

# Early Help and Children with Disabilities Services

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# Early Help SEND

## **Early Years SEND Service**

- EY SENCO
- EY SEND Outreach
- Early Years SEND Support

## **Early Help SEND Family Support**

- 5 SEND FSW's

## **Play and Sensory Centre**

- Purpose built soft play and sensory room specifically designed for SEND children, young people and adults
- Café
- Open 7 days per week

## **Commissioned Services**

- Aspire
- Sportsworks

# Early Years SEND

- ▶ Early years SEND support – Home visiting and children centre group sessions
- ▶ Early years outreach – Setting support for early years providers
- ▶ Workforce development – Training and development of the early years workforce
- ▶ Sandy Lane Application and process delivery – Coordination of the panel

# Early Help SEND Family Support Team

## **In the last 12 months:**

- Increased number of SEND Family Support Workers – now have 5 workers and a manager all based at the Play and Sensory Centre
- Training has been enhanced to include Makaton, Behaviour that Challenges, Continuing Care, Independent Provider of Specialist Advice (IPSEA), Court of Protection/Deprivation of Liberty.
- Improved relationships with Children with Disabilities team which aids smoother transitions between services.
- Improved relationships with Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) team to ensure annual reviews are shared to enable short breaks to be discussed at one meeting.

# Play and Sensory Centre

- ▶ Sensory room is being refitted this summer
- ▶ Interactive floor lighting for the calm zone is going to be fitted this summer
- ▶ Increased membership and increase in the number of families attending
- ▶ Bookings have increased from external groups and schools.
- ▶ Annual Family Fun day continues to be a success.
- ▶ Nominated for Team of the Year.

# Short Breaks

- ▶ A review of short breaks is taking place in response to feedback from parents and professionals which is being co produced with WarrPAC, CwD, Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO) and Early Help.
- ▶ Short Break Panel where decisions are made in relation to direct payments and personal budgets now has a core membership which includes CwD, Early Help and DSCO to ensure decisions are consistent.
- ▶ There is an increased use of personal budgets to allow some choice about how to utilise funding for short breaks identified through assessment.

# Aspire

- ▶ Improving the offer to include Easter and Whit. This is reliant on schools being able to provide the venue.
- ▶ Additional group to ensure all needs are catered for since we have broadened the offer to include children who may require oxygen, peg feeding, etc
- ▶ Regular meetings with parents to ensure developments are shared and feedback is gathered.

# What we still need to do

- ▶ Complete the review of the short break process
- ▶ Produce a direct payment and personal budget policy
- ▶ Review the short break statement
- ▶ Contribute to the local offer to ensure services in the community are visible for parents/carers to access
- ▶ Continue to seek funding to enable Aspire to offer year round provision.
- ▶ Continue to explore new ideas to increase the number of PA's available



# Children with Disabilities Team

The Children with Disabilities team works with children and young people up to the age of 18 years with a disability, who are subject to the eligibility criteria. The team comprises of 6 Social Workers, 1 Senior Practitioner and one Team Manager. The team provides practical, emotional support, advice and information and undertake social care assessments. The social care assessment considers the needs of the whole family

## Our aims and principles:

- ▶ We believe in the value of relationships. We believe that we can be of most use when we seek to develop and harness good relationships with children, families and other professionals;
- ▶ We are child and family centred in our approach. We recognise every child is unique and assessments should be holistic around the family circumstances. Assessments should reflect needs of the child and family;
- ▶ We believe that parents/ carers should be involved throughout the process. Their perspectives and input should be valued. Parents/ carers should be kept informed of what to expect and when. We will set realistic expectations and ensure that these are consistently and effectively communicated with families.
- ▶ We believe children and families should receive the help and protection they need when they need it. We will do this by ensuring that families are directed to the most appropriate service at the earliest opportunity. When/if families need to transfer between Early Help and Children's Social Care this should be a seamless transition for families. We offer consultation to early help services, to help inform their plans with families and to ensure that all families get a consistent process between early help and children's social care services.
- ▶ Through good partnerships working we aim to reduce the number of times that families need to tell their story, and transfer between different teams and services;
- ▶ We are a learning and reflective organisation. We recognise and see value in identifying, acknowledging, resolving and learning from situations when we do not get it right. Equally, we seek to provide opportunities to identify and share examples of best practice to continually improve practice
- ▶ We are committed to Coproduction when thinking about service development and delivery. This is central in all areas of our practice.
- ▶ Our core model is systemic based practice. We believe this is the best approach to work together with families when thinking about complex problems and/or areas of support.

# What circumstances will support from children's social care be appropriate?

Children and families will be supported by **Children's Social Care** Children with Disabilities Team in the following circumstances:

- Provision of short breaks, if this involves overnight respite away from the family home in an OFSTED registered provision.
- Any children having overnight respite that is not an OFSTED approved provision still require a social work assessment, however following assessment/period of intervention consideration can be given to stepping down to early help.
- Children who are or may be being deprived of their liberty that may require an application to court via Inherent Jurisdiction or the Court of Protection.
- If there are significant welfare concerns regarding the care of a child with a disability that would meet the criteria of S17 of the Children Act 1989
- Children suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm
- Children in the care of the Local Authority.

It is recognised that any parent of a child with a disability may make a request an assessment of their child. In such circumstances full consideration should be given to whether this assessment should take place under S17 or via an Early Help Assessment.

# A review of the last 12 months...

## In the last 12 months:

- Increased stability within the team. We currently have 6 permanent members of the team. Whilst we continue to have 2 agency workers, both have supported the team for over 1 year. We believe that this provides further consistency for the families that we support.
- Training has been enhanced to include Systemic Training, Behaviour that Challenges, Continuing Care, Mental Capacity, Court of Protection/Deprivation of Liberty.
- Improved relationships with SEND early help team which aids smoother transitions between services.
- Best support consultations being offered to other teams including early help and other social care teams (child in need and permanence). This allows specialist advice and input, to ensure that all children and families receive a consistently good service across all areas.
- Consistent attendance at multi-agency meetings and panels. This includes Dynamic support database tracking meeting, continuing care panel, short break panel and preparation for adulthood operational group. This promotes collaborative working and improves relationships across key agencies.
- Attendance at parents evenings, WARPAC events and parent/carer sessions to help build relationships with families and share relevant information.
- Improved relationships with Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) team to ensure relevant contributions are provided, to inform the plan
- Wider training with schools, colleges and early help to ensure children are supported to have the least restrictive plan.
- We have developed a stand alone parent and carer assessment that is now being rolled out to families via early help and via children's social care

# What we want to work on...

- ▶ We will work in collaboration with early help to review the short break process and statement
- ▶ We will consistently offer all parents and carers the option of a standalone carers assessment.
- ▶ We will develop the support that can be offered to parents and carers as an outcome of their parent/carer assessment
- ▶ We envisage that we will offer timely assessment and planning for all children who are deprived of their liberty and to progress applications to court of protection when children reach 16.
- ▶ We will embed and enhance our systemic practice model and learning culture
- ▶ We will work closely with the fostering team to develop their skill, experience, understanding and confidence with children with disabilities. This would seek to increase placement options available and respite provision available.
- ▶ We will work closely with the preparation for adulthood team and both children's and adult respite provisions, to ensure that young people have a smoother transition to adult respite provisions and that this is started when they are 17.5 years.