

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee
Date: February 2021
Report for: Information
Report of: Director of Education, Standards, Performance and Quality Assurance

Report Title

SEND Preparing for Adulthood (PfA)

Summary

Following a previous report in January 2020 which referenced the Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) Protocol, an update has been provided with regard to its implementation and planned next steps.

Recommendation(s)

That the contents of the report are noted.

Contact person(s) for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Karen Samples: Director of Education, Standards, Quality and Performance
Sally Smith: Head of Inclusion
Jacqueline Coulton: Chief Nurse
Colin Reynolds: Service Manager for Complex Needs Team Adults/Community Learning Disability Team

1. Introduction: Trafford's Local Area SEND Ambitions

Following a SEND Visioning Day held in partnership with Trafford Parent/Carers Forum, the vision and priorities were agreed. In essence, our ambitions are quite simply focused on ensuring our children/young people and their families get the right support from all partners so that they achieve well and are happy and safe. These are:

1. To promote co-production at the heart of professional practice so that the voice of children, young people and their families is at the heart of all we do.
2. Build stakeholder confidence by delivering timely information, advice and support and a high quality statutory assessment process which meets timescales and ensures that children and young people with SEND, and their parents and carers, are considered at every stage of the process.
3. Develop the quality and capacity of early years providers, schools and colleges to meet the needs of local families and their children with SEND.

4. Deliver greater local integration and co-ordination of education, health and social care services and plans for children and families to promote positive and seamless transitions at all stages between the ages of 0-25 years.

5. Develop outcome-focused approaches to joint commissioning and integrated working to promote early identification and intervention.

6. Maintain strong outcomes for Trafford SEND pupils, so that they achieve outcomes which are above national expectations for similar pupils and where possible, prevent school exclusions.

We are also committed to ensure the voice of the child is the golden thread running through each and every one of the ambitions so that our young people feel that they have helped to shape and influence the Trafford SEND experience. These ambitions were tested throughout the recent Peer Challenge process to ensure they were the right priorities for the Local Area and could be updated on the basis of the findings of the review.

Trafford are steadfast to the expectations in the SEND Code of practice 0-25yrs as we know being supported towards greater independence and employability can be life-transforming for children and young people with SEND.

The SEND Code of Practice states 'This support needs to start early, and should centre around the child or young person's own aspirations, interests and needs. All professionals working with them should share high aspirations and have a good understanding of what support is effective in enabling children and young people to achieve their ambitions'. Trafford's PfA protocol and the work lead by the PfA Board aim to put this into practice.

Preparing for adulthood means preparing for:

- Higher education and/or employment – this includes exploring different employment options, such as support for becoming self-employed and help from supported employment agencies
- Independent living – this means young people having choice, control and freedom over their lives and the support they have, their accommodation and living arrangements, including supported living
- Participating in society, including having friends and supportive relationships, and participating in, and contributing to, the local community
- Being as healthy as possible in adult life and strategic planning for the best outcomes in adult life

We recognise as an LA we must work with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to place children, young people and families at the centre of our planning, and work with them to develop co-ordinated approaches to securing better outcomes.

2. Trafford Preparing for Adulthood Protocol

'High aspirations are crucial to success – discussions about longer term goals should start early and ideally well before Year 9 (age 13-14) at school. They should focus on the child or young person's strengths and capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve'

(SEND Code of Practice 0-25yrs, 2015). In Trafford we have introduced PfA outcomes into EHCPs from Y6 onwards. We share the national PfA guidance with all schools starting with the [PfA outcomes across the age ranges for CYP with SEND](#) and plan to continue to embed this practice over the next year.

Trafford's revised Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) protocol sets out the local area's commitment to supporting those young people who may have the need for additional care and support in adulthood. It reflects Trafford's approach to multi-agency practice across the areas of Education Health and Social Care and describes how all the agencies will fulfil their duties and responsibilities under current legislation and guidance relating to transition. The PfA protocol lays out arrangements for an embedded PfA database within Liquid Logic that allows the local authority and partner agencies to track individual young people through their PfA journey or to recognise them as cohorts along a Complex Needs pathway, Neighbourhood Pathway and Independence Pathway.

