

Peterborough Specialist SEN Hub Network.

Review of progress and plans for the future – first published March 2020. This version contains an update for the period April 2020- August 2021.

1. Background

1.1 The present network of Specialist Hubs was established in September 2016 following a detailed review of existing specialist provision, including the previous “Enhanced Resource Provisions” (ERPs). The existing budget was maintained and reconfigured, with savings reinvested to open new hubs.

1.2 A service level agreement (SLA) was developed and agreed with the Hub settings, before it was signed by all participants for the 2016-17 academic year. The main body of the SLA was the same for all settings, with the specific arrangements for each specified in a separate schedule. The SLAs and a guaranteed level of funding were put in place for 3 years, i.e. until August 2019. The total budget for all hubs in 2018/19 was £1,909,000.

1.3 The original ERPs were hosted by four primary and four secondary schools. While there were changes at individual schools in the number of funded places and the level of top up funding, all eight schools remained involved. A further three schools (one nursery, one special and two secondary) were also added to the network of Hubs to produce the following configuration:-

1.4 Early Years and Primary Phase

	Ages	Type of need
Caverstede Nursery	EYFS	EY SEND
Middleton Primary	4-11	HI
Ormiston Meadows Academy	4-11	PD
Southfields Primary	4-11	SLCN
Welbourne Primary	7-11	Autism
Nene Gate Special School	8-11	SEMH

Secondary Phase

	Ages	Type of need
Arthur Meadows Village College	11-16	VI
Jack Hunt	11-16	PD
Jack Hunt	11-16	HI
Nene Park Academy	11-16	Autism
Ormiston Bushfield Academy	11-16	SEMH
Queen Katharine Academy	11-16	SpLD
St John Fisher	11-16	HI

Table 1: 2016 to 2019 configuration

1.4 The key difference between the new hubs and the previous ERPs was the development of a dual function: -

- (i) A Centre of Expertise role to support all mainstream schools to develop greater expertise and confidence (resilience) in meeting the SEND of their pupils locally. This was in the context of Peterborough having a higher proportion of its pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in special schools, and a correspondingly lower proportion in its mainstream schools, than regional and national averages.
- (ii) A specialist provision role for a smaller number of pupils placed on the roll of the Hub School following an EHCP assessment.

1.5 The balance between Centre of Expertise work and specialist provision for children placed on the Hub roll through EHCPs has varied from school to school and has changed over time as the expertise of local mainstream schools has developed. A major change of emphasis has been Hub schools' centre of expertise role to support inclusive and whole-school approaches to SEN as well as on the specific type of need in the designation.

1.6 DfE national funding requirements meant that it was necessary for Peterborough to finance all Hub schools solely through an agreed number of notional places. This was not helpful because it resulted in some arbitrary allocations and a lack of clarity about the funding for its dual role. Fortunately, the DfE funding methodology has now changed, and from September 2019 it is possible to improve clarity by separately identifying for each school a lump sum for Centre of Expertise work and then funding a specific number of Hub places.

1.7 Each Hub has been supported by an identified LA Link Officer to:

- provide support, information and advice
- facilitate effective two-way communication
- ensure common approaches between Hubs and consistency of message to schools across the city

1.8 The purpose of this report is to evaluate progress over the 3-year span of the project and to make recommendations about the continuing development of the hub network. The SLA included a requirement for brief standardised termly and annual progress reports. and these have formed the basis of independent yearly evaluations in September 2017 and November 2018 shared with Schools Forum.

2. **Current position**

2.1 On-going monitoring and annual reviews of the SLAs have shown a pattern of steady progress in developing expertise both in the Hub schools themselves and the mainstream schools that they support, so that there is increased

Appendix 1 - Review of Hub Arrangements

confidence and willingness to meet the needs of pupils locally. Equally importantly, pupils placed in the Hubs have also made encouraging progress against their individual targets.

