The SEND reforms in England: Supporting children and young people with speech, language and communication needs
THANK YOU
SEND reforms in England

- Successes
- Concerns
SEND reforms in England

Biggest education reforms in a generation

Welcome to the webinar:
SEND reforms: an introduction for SLTs

26th January 2015
#SEND

Children and Families Act 2014
Key areas of concern/engagement:
- classification of speech and language therapy as special educational provision
- joint commissioning for children and young people without education, health and care (EHC) plans

Expert legal advice highlighted gaps in the joint commissioning duty. There was concern that in practice local authorities and health partners may not secure support for children without EHC plans.
Joint commissioning

Coalition of support

Royal College of Nursing  Nasen  National Association of Headteachers  British Association for Community Child  Special Educational Consortium

Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health  Every Disabled Child Matters  National Autistic Society  Children’s Heart Federation  The Communication Trust

Afasic  Independent Parental Special Education Advice  British Stammering Association  Guide Dogs  Rainbow Trust Children’s Charity

Selective Mutism Information and Research Association  Children’s Services Development Group  Jean Gross CBE  Brian Lamb OBE
Joint commissioning

Action following implementation

2015 General Election:
- further legal advice from David Wolfe QC
- manifesto asks regarding children and young people
- meetings with ministers and shadow ministers, including Edward Timpson MP
SEND reforms report – why now?

- Member feedback
- Full implementation
SEND reforms report

The SEND report developed in response to member concerns:

- support for children without EHC plans
- cliff edge in support for young people
- variable implementation of joint commissioning arrangements

In July 2016, we commissioned SQW to conduct a survey of our members to find out more about their experiences of the SEND reforms.
SEND reforms report

- Our new report brings together:
  - survey findings
  - case studies of good practice and challenges faced by services
  - practical policy recommendations
SEND reforms report

Key headlines

- Involvement of parents and carers in decision-making and partnership working – highlighted by 87% of respondents
- SLTs’ confidence in helping deliver the changes – highlighted by 66%
SEND reforms report

Key headlines

- Children without education health and care (EHC) plans are not getting the support that they need.

- Joint commissioning arrangements are patchy, and in some cases SLT services are not being commissioned for children and young people.

- SLTs have experienced capacity challenges in terms of engagement in the EHC planning process.
SEND reforms report

SLTs reported a refocus of resources to support children with EHC plans, which has often been to the detriment of children without EHC plans.

- Nearly half (45%) of SLTs said that they lack the time and resources to support children without EHC plans.
- Just 40% of SLTs said that they were able to support children without EHC plans.
- 15% of SLTs responded don’t know or other.
Send reforms report

Survey findings: joint commissioning

- Members reported that joint commissioning arrangements are patchy, and in some cases speech and language therapy services are not being commissioned for children and young people.

- SLTs reported varied and inconsistent joint commissioning arrangements between health, education and social care agencies at a local level.
SEND reforms report

Survey findings: 0-2s

- 43% of respondents reflected that SLT support was not being commissioned for children aged 0-2 years following implementation of the reforms.

- SLTs who shared further information regarding why they did not feel that support was being commissioned for children aged 0-2 highlighted reductions in, and a lack of funding/resourcing for early intervention and early years work.

“Our early years service has been stripped back to the point where it is difficult for the under threes to get seen by SLT”
43% of respondents reflected that SLT support was not being commissioned for children aged 18-25 years following implementation of the reforms.

SLTs who shared further information highlighted the following:
- reductions in or a lack of local funding
- a lack of clarity regarding how support should be commissioned for young people
- resistance from post-16 education providers and adult health to support the age 18-25 group
Survey findings: engagement in the EHC planning process

SLTs have experienced capacity challenges engaging with the EHC planning process:

- SLTs have reported that they lack capacity to attend EHC planning meetings (33% of respondents said that they or their team felt unable to attend meetings as a result of capacity issues).

- Respondents also raised issues regarding a lack of notice being given by local authority colleagues to provide inputs to the EHC assessment and planning processes.
Policy recommendations

Reductions in speech and language therapy support for children and young people without EHC plans

- Calling on government departments to provide clarity on, and reinforce, the responsibilities of local authorities, schools and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to commission services for children without EHC plans.

- Working with the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) to develop advice and information for schools regarding how to support children with SLCN and how they can buy in speech and language therapy services directly.
Policy recommendations

Variable implementation of joint commissioning and a lack of speech and language therapy support for children aged 0-2 and 18-25

- **0-2s:** Calling on the DfE to develop guidance and a national framework regarding children’s early language and communication skills as part of the forthcoming early years workforce strategy and consultation on children’s centres.
SEND reforms report

Policy recommendations

- **18-25s**: we are calling on the Minister of State for Vulnerable Children and Families and the Department for Education to:
  - Provide clarity regarding which local agencies are responsible for commissioning speech and language services for young people aged 18-25.
  - Conduct research which will map gaps in the commissioning of local speech and language therapy services for young people aged 18-25.
  - Identify how existing financial resources can be reallocated to address commissioning gaps regarding speech and language therapy services which support young people aged 18-25.
  - Incorporate a review of how areas are responding to the extension in commissioning for young people aged 18-25, as part of the Ofsted and Care Quality Commission joint SEND inspection process.
Policy recommendations

Capacity challenges associated with the EHC planning process

- We are calling on the Department for Education to recognise the challenges faced by SLTs and other practitioners in attending EHC planning meetings, and the need to increase capacity within the system in order to deliver requirements within the allocated timescales. The combination of inflexibility within the system and high caseloads are leading to poorer results.

- We are calling on the Department for Education and local government sector partners to develop resources that can support local authority areas with the paperwork associated with EHC planning meetings and resource allocation systems.

- We are calling on local government sector partners to develop training and resources that can help to support and develop the skills of case workers who are responsible for coordinating and developing EHC plans.
SEND reforms report

Policy recommendations
Continuing partnership working with families and other professionals

- In 2017, the RCSLT will hold a joint roundtable with social care sector organisations to discuss ways to support partnership working between speech and language therapy services and adult social care colleagues to improve outcomes for young people with SLCN.

- In 2017, the RCSLT will work with external partners, including SEND support services and voluntary organisations that support children with SLCN to develop resources that can help support greater involvement of children in decisions regarding their care.
How the APPG can help

• Highlight the report’s findings in parliamentary arena and express support for policy recommendations
• Seek a response from the Government
- Thank you
- Any questions