

SHROPSHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Meeting Date: 9th September 2021

Paper title: Speech, Language and Communication update

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Email:

1. Summary

This report provides an update on the Speech, Language and Communication Needs workstream of action in Shropshire following the joint SEND CQC and Ofsted inspection which took place between 27 January and 31 January 2021.

- 1.1 Following the findings of the joint inspection and in accordance with the Local Area Inspection Framework the Chief Inspector determined that a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) was required due to significant areas of concern that were identified.
- 1.2 Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) is identified as an area of focus which requires improvement in Shropshire. *'Significant waiting times for those needing assessment and treatment from the speech and language therapy service'* has been highlighted as one of the WSoA.
- 1.3 SLCN is an area in which all stakeholders are working to improve outcomes for young people in Shropshire through the WSoA. A joint vision statement has been drafted between all relevant stakeholders (Schools, Early years Settings, SEN, Parent Carer Forum, Public Health, CCG, Shropshire Community Health Trust) and key priorities have been outlined in the joint Delivery Plan for SLCN.

2. Recommendations

SLCN is 'everyone's business' and 'everyone's responsibility' and a whole system approach to SLCN should be a priority.

3. Report

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 Communication is a fundamental life skill that begins in early years and continues through the life course; however, it is recognised that every individual can develop at different ages and stages. Speech, Language and Communication (SLC) are three of the key milestones which the majority of children meet in the early years. Where development milestones are not reached, additional support measures may be put in place for the parent and carer(s)¹. Research has identified that approximately 10% of all children in the United Kingdom (UK) have long-term Speech, Language and

Communication Needs (SLCN)² and in some of the more deprived areas in the UK up to 50% of children start school with SLCN³.

- 3.1.2 The 'Bercow: 10 years on' report published in 2018 highlights the need for early intervention for SLCN and that systems at all levels should work to prevent support SLCN⁴.

"Identifying and supporting children and young people's speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) accurately and early means fewer issues later on. Early identification is a well-evidenced, cost-effective approach shown to result in longer term economic benefits; yet still too many children are being missed⁴."

- 3.1.3 Following the SEND CQC and Ofsted inspection in 2020, SLCN has been a key focus of improvement in Shropshire, with the SLC workstream established in February 2021. Local Authority representatives are collaborating with CCG and NHS partners, Parent and Carer forums and Early years settings as part of the six WSoA to develop plans for improving SLCN provision and services in Shropshire⁵.
- 3.1.4 The following delivery plan has been developed between stakeholders which aims to drive forward the required improvements in Shropshire, demonstrating a commitment for improving the SLCN system using a whole system approach. This is part of the WSoA which works to improve SLCN support and to promote prevention and early intervention of SLCN.

3.2 Delivery Plan Summary

Joint Vision Statement:

The culture of SLCN being everyone's business / responsibility with all parts of the system taking responsibility and ALL, including parents, carers and educators, being empowered with the ability to support SLC to enable meaningful progress in a timely way for Children and Young People (CYP) with SLCN. Ensuring the right support is available at the right time and promoting that communication is fun!

Aims:

- To ensure that CYP are Identified and supported with SLCN. This should be at the right time and the right place.
- To identify what services and support are available for SLCN at all levels of the system.
- To create clear pathways of support for SLCN within the system using an integrated approach.
- To encourage innovation in relation to service delivery.
- To strengthen the links between Early years settings, Public Health Nursing services, Health services and parents.
- To develop the confidence of all partners to know they can provide valuable support for SLC.

Need:

- Too many children in reception year do not achieve at least the expected levels across all goals in 'communication and language' and 'literacy' areas of learning.
- Shropshire: 73.6%
- National: 72.6%

- Lack of joined up, strategic approach for children in the Early Years and their families resulting in gaps and duplication in provision, missed opportunities and needs.
- Some parents/carers can face challenges in supporting their child's SLCN development, contributing to a word gap that is already present by the age of 3.
- Some professionals across the Early Years system require more support to develop and maximise opportunities to identify and support SLCN.
- There is inconsistency in school and Early years settings provision to support SLC development.
- There is a lack of understanding by professionals across the Early Years system and parents/carers on how SLCN can be supported in all settings prior to/without the need to refer to the specialist Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) services.
- There is uncertainty surrounding what support is available and a mapping exercise has been highlighted as essential to progression.

Input:

- Wider stakeholder input across the system.
- Joint working between all services.
- Mapping of the system and services- split into universal, targeted and specialised.
- Reviewing the strategy statement to ensure it is appropriate to SLCN specifically.
- Shared priorities between SLCN workstreams and the wider SEND workstreams.
- Shared outcomes and measuring of outcomes.
- Ensure the work undertaken sits within the Integrated Care System (ICS) work between Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.
- Ensure all relevant services are receiving training in the relevant SLCN assessment tools to use them in practice.
- Increase provision for integrated Reviews (All about me at 2) between Public Health nurses and Early years settings.
- Improve information sharing between agencies.
- SLCN training to reach all relevant agencies and staff members, including Early years settings.
- Key messages surrounding communication to be given to parents/carers in all settings.
- Funding for early years and health, including the early years (EY) entitlements, Public Health Grant and EYs social mobility programme, which includes: Hungry Little Minds (to support the home learning environment).
- Increased parent involvement across the system.