- 2.2 A new SLA has been agreed to cover the period from 2019-2024 with an initial 3-year guarantee of funding. This has also provided an opportunity to review the level and range of provision in response to changing patterns of demand. This has resulted in one Hub facility beginning a phasing out process (Jack Hunt's HI Hub) and in two additions to the Hub Network (Ken Stimpson for Autism and Marshfields for Complex Learning Difficulties), plus extension of the age ranges at Welbourne and Nene Gate.
- 2.3 This produces the following configuration (where the age range for commissioned places is different from the hub centre of expertise role, it is indicated in the final column): -

	Age range	Type of need	2019-2022 commissioned places
Caverstede Nursery	EYFS	EY SEND	0
Middleton Primary	4-11	HI	4
Ormiston Meadows Primary	4-11	PD	6
Southfields Primary	4-11	SLCN	6
Welbourne Primary	5-11	Autism	8
Nene Gate Special School	5-14	SEMH	10 (8-11 years)
Marshfields	7-11	LD	6 (9-11 years)
Arthur Meadows Village College	11-16	VI	0
Jack Hunt	11-16	PD	6
Jack Hunt	11-16	HI	3 (0 2020)
Ken Stimpson	11-16	Autism	4 (6 from 2020)
Nene Park Academy	11-16	Autism	10 (8 from 2020)
Ormiston Bushfield Academy	11-16	SEMH	0
Thomas Deacon Academy	11-16	SpLD	2
St John Fisher	11-16	HI	4
Totals	-	-	69 (66)

Table 2: 2019 to 2022 configuration

- 2.4 The SLA now includes a requirement that each school produces an annual Hub Action Plan, which would be developed during the first term of the 2019-20 academic year and could include suggestions from the local area. The school is also required to work in liaison with an LA Link Officer to provide regular data to monitor its impact on mainstream practice and outcomes for individual pupils.

3. Summary of Progress

- 3.1 When the Hub Network started operating in September 2016, the schools began their journeys from a variety of different starting points. The Jack Hunt

School, for instance, had a long history of Knowledge and experience with physical impairments whereas Arthur Mellows Village College Hub became a new hub from September 2017. Consequently, a priority in the first year of operation was to consolidate internal knowledge and practice and develop a coherent network of support across all schools in the city through the “Centre of Excellence” role.

3.2 As part of the SLA all Hubs complete an end of year report (“Schedule 2”) to identify: -

- How resources have been used over the previous year.
- Areas of success to be celebrated
- Attainments of pupils on roll (where applicable)
- Achievements in the centre of expertise role
- Proposed changes and priorities for development during the following academic year

3.3 This data, together with ongoing feedback from schools and other service users, has formed the basis for an independent annual evaluation report. This has been consistently positive, highlighting many examples of good practice and innovation (Appendix A).

3.4 Achievements in the first year included: -

- Establishing consistent admissions guidance for the LA Provision Panel.
- Developing an effective working partnership between Link Officers and Hub staff.
- Delivering a range of targeted training opportunities for specialist teaching and support staff both within the Hubs and their host schools.
- Offering a wide range of advice and support activities to mainstream schools from both specialist and general SEN perspectives.
- Creating a sense of belonging and learning from each other within the hub network alongside the already established SENCO network.
- Ensuring that the children on hub rolls were able to make progress.
- Using hub resources to develop and extend work with parents/carers and collaboration with Family Voice Peterborough.

3.5 The outcomes for pupils placed on the role of Hub schools typically included: -

- higher than average attendance rates
- at least expected levels of progress in curriculum and achievement
- high levels of positive behaviour
- increased confidence and levels of inclusion and independence
- increased parental involvement and levels of satisfaction.

- 3.6 A growing sense of coherence and collaboration between Hubs was developed through termly hub network half-day events to share expertise and develop common approaches.
- 3.7 As part of this consolidation process, a termly questionnaire was developed and agreed with all Hubs to collect more consistent information on the impact of their work with mainstream schools, children on roll, parents and other stakeholders. This data has been used in subsequent evaluations.
- 3.8 The service continued to develop well during Year 2, building on its initial success and responding to recommendations made in the initial evaluation report. Notable achievements included: -
- Further development of expertise within Hubs
 - Good progress by pupils on roll and positive engagement of parents/carers
 - Increased levels of training and support work in early years settings, mainstream and special schools across the city. These sessions involved both specialist expertise and more general SEND issues (e.g., audits of SEND provision). Some training events were co-produced with national/regional organisations such as the Autism Education Trust and Guide Dogs Association, whilst others involved local specialist services e.g., for hearing impairments and for speech and language.
 - Increased collaboration with SENCO networks and Family Voice Peterborough which independently represents the views of parents and young people.
 - Quality audits within individual Hubs and whole school SEND audits and initiatives across host schools. Hub schools generally have the highest “secure” ratings for whole school SEND provision in City-wide audits.
 - Improved communication through school websites, leaflets, the Local Offer and SENCO networks.
 - Effective support and monitoring of transfers from and into mainstream schools and the FE Sector

