

Scrutiny Review of SEND – Preparing for Adulthood DRAFT Visit Notes

Daisy Chain – 22 June 2017

In attendance: Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Sally Ann Watson, Peter Mennear, Graham Barker (Head of Operations, Daisy Chain), Stuart Dexter (Chief Executive, Daisy Chain)

Key Points

- Daisy Chain is a charity based in Norton providing a range of services for children and adults with autism, and their parents/carers. Services are based at a farm with educational, play and meeting room facilities, and the charity also run a Charity Superstore and Coffee Shop on Portrack Lane.
- Service users were primarily based in the TS and DL postcodes.
- The organisation has 98 staff (65 FTE) and over 200 volunteers. Provision was now across 7 days per week, with Saturday and Sunday clubs. Demand was such that the charity was having to manage growth, and had for example moved the sibling support group (Sibs) to two weekly provision.
- 650 hours per month were accessed by pupils referred from schools (mainly secondary).
- Daisy Chain was taking part in the various multi-agency SEND development groups hosted by SBC
- Recognise the need to avoid a cliff edge between being a child and adulthood, and support work taking place from Year 9 to show young people what their options are. Daisy Chain's provision was focussed on children and young people, but can support into adulthood
- A DVD has been produced in order to highlight student successes and to demonstrate that they don't need to be 'defined' by their diagnosis
- Hope to build on work to improve employability, potentially building on the links with its corporate supporters. Daisy Chain could potentially have workers on placements supporting students and employers.
- Daisy Chain had been invited to speak at a corporate HR event, providing views on recruitment of people with Autism.
- The Links Parent Group was to be surveyed over the next 6-8 weeks and the results should be available to inform the Committee's work
- A Youth Forum is to be established to seek views of children and young people on how they want to progress, and this should be set up by January 2018.
- Daisy Chain also wanted to explore cultural barriers to services and see if they could increase BME participation
- A number of future developments are planned at Daisy Chain including an extension to the nursery/educational area, and also the development of new skills training rooms and kitchen area, which they hope to develop into commercial-type ventures

Stockton Riverside College (SRC) – 23 June 2017

Attendance: Peter Mennear, Cllr Hampton, Helen Crawford, Cllr Watson

Alexa Lang, Head of Foundation Skills

Key Points

- The college was split across 4 sites, including the main SRC site (which hosts the Foundation Skills base), and the Skills Academy based in Billingham.
- The College had 126 High Needs Places. 50 of these were in the Foundation Skills level, and others were in mainstream provision with Education Health Care Plans in place, for example.
- Students coming from schools were either self-declared as having additional learning needs, or the College would be advised by SENCOs.
- The college was a different environment to school, particularly Abbey Hill, and students are often able to make progression in a range of areas due to their increased independence, but providing support and reassurance to parents is key. There were potentially some students who may stay in a school environment up until the age of 19 whereas with the appropriate support they may have been able to progress to alternative provision at an earlier stage. It was recognised that young people with additional needs often had parents with additional needs.
- Community Transport drop off locations, and access to the café areas were adapted to the needs of those with high level needs
- Social workers and community health care workers were able to undertake 1:1 work with students within the College.
- Where necessary the College maintained links with a student's home environments, for example to ensure that sleeping patterns were being adhered to.
- The College has a range of opportunities on site for students to develop their skills, for example the Infinity Restaurant which is open to the public two days per week. A number of High Needs students were on catering courses. SRC also has a fully equipped theatre onsite for theatre courses but which also holds other events such as the Foundation Skill Prom nights.
- Some students were academically very able but had a high level of needs in relation to socialisation. Sex and relationship advice was also provided as part of wider enrichment sessions across the cohorts.
- Students on Foundation Skills courses were able to study Entry Level/Level 1 Courses focussing on employability, which covered independent living skills training and vocational elements. More detail can be found here: <https://www.stockton.ac.uk/courses/foundation-skills/>
- Foundation Skills had a dedicated youth and welfare officer.

