able to attend, but the outcome from the workshop has been shared widely.
3. The focus of the workshop was to agree a shared vision and explore how we can work together to achieve agreed goals towards meeting this vision. The vision and plan for achieving this are produced in a creative artwork – the SEND City Together Banner (Appendix 1).
4. In terms of the vision, a picture of where we wanted to be in the future was developed. This was then termed 'The Dream' and set out the ideal picture of what the COL would be like in three years' time. It is aspirational, ambitious, inclusive and community focused. The following are some of the key points that are incorporated in the dream:
  - ***Families want their voices to be heard; they want to be involved in decision-making*** so that key decisions that affect them are made with them – no decision about me without me.
  - ***There are clear pathways***, with systems that are easier to navigate, clear choices and options, new and local opportunities for their children and young people.
  - ***Families want to be an equal part of the community in which they live*** – that we imagine the world in a different way; that we see the child first before their disability, and celebrate difference; that they are welcomed everywhere and feel that they belong. They also want the COL to be more accessible for them, to be able to access culture, creative places, and be able to come together outdoors.
  - ***Wellbeing*** is important – “no stress, peace of mind, clear skies, safety, awareness and understanding, better frame of mind” are some of the words used by the group to capture this.
  - ***SEND City Together*** – This is the name that the group gave to the vision/dream. They agreed that there must be equal partnership between parent carers, young people and professionals; that there must be good communication systems in place; good training and awareness of needs; that we must break down barriers; that services must work together – “we can, together we will”.

5. The group considered the current picture and how we can move from this towards the vision/dream. In terms of what is happening now, the positives include:
  - There is a SEND Programme Board, with parent carer representation
  - Young people with SEND are members of the City Youth Forum
  - Children are known and cared for as people first
  - The COL is ambitious and has high aspirations for SEND students
  - Access to services is easy compared to other boroughs
  - Teachers and practitioners feel supported.
6. The concerns for the group include:
  - Voice of young people is quiet
  - No maintained secondary schools in the COL
  - Children attend a lot of different schools
  - A lot is asked of families
  - Not enough parents actively involved in the CPCF
  - Inconsistency in planning
  - Things are slow to change
  - Partner organisations have different visions
  - We don't always know about each other's services
  - The COL is not brave enough
  - Hackney and COL are not joined up
  - No clear direction
  - COL website is not user-friendly.
7. A wide range of partners participated in the Co-production Workshop. The group also considered who else needed to be involved to realise the vision/dream and agreed that future engagement with the following would add value to this work: Members, the Director of Community and Children's Services, young people with SEND and their siblings, more parents and carers, the City Youth Forum, Headteachers and SEND Governors, Tower Hamlets CCG and Designated Medical Officer, Health Commissioning, Adults/Skills, Education and Apprenticeships, Culture Mile Team, Parks and Open Spaces, and Human Resources contacts in large corporations in the COL.

### **The views of children and young people**

8. The participation of children and young people, both at an individual level and in terms of service development, is key to ensuring good outcomes for them. A group of children with SEND who are members of the City Youth Forum shared their views with the COL through a short film.
9. We have met with children and young people from Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School – School Council and the City Youth Forum. The children and young people have told us that they:
  - like living in the COL: it is well connected to transport links

- like the galleries, especially the Art Gallery and the Barbican Centre
- feel safe, as they see the City Police patrolling the area
- like the services that the SEND team provide for them, especially Speech and Language Therapy
- feel that the City Youth Forum has given them a chance to have their views heard: one young person is the deputy chair
- have aspirations to work and have good jobs in the future
- are worried about terror attacks
- are concerned about the environment, climate change/global warming and air quality
- are also worried about anti-social behaviour and how this impact on their ability to walk to school and socialise in the COL.

## **What we are doing**

10. The discussions and outcomes from the co-production events are informing planning in the short, medium and long term. Short-term actions agreed at the workshop have been completed.
11. One of the short-term actions was to address the concern that there are not enough parents actively involved in the CPCF. To build on the excellent work the CPCF has undertaken over the last few years, the COL has engaged *Contact*, (a charity for families with disabled children, commissioned by the Department for Education to support parent carer forums), to support the ongoing development of the CPCF as it goes through a period of change. *Contact* has already reported to the SEND Programme Board with a programme of action in relation to this.
12. The medium-term and long-term actions are in progress or are being planned. These include:
  - Co-produce a communication strategy by March 2020
  - A young person with SEND to be elected to the Youth Parliament by October 2020
  - Create a 'SEND City Together' charter by May 2020
  - Voice of the child is heard in the design and review of school SEND support strategies more often
  - Develop a model to engage new families in the CPCF
  - Hackney Youth Forum will be more linked with the City Youth Forum and the Museum of London offering preparation for adulthood by October 2020
  - Five young people will be actively engaged with free activities in the community once a week by April 2020
  - Developing the new SEND Strategy 2020–23 with parent carers, children and young people and partners is informed by the outcomes and discussions from the workshops and meetings the children.

## **Impact/conclusion**

13. While it is too early to measure impact and give examples at this time, we will monitor and report these to the SEND Programme Board and update the Committee in the future.
14. Feedback from participants indicates that the early impact of the co-production events in the autumn offered a unique opportunity to hear the views, opinions and wishes of a wide range of stakeholders from across the COL community. The resulting information and artwork are now being used as the foundation of the new SEND Strategy 2020–2023. This will mean that all future developments in SEND will reflect the wider COL community, and there will be opportunities for children and young people with SEND and their families to have services that have been co-produced with them.
15. To turn the vision from the events into reality, we are at the early stages of planning and discussion on a new, ground-breaking initiative – the SEND Friendly City. This will be discussed through the Children’s Partnership Board and, if agreed, over the next three years, this project will spearhead developments across the COL and other commercial, charitable and community organisations to ‘go the extra mile’ to make the COL the best place in the UK to bring up and educate children and young people with SEND.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1: SEND City Together Banner

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