4. Evaluation of 2018-19 Outcomes

- 4.1 The centre of expertise role has continued to develop well over the final year of the initial Service Level Agreement, and the number of training events and contacts with schools, parents and other educational settings significantly exceeded those recorded in the previous year. Comparison of 2017/18 and 2018/19 impact measures data from each hub is summarised by phase in Appendix B, where the final column shows the overall percentage increase between those two academic years.

- 4.2 It should be noted that this data is likely to underestimate the full extent of Hub activity over the year as it was not always possible to capture this consistently through the termly Impact Questionnaires returned for analysis, given the numbers of staff and settings involved. It is clear from analysis of Schedule 2 Questionnaires that Hubs:
- can justify their use of resources
 - have a range of staff and pupil achievements to celebrate
 - have plans in place to continue and further develop their expertise and influence within the learning community.
- 4.3 All Hubs have conducted internal quality assurance reviews and all host schools have been through at least one whole school SEND audit. Several (e.g., Welbourne, Middleton, Queen Katharine and Jack Hunt) are involved in continuing programmes of peer review. Throughout the Hub network there is clear evidence of high levels of support for both staff and pupils in host-schools from their specialist Hub staff. Importantly this includes induction programmes for newly appointed staff.
- 4.4 Where recorded, the level of satisfaction expressed by those attending training courses has been consistently high and recent feedback from Ofsted CQC local area inspection on the role and function of Hubs has been very positive. A questionnaire was distributed to all schools and educational settings in September 2019 to gather more detailed information about the impact and perceived value of Hubs.
- 4.5 50% of questionnaires sent to school settings in September 2019 have been returned: analysis of feedback demonstrates that the Hub Network is valued and is having a positive effect upon inclusion and good practice in the City. Headline messages are that: -
- The majority of responses (70%) were made on behalf of schools by SENCOs. Other contributions included Headteachers (5%), Assistant or Deputy Heads (9%) or Assistant SENCOs (5%).
 - 79% of respondents felt that Hubs are helpful or very helpful in meeting children's needs.
 - 82% of respondents felt that Hubs are helpful or very helpful in promoting the knowledge and skills of staff.
 - The most frequent forms of contact were visits to Hubs (26%), phone calls and emails (26%), training sessions (22%), visits from Hub staff (15%) and provision of resources (12%).
 - 27% of respondents had attended one training event and 49% had attended two or more events.

- The number of children judged to have benefitted from Hub services in individual schools was as follows:
 - between 1 and 5: 53% of responses
 - 6 - 10: 18% of responses
 - 10 - 20: 7% of responses
 - 20+: 4% of responses

No casework data is available to back-up these figures.

- The most positive impact of Hubs was reported as sharing information and resources (20%), providing advice (19%), direct pupil support (15%) and training events (15%). Other key functions mentioned included supporting practitioners (11%), supporting assessments (7%), observation/modelling good practice (7%) and networking (6%).
- A number of suggestions for improvement were made. These included training and open events outside school hours (20%), forums and conferences to promote good practice (15%), better awareness and more targeted e-mail information about training events and follow-up (15%), more time and availability of staff to attend training (10%), greater coordination of training across Hubs and SENI Services (10%) and continuing recognition of the work of Hubs (10%).

4.6 An initial aim of the Hub development programme has been to build a robust and self-sustaining professional network that provides a coherent and readily accessible SEND service to school staff, pupils, and parents. This aim has been met in large degree and there have been numerous examples of sharing knowledge, expertise, resources and research across specialisms and the network as a whole. Good links have also been maintained with established SENCO networks who also have a key role to play in promoting inclusion and good practice. A successful one-day conference was held in February 2019, providing an important stimulus for further collaboration and development by Hub staff and SEND practitioners across the city.