The PfA webpage continues to be developed and acts as a young person's / parents and professional portal to all things PfA. The website is designed to reflect the four PfA outcomes and will provide all the necessary information to allow families and professionals navigate this complex landscape. It does this by providing information and links to both internal and external agencies.

[Preparing for Adulthood | Trafford Directory](#)

3. The PfA Journey for Young People

This pathway outlines the steps to support young people transferring from children's to adults services, however we accept these are not yet firmly embedded and this is being addressed through the ambition plan.

Year 9 (Age 13-14)

What changes for a young person

- The young person begins the Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) pathway aspect of their EHCP.
- The young person's EHC Plan will have outcomes related to education, work and independent living
- The young person will be placed on the SEND Monitoring Group database who will allocate the young person to the required PfA Pathway or request further information.
- The EHCP workspace for the young person will be made available to adult health and social care services.
- All health services involved with a young person with an EHCP will review outcomes for PfA

Year 10 (Age 14-15)

What changes for a young person

- Between the ages of 15 and 17 years, the young person's EHC Plan will be adapted to reflect their changing needs as they make their journey into adulthood, with all agencies contributing to the Education, Health and Care plan.

Year 11 (Age 15-16)

What changes for a young person

This is a key decision making year for many young people.

- Young people are supported to make decisions regarding their post 16 education

- The Educational psychologist assessment is updated if not recent.
- A multi-agency PfA annual review of the EHCP is undertaken. For those children with Complex needs an indicative care act assessment is completed which, when read alongside the EHC Plan, supports adult services in their decision making of when they will become involved for the Care Act assessment.
- Community services managing conditions such as asthma or epilepsy will hand over the case management to the young person's GP. Health and wellbeing post 16 is supported by the school nursing service.
- If young people have capacity then they can manage their own direct payments

Year 12 (Age 16-17)

What changes for a young person

- The young person is presumed by the Children and families Act (2014) to be competent to make their own decisions in regard to their health, care and education.
- Some young people will start college or engage in training. This will continue for 2 years for young people in mainstream schools (until 18) or 3 years for specialist schools.
- There may be work experience opportunities depending on course / institution.
- Preparations are made for any developmental therapy interventions (speech and language / physiotherapy) to be delivered through the GP.
- Plans are made for young people to transfer from children services to adult services if eligible

Year 13 (17-18)

What changes for a young person

- Legal childhood ends and a young person is legally considered an adult when 18
- Young people may begin to receive state benefits in their own name.
- Indicative Care Act assessments are completed on all children on the Complex Needs Pathway. That assessment is used by the Complex Needs team, in conjunction with the EHCP, to determine timeliness of allocation and Care Act assessment.
- EHC Plans are not continued into Higher Education but the LA should ensure a smooth transition before ceasing the plan.
- Preparations are completed for therapy services to end and for young person's health and therapeutic needs to be met through the GP.
- Healthy Young minds involvement ends and young people's support is delivered through voluntary or community groups. For young people with eligible mental health needs, the care will be delivered through adult mental health services.
- Care is delivered through Neighbourhood / Complex Needs Adult Social Care teams or Cheshire Wirral Partnership for eligible adults.

4. PfA Pathways

Each young person has an individual PfA form which describes the actions needed by agencies to meet the PfA outcomes. This creates the linkage between the Education, Health and Care Plan with the action planning of other agencies.

The monitoring of compliance and the gathering of intelligence is the remit of the PfA Monitoring groups. A PfA monitoring group (complex needs) has been established and meets bi-monthly. The purpose of this group is to gather assurance that the protocol is being implemented effectively and to monitor the cohorts of young people as they move through to accessing appropriate adult services in line with the new pathway model.