Output:

- Clear pathways for the system help to improve service delivery and avoid duplication.
- Number of organisations endorsing the vision.
- Wider stakeholder engagement and involvement.
- Driving forward actions through an integrated approach and collaboration.
- Wider knowledge of SLCN across the system.
- Better understanding of need through empowering parents to be involved throughout the process.
- Increase the number of parents receiving SLCN focussed interventions carried out in the home (Health visitors).
- Increased number of parents/carers receiving evidence based SLCN messages, reinforced by professionals to build knowledge and skills to support interaction with their children.

- Increased number of children who receive universal and targeted support and intervention.

Outcomes:

- Ensuring the children who need specialist intervention are able to receive this at the right time.
- Wider reach and contributions to the vision.
- Promotes a whole-system approach.
- Increased understanding and opportunities for collaborative working across the Early Years system on the Local Area's strategic priorities.
- CYP identified and supported with their SLCN. Empowers families and parents to build confidence in their role to play - reduce the reliance of the medical model.
- Parents/Carers have increased knowledge and are able to maximise opportunities to promote SLCN.
- Increased understanding of parent/carer experiences.
- A confident and competent workforce that is able to deliver effective support at universal and targeted level.
- Increased confidence from families that their child has the right support at the right time.
- Improved quality of integrated approach and clear actions to work towards the vision.

Impact:

- The % of children achieving the expected level across all goals in the 'communication and language' and 'literacy' areas of learning at the end of reception year will increase by 25% by 2025. (Baseline set using 2019 data).
- The percentage of children not achieving at least the expected level across all goals in the 'communication and language' and 'literacy' areas of learning at the end of reception year, is reduced by half by 2028- (72% 2018 so 2028 needs to be 86%).

4. Risk assessment and opportunities appraisal

(NB This will include the following: Risk Management, Human Rights, Equalities, Community, Environmental consequences and other Consultation)

There are no Human Rights, Environmental Consequences, Community or Equality issues identified with the provision of these updates.

5. Financial implications

Increased provision of training in SLCN for Early years and Education will require additional funding which relevant members are working to secure.

6. Additional Information

None

7. Conclusions

This report works to provide an update on the SLCN WSoA, outlining the delivery plan for SLCN in Shropshire. It is the vision of all members that SLCN should be made a priority across the system to ensure SLCN is 'everyone's business'. The WSoA will continue to collaborate and aim to drive forward the necessary changes outlined in the Delivery plan.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

References and background papers

- ¹Public Health England. (2020). Best Start in Speech Language and Communication: Guidance to support Commissioners and Service Leads. *Department of Health and Social Care*.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/931310/BSSLC_Guidance.pdf
- ²Law, J., Mcbean, K., Rush, R. (2011). Communication skills in a population of primary school-aged children raised in an area of pronounced social disadvantage. *International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders*. 46(6). pp. 657-64.
- ³Lock, A., Ginsborg, J., Peers, I. Development and disadvantage: Implications for the early years and beyond. (2002). *International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders*. 37(1). pp. 3-15.
- ⁴I CAN; Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists. (2018). Bercow: 10 years on. An independent review of provision for children and young people with speech, language and communication needs in England. *I Can; RCSLT*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.bercow10yearson.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/337644-ICAN-Bercow-Report-WEB.pdf>
- ⁵Shropshire Council. (2020). Shropshire Local Area Written Statement of Action. *NHS Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Shropshire Council & PACC*. Retrieved from:
<https://shropshire.gov.uk/media/16591/local-area-send-inspection-written-statement-of-action-november-2020.pdf>
- ¹Public Health England. (2020). Best Start in Speech Language and Communication: Guidance to support Commissioners and Service Leads. *Department of Health and Social Care*.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/931310/BSSLC_Guidance.pdf
- ²Law, J., Mcbean, K., Rush, R. (2011). Communication skills in a population of primary school-aged children raised in an area of pronounced social disadvantage. *International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders*. 46(6). pp. 657-64.
- ³Lock, A., Ginsborg, J., Peers, I. Development and disadvantage: Implications for the early years and beyond. (2002). *International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders*. 37(1). pp. 3-15.
- ⁴Shropshire Council. (2020). Shropshire Local Area Written Statement of Action. *NHS Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Shropshire Council & PACC*.
<https://shropshire.gov.uk/media/16591/local-area-send-inspection-written-statement-of-action-november-2020.pdf>

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) or your organisational lead e.g. Exec lead or Non-Exec/Clinical Lead

Cllr. Dean Carroll, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Assets

Appendices