4.7 Effective communication is critical for the successful delivery of any service and all Hubs have a presence in some form or another on their school website. However, there is still a great deal of variability in the form that this takes, and no common standards have yet been agreed. Consequently, each Hub has been offered a meeting with an experienced Local Authority Officer to review their website's strengths and areas for improvement.

4.8 At the heart of all the work of all Hubs, is the achievement of learners with SEN and/or a disability. Whilst the centre of expertise role has a widespread influence upon this throughout the city, for some pupils the answer lies in a specialist placement within a Hub or in a Hub school with very high levels of support from specialist staff. Whilst the numbers of pupils requiring such placements has reduced in recent years, the progress of those attending Hubs

with an EHCP has been carefully monitored. This monitoring has included not only pupil achievement, but also the quality of their learning and social experiences. A regular feature of professional life in Hub schools is the “Learning Walk” where the Hub staff observe and work alongside mainstream colleagues to support and monitor practice. The result of this is that many Hubs report 100% of lessons attended by Hub pupils are good or better.

- 4.9 As in previous years the majority of pupils on Hub rolls are reported to have made progress against EHCP targets and in some cases to have met or exceeded expected progress against national targets. Attendance levels are high in all Hubs, with unavoidable physical difficulties being the main reason for absence. There are very few reports of behaviour difficulty and all pupils have as much inclusive experience as possible - either independently or with support according to individual needs.
- 4.10 The self-confidence and social achievement of pupils benefit from their Hub attendance and a number of significant personal achievements are reported. For instance, individual students have contributed to the Hub Network Conference and a review of the Local Offer, whilst others have acted as school ambassadors, contributed to school-student councils and in one case become Deputy Head boy. Planning and support for successful transition into the FE sector has also improved as the Hubs have become more established. Many examples are also given of participation in fieldtrips and after-school activities.
- 4.11 Numerous examples are given of efforts to engage parents and carers beyond their participation in annual reviews e.g. through coffee mornings, open-evenings, drop-in sessions, transition visits and family days. In at least three instances these have been organised jointly with voluntary organisations such as “Families First” (1) and “Family Voice Peterborough” (2) as was recommended in the September 2017 evaluation.
- 4.12 A Hub Action Plan was compiled following last year’s review. This is attached as Appendix C along with a summary of progress. All of the items raised have been addressed to some degree and those that need to be carried forward to next year are included in Section 5 below.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

- 5.1 The Peterborough Hub Network was launched in September 2016 with the intention to help ensure that the needs of children and young people with complex SEN and disabilities should be effectively met in their local communities.
- 5.2 The available evidence of the last three years indicates that the Hub Network has made a significant contribution by enhancing confidence and expertise in settings across the City, and by providing high-quality targeted support for

pupils placed in Hubs. The results of the recent questionnaire indicate that the network is engaged and appreciated across a broad range of school settings. Very specific data from Caverstede also demonstrates an extensive and highly regarded impact across 55 pre-school and early years settings in addition to its work with Infant, Primary and Special Schools referred to in Section 4.5 above.

5.3 The hub approach is innovative and continues to evolve, there is still work to do. Now they are consolidated, Hubs should play a key role in the implementation of the Joint Peterborough and Cambridgeshire SEND Strategy.

5.4 On the basis of the evidence available to date, the recommendations are that:

- (i) The Local Authority should continue to provide a clear leadership role in the promotion and continuing development of the Hub Network and should continue to monitor demography and demand for future places.
- (ii) Annual evaluations and termly returns of basic operational data should continue. As well as ensuring transparency, these provide an important means of identifying, celebrating and sharing good practice and innovation. They should also provide important information for future development needs.
- (iii) The Link Officer role should continue but with more coordination and moderation of data to ensure greater consistency and accuracy. This will be of particular importance following recent changes to the termly Impact Questionnaire from September 2019.
- (iv) A mechanism should also be agreed to ensure that there are appropriate links between SAMS officers and the work of Hubs with pupils both on and off their rolls.
- (v) Regular meetings of Hub and SENCO networks should continue to be facilitated, with some hubs being represented on the SENCO Network Steering group.
- (vi) Extending the Hub model to more schools should be investigated in relation to emerging demand and available funding.
- (vii) The review of website content should be completed, and a communication strategy (including common minimum standards) should be agreed.
- (viii) An updated Action Plan should be agreed to respond to key messages from schools' responses to the questionnaires and take forward lessons learned from the first three years of operation. This should include issues of communication and coordination across the Hub

Network, SEND Support Services and other agencies (including the voluntary sector).