The multi-agency pathway groups are responsible for the monthly review of cases on a rolling basis, setting of actions in line with the PfA outcomes and ensuring the database is updated. These groups are multi agency and include representation from education, health and social care.

a. PfA Independence Pathway

The Independence Pathway is for young people with an EHCP but are unlikely to need care and support into adulthood. This is determined by the Care Act screening tool undertaken following Year 9 and, if necessary confirmed by the Care Act Indicative Assessment following Year 11. If the Care Act screening tool indicates that the young person is unlikely to be eligible for adult social care services (eg: they have needs based on circumstances rather than arising from or are related to a physical or mental impairment or illness) then involvement from adult social care services may be limited and the Preparing for Adulthood EHC plan needs to be focused on the young person's education, employment, independent living, community inclusion and health and include advice and guidance. If specialist advice and guidance is required a referral into Adult Social Care will be required.

b. Neighbourhood Pathway

This Pathway is for young people who are likely to need care and support into adulthood and those interventions will be delivered through the All Age Neighbourhood Teams. This will be determined by the Care Act screening tool at year 9 and confirmed by the Indicative Care Act assessment completed at year 11. This support may be delivered by exploration of a person's individual and community assets from an Adult Social Care perspective or by adult health services. This would be dependent on individual transition protocols and eligibility criteria for each service. It is likely that the young person's future needs for care and support arise from or are related to a physical or mental impairment or illness and are not caused by other circumstantial factors.

Young people on the PfA **Independence Enhanced Pathway** are likely to have multi agency reviewing processes either social care as Looked After Child or Child in Need or health due to social, emotional and mental health issues. It is likely their future needs for care and support arise from or are related to a physical or mental impairment or illness and are not caused by other circumstantial factors. They are likely to need specialist support in adulthood due to; autism, mental health issues, or learning disabilities meaning they may require care and support into adulthood.

c. Complex Needs Pathway

This pathway is for young people who are likely to need care and support into adulthood and those services will be delivered through the Complex Needs (adult social care and health) Team. That support may be delivered by either or both adult social care or adult health services subject to the individual transition protocols and eligibility criteria for each service.

5. The findings of the Peer Challenge regarding Preparing for Adulthood

- **Communicate clearly with children and families describing the provision and transition support available to them 0-25+**
- **Develop an employability pathway for those with less obvious needs and those with high functioning ASC where traditional supported internships are not appropriate**

The findings of the Peer Review reported several emerging improvements around Preparing for Adulthood as follows:

- ✓ Young people the peer team met were confident about their transition, they spoke about the support from their schools, college or the Sensory Impairment Service
- ✓ The Transitions Board has been refreshed with new terms of reference and a new Chair. (**See Appendix 1**)
- ✓ Educational Psychologists and SENCOs are using Preparing for Adulthood outcomes as the basis for their reports and reviews.
- ✓ There is a commitment to learning from practice and being responsive to young people's changing needs

However, the reviewers also reported the limited evidence that there is sufficient focus on the voice, views and lived experience of children and families at key transition points from 0-25. There are real concerns from parents about transition from primary to secondary and from 14+ - words used included 'frightened', 'fearful', 'terrified'.

Trafford's Education, Health and Care Plans have been reviewed to reflect the 4 key elements of PfA; Employment, Independent Living, Community Inclusion and Health, and these are considered from year 6 to support a young person's transition into secondary education. However, the Peer Review also stated that it appears that it is easier for those transitioning to adult health services who have a clear medical need or learning disability rather than those young people with less obvious needs. This gap may be exacerbated by post-COVID-19 emerging or unassessed needs.

As a result, some families would benefit from support around transitions, particularly around preparing for adulthood and the changing relationship with their child. For many they have been the child's principal advocate and the change to a world where their child has an independent voice may be a particular challenge.

Finally, although the Sensory Impairment Support Service, SEN Advisory Service and Educational Psychology Service provide advice and guidance to educational settings and specific ideas are shared with SENCOs, including the writing of Preparing for Adulthood outcomes for EHC plans and supporting young people directly when transitioning to Post 16 education, the review reported the inconsistent picture of adult health and care services involvement in supporting young people and that these services are not being involved soon enough.

Through the strengthened partnership meetings which are being embedded into the pathways, we are committed to ensure earlier involvement takes place to ensure a smooth and cohesive transition.

6. Next Steps

▪ Parent Experience Panels

Through the Communication & Engagement group, and in partnership with Trafford Parent/Carer Forum, a calendar of events have been devised to enable Parent Experience Panels to present to professionals on a series of themes, one of which is Preparing for Adulthood. These are designed for both positive and challenging experiences to be shared in order for lessons to be learned and improvements to be agreed. This is a valuable opportunity for effective co-production and the experience of our young people and their families, to influence and shape future working.