- Citizenship and independent living skills were built into the Foundation Programme, including British values, visits to local courts and civic institutions, and online safety, for example.
- Possible progression was assessed each year to see if student able to move onto to next stage
- Following a Foundation Skills programme, for example, depending on a student's needs, onward progression may either be to:
 - supported internship, provided by College;
 - potential social care referral;
 - vocational courses, after using the Foundation Stage to settle in to college life.
- Students with additional learning needs in the mainstream of the college may have adapted timetables. For example, extra routine and supervision was built into the timetable of someone with autism. The Learning Resource Centre included library facilities and a number of dedicated spaces were available to students with additional needs.
- University level courses can take place at the college which was beneficial for students if they can carry onto those courses with staff they know
- The College is looking to undertake development work with Daisy Chain, for example to develop accredited animal care courses. The college already has a good relationship with the charity, and works with them on specific issues. College students have achieved work experience at the Daisy Chain Superstore.
- SRC is looking to further develop its Supported Internship Provision. From the next year this model would see students spend one day per week in college, with the remaining days based in the employment environment.
- College has staff able to support both students in placements, but the employers themselves. Gradually over time the support staff time could be reduced as the student was increasingly comfortable with the placement and environment. Ideally students would leave placements with a reference at the end.
- The college wants to develop a range of options. For example, full childcare responsibilities may not be possible, but elements of elderly care, or dinner ladies, may be able to be progressed.
- There is recognition of the need to have more positive examples of potential destinations, and better engagement with employers.
- The College was participating with the Council's SEN development groups to improve local services.

Egglescliffe Secondary School - 3 July 2017

Attendance: Peter Mennear, Cllr Clark, Cllr Watson

Dr Caroline Lear (SENCo), Mr White (Headteacher), Careers Advisor, Assistant Headteacher

Egglescliffe School pupils

Key Points

- Overall the school would say that a range of progress had been made, but further improvements were being identified. The school was working towards ensuring that pupils develop life skills as well as making academic progress.
- The school has 180 pupils on SEN Support, and 5 with EHCPs. These numbers were predicted to increase in September, with a noticeable increase in pupils with autism spectrum disorders.
- Looked after children and those with an identified 'vulnerability' were provided with an additional transition day between Primary and Secondary.
- The Learning Support Base has been renamed as the Endeavour Suite and is open for 8am, with interventions provided from 8.30. Some pupils, for example with anxiety, are able to stay in the base all day but are encouraged to rejoin the mainstream classroom wherever possible. A member of staff was always present.
- Some pupils were able to access one day per week at alternative provision including Daisy Chain, Askham Bryan, or the Skills Academy provided by the Riverside College (based in Billingham).
- The school agreed that conversations and planning for the future needed to start happening at an earlier stage. It was recognised that career aspiration may change between Year 7 and 11 but it was important to start the conversation.
- Within the SEN cohort, teachers estimated that 95% of pupils were reasonably well informed of career options, with high aspirations, with around 5% open to further guidance.
- We were able to speak with a range of pupils who had access to the Endeavour Suite. The pupils spoke about their work experience. Placements had included college placements, office, graphic industry, and kennel work.
- The school had developed 'My Career Story – a record of education, information and guidance gained at Egglescliffe School'. This passport document was in the final stages of development and would enable pupils to track the careers guidance they received, and to reflect on their aspirations on an annual basis. This was to be rolled out to all pupils.
- Egglescliffe benefited from an in-house Careers Advisor, and pupils were provided with timetabled time specifically for careers advice.
- The school would be looking to build on links with Stockton Riverside College to further improve transition into post-16 options.

- The school was now aware of the SBC Travel Training provision and want to look into this further
- The SENCo attended the Preparing for Adulthood SEN Operational Group hosted by SBC, and was to undertake specific work for them, and took part in wider networking to improve careers advice/SEN provision.