- (ix) There should be close scrutiny of transition in and out of Hub schools to develop and build on good-practice case studies. This should include transition into the FE sector.
- (x) There should be further investigation of the outcomes of Hub interventions in mainstream settings, so that there is better tracking of the impact of those interventions on individual pupils/whole school practice.
- (xi) Engagement with parents and voluntary organisations should be further developed to ensure effective coproduction and partnership working.

6. Hub review – April 2020- August 2021

COVID 19 had a significant impact on the development of the SEN Specialist hub approach and for this reason an addition to the earlier paper has been produced below rather than a new report.

- ‘Hubs’ were able to maintain the delivery of training during this period on a virtual basis. Feedback around training continues to be very positive.
- The hubs organised and delivered a very successful virtual hub conference week in June 2021, with all hubs delivering at least one training sessions on a board range of subjects to mixed audiences, to include, parents, education staff, governors, health professionals and others.
- The ability to provide support through ‘on site visits’ or allowing observations to model good practice continues to be curtailed but there have also been innovations that hubs have been able to share with the support of colleagues from central SENI services. For example, use of virtual observations to inform discussions around individual support.
- The restriction of some usual hub practices allowed for the further development of the hubs own areas of interest and expertise through a variety of virtual training courses.
- Appendix D provides details of training and feedback during this period.
- The number of specialist placements during this period remained steady although the re-designation and extension of the of the age range at Marshfields Special School allowed for hub placements to be incorporated into school place numbers. Marshfields however remains ‘a centre of expertise’.
- New hubs established in 2019 have been successful and the ASD provision at Ken Stimpson was able to expand numbers to 6 as planned. There is the

potential to increase this to 8 places but this will only be with the agreement of the school and as circumstances allow.

- An additional hub at St Michael's Church school was introduced in 2020 with an area of interest in SEMH and nurture, the hub has started with a centre of expertise only role, with a view to possible pupil placements at a later stage. St Michaels has had a keen interest in nurture approaches within education and has gained accreditation and developed experience in this field.
- By mutual agreement the specialist hub at OBA will close in March 2022. The hub has enabled the school to promote a model for providing a bespoke curriculum and support for young people with SEMH so that they can be maintained in school as well as delivering training to schools. Thanks to OBA for all of their support in promoting inclusive practice for children and young people in challenging situations.
- The change to a dual designation at St John Fisher (HI/VI) has proved successful and the majority of CYP with significant needs in these areas are educated in their local mainstream school with the support of the hubs and central LA services.

Forward planning – 2022/23

- In terms of mainstream pressures, the main presenting need in Peterborough continues to be ASD. Whilst the city has a specialist ASD school for those with most severe needs, the majority of CYP with an ASD diagnosis are taught in mainstream school with appropriate support. A further secondary and primary ASD hub is proposed to support understanding and delivery of best practice and provide placements for CYP who experience difficulties in accessing their mainstream classroom despite the appropriate support on offer. These placements may be short term in some cases and CYP placed in hubs will ultimately spend the majority of their time in mainstream classes. As with previous expansions, expressions of interest will be sought from Peterborough schools to take this forward.
- The LA will appoint a new 'hub coordinator' (funding will be from current staffing budgets) to ensure the development and completion of reports tracking outcomes of the hub approach to inform future developments. The coordinator will also be responsible for maintaining the SLA with schools.
- The number of core specialist staff providing link support to hubs will be extended and their remit will be to support the development of skills and knowledge around the hubs area of specialism. They will work in partnership with schools and ideally provide a number of days 'on site' each term to support hub development. They will have less involvement in the administrative requirements of the SLA which will be covered by the new 'hub coordinator' post.

Appendix 1 - Review of Hub Arrangements

- A recent review of 2019-2024 SLA agreement, in accordance with the initial 3rd years of guaranteed funding, is near completion, this has provided an opportunity for the LA to identify hubs which are well placed to further support the hub development approach. 4 of the hubs have adopted a hub plus role and as such will work in greater depth with the new Hub co-ordinator to enable all hubs to develop greater practical support to schools through their centre of expertise roles.