The PfA Board will also provide scrutiny for case studies which will be shared with the SEND Strategic Board.

▪ Roll out of online training to all professionals

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, training on the PfA protocol has been delayed, but is looking to be rolled out in the next few months.

We are working to plan a training programme for professionals around national PfA materials and person centred-working to utilise the experiences gathered and to complement other approaches.

- **Living my best life**

The PfA Board is focusing on creating ways of ensuring that the young person's voice is heard through developing self and citizen advocacy approaches and utilising "Living my Best Life" assessment tools and planning. This will in turn enable the identification of barriers to achieving the individual's full potential and the prioritisation of work outside the traditional commissioning of services to facilitate inclusion and integration in the local community and communities of interest.

The Learning Disability Team is also prioritising strength-based conversations around support and advocacy support during pathways to adulthood and legal literacy in helping people to understand how the law may change.

- **Earlier engagement**

We remain committed to ensuring that transition commences earlier to ensure more timely joint working and planning between all who are involved in a person's life and streamlined assessments so young people and their families are not repeating their story. Work is also taking place to ensure there is a full multi-disciplinary team attending all reviews.

APPENDIX 1

Trafford Transition - Preparing for Adulthood Board **Terms of Reference** **March 2021**

1. Purpose

The purpose and function of the Transition Board is

- To have a strategic overview of transition for all children and young people in receipt of a service who will transition into adult services.
- To pay particular attention to supporting the smooth transition of children who are subject to Education, Health and Care Plans who will be in receipt of services from two areas or more (education, health or social care) when they move into adulthood and those with complex health needs
- To retain strategic oversight of all associated Preparing for Adulthood pathway's data sets and any 'unlock' any potential barriers to achievement
- To ensure strategic oversight of young people and their journey to influence and deliver demonstrable practice improvement and improved outcomes for Children and young people
- To take a lessons learned approach

2. Responsibilities

The Transition Board will be responsible for:

- Establishing, delivery and monitoring a PfA Strategy & protocol and any associated action plan.
- Monitoring the delivery of the action plan monitoring against defined timescales.
- Ensuring links and interdependencies with other Boards are identified and addressed.

- Supporting the cascading of information to relevant; stakeholders/ groups/ organisations.
- Ensuring accountability to the Health & Well Being Board and SEND board.
- Providing assurance to the SEND Board that the Preparing for Adult processes for young people with EHCP's and other specific groups are robust and achieving against the outcomes set by the Board.
- Reviewing the performance reports of the sub groups relevant to Preparing for Adulthood. Currently these are the PfA Enhanced group, PfA Neighbourhood Group and the PfA Complex Needs Group.
- Monitoring and managing the effectiveness of the PfA pathways and working to improve processes and unblock areas of concern.
- A separate group will be established up to act as a mediation forum for individual cases which require strategic decision making, where attempts at reaching a resolution have proved challenging. An action log will be kept of these cases for audit purposes which will include personally identifiable data accessible to only the Chair & Co-chair.

3. Membership

The membership of the PfA Board will consist of:

- Director – Director of nursing
- Director – Education
- Director - Adults
- Director – Children's Services
- Strategic Lead – Complex Needs
- Strategic Leads – Adult neighbourhood services
- Head of Service – Inclusion
- Designated Nurse – Safeguarding and LAC
- Designated Nurse - Adults
- Representative - Joint Commissioning Unit
- Representative – Cheshire Wirral Partnership
- Representative - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Representative – Parents Forum
- Representative - Voluntary Sector
- Representative - Youth Justice
- Representative - Self-Advocacy Group – voice of young people.

Others may be invited to attend as appropriate and co-opted as necessary.

Members may send someone to represent them but the representative must come fully briefed and with the designated authority of the Board Member to take action as required.

The Board will ensure that appropriate methods are found to include the voice of young people in its meetings.

4. Frequency

The meetings will be held on a quarterly basis. More often by exception.

5. Governance

The Chair will be Director - Chief Nurse.

The Deputy Chairs will be - Head of Service - Inclusion
Strategic Lead - Complex Needs