Abbey Hill Sixth Form - 4 July 2017

Attendance: Peter Mennear, Cllr Inman, Cllr Watson, Helen Crawford

Kathryn Lindrop (Principal), Paul Barton (Vice-Principal)

Key Points

- The visit consisted of a discussion around the provision offered by the Sixth Form (based in the Sheraton unit), a tour of the sixth form, an opportunity to sample student's work books, and a visit to the bistro. The bistro is provided by students, and parents / visitors are able to visit and buy food therefore providing students with a realistic working environment. Members were able to speak with young people throughout the visit.
- The Sixth Form is in a purpose built building which is part of the wider Abbey Hill site. There are three other buildings providing secondary education for students with autism, learning disabilities, and more complex/medical needs. The site has a road linking the buildings, including pelican crossings to help with travel training, and the bistro is in a separate unit at the centre of the site.
- The Sixth Form had 72 students on the roll in 2016-17. There were seven teaching groups, with a range of abilities attending. All students had EHCPs in place.
- Students are enrolled on one of four Pathways that bring together the academic and vocational units a student will study. Pathway brochures are attached.

Students have a range of learning levels, from Milestone Level to Entry Level to GCSE/Level 1 and 2. Pathways 1 and 2 take three years, for example, while Pathway 3 and 4 is completed in two. There is a greater input from Special Needs Teachers in Pathways 1 and 2, often using a variety of experiences to build on communication skills. Pastoral care forms a large part of the teachers' work across the Pathways.

- Students may access different elements of the pathways depending on their needs. For example may access maths as part of Pathway 3, but access art through Pathway 4. Pathway 1 and
- There is a focus on preparing students for employment wherever possible. All those on Pathway 4 should have the ability to be able to work. Abbey Hill recognise that some parents and carers need further reassurance that their children will be able to access some form of employment in future.

- Destinations following sixth form include further education including Stockton Riverside College, Askham Bryan, some form of employment/supported employment, or social care. Information on achievement and destinations can be found here: <http://www.horizonstrust.org.uk/sixth-form-achievement/>
- Students are capable of a high level of achievement with the appropriate level of support. For example, a student had a high level of creative talent with photography, but needed a lot of support to manage crises/behaviours during their length of the course.
- Students may previously worked in a small cohort with similar needs that stayed together from primary to secondary, with the same teacher at each stage. The Sixth Form aims to ensure that they are provided with a more adult environment.
- The Sixth Form has a well-equipped hair salon, and poly tunnel which assist with gardening and science skills.
- The Design and Technology course have a business element to them, and students are also able to achieve volunteering experience, for example through the Tees Wildlife Trust.
- Youth Direction has a Careers Advice and Guidance base on site.

Feedback from Cllr Watson

The meetings I attended for the development groups , which included representatives from all areas connected to SEND, can be summarised as follows:-

There is a need for joint strategies to be formulated along with data sharing so that children, young adults and parents only need to tell their story once. It is vital that EHCP reviews are conducted thoroughly with the relevant people in attendance. The voice of the child is paramount, especially when it comes to possible employment pathways. The aim is for SEND young adults to find meaningful employment not perpetual volunteering.

The mainstream education visit highlighted an awareness for a greater focus on SEND requirements going forward into adulthood. A new member has joined their team and has brought with her ideas and experience and they are now beginning to show improved transitions and pastoral care. There is a keenness to seek out the individual aspirations of the young adults.

The three specialist education visits to Daisy Chain, Abbey Hill and Stockton Riverside College were excellent and a great deal of thought is going into work placements and seeking out future employment pathways. However, all agreed that they require an increase in the numbers of employers coming forward with opportunities for SEND young adults. More opportunities are required in child care, adult care, animal care, catering and service.

The parent group, Stockton United for Change, had particular issues with the reviews that had been conducted in the past along the lines of consistency of attendees and setting new objectives. They were also very concerned about employment pathways.