



STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

S E R V I C E S T O P E O P L E

The School Offer

Guidance for Educational Settings in Stockport

May 2014

This guidance has been produced as part of Stockport's 0 - 25 SEN Transformation process.

GUIDANCE FOR EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS – THE STOCKPORT LOCAL OFFER

This guidance has been produced as part of Stockport's 0 - 25 SEN Transformation process.

Representative colleagues from Primary, Secondary, Early Years, Academies, FE Colleges, PRUs, Special, Inclusion Services, Ethnic Diversity Service, Therapy Services, Governance, Local Authority, Parent Carer Forum PIPS (Parents In Partnership in Stockport) and Parent Partnership met in March and May 2014 to discuss the process of supporting schools, colleges and Early Years settings in contributing a published offer to the wider Stockport Local Offer.

Thanks are due to those colleagues and to others who have added advice and opinion.

This guidance is not prescriptive but designed as a starting point for settings to adapt in whichever way they choose to illustrate the diversity and breadth of provision available in Stockport to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN or a disability.

This is work in development and we hope that colleagues will be happy to share experience across settings and phases through existing networks and professional dialogue. We will endeavour to share any updated developments in due course through existing channels.

Please do not hesitate to bring any issue or development to the attention of School Offer Project Leads:

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Support

At time of writing (May 2014), Cathy Lyall (Headteacher, Ladybridge School) will coordinate some proof reading of content for educational settings. Contact for further detail:

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Connectivity with Local Offer

Once your Offer has been published on your own school/ college/ setting website, please email the link / web address to the point of coordination for the overarching Stockport Local Offer:

localofferhub@stockport.gov.uk

GUIDANCE FOR EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS – THE STOCKPORT LOCAL OFFER

Context

The Children & Families Act 2014 (Section 30)¹ places a statutory duty on a Local Authority to publish a Local Offer. Requirements for cooperation and current detail on compiling a Local Offer is set out in the Draft Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years (Section 4 pp 47 – 65)(April 2014)²

Statutory compliance with a published Local Offer is required for September 1st 2014.

Practical exemplars of the processes and outcomes of compiling a Local Offer have been provided by a number of 'Pathfinder' projects funded in 31 different Local Authorities from April 2011. Since April 2013, 9 'champion' pathfinders have been retained until March 2015³.

The Local Offer in Stockport is being compiled as part of a project planning for strategic transformation of all services for children, young people and their families from 0 – 25 years. A blueprint of change is being produced for September 2014 with ongoing implementation to 2017.

This Guidance

This paper reflects the objective of a specific project strand to provide guidance to schools and educational settings about their duty of cooperation with the Local Offer. This element is referred to as the 'School Offer'⁴.

What is the Local Offer?

*'Local Authorities **must** publish a Local Offer, setting out in one place information about provision they expect to be available across education health and social care for children and young people in their area who have SEN or are disabled, including those who do not have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. In setting out what they 'expect to be available', local authorities should include provision which they believe will actually be available.'* (para 4.1, Draft SEN Code 2014)

The Local Offer – Key Purposes

The Local Offer has two key purposes:

- *To provide clear, comprehensive and accessible information about the available provision and how to access it, and*

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/section/30/enacted>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/revision-of-the-send-code-of-practice-0-to-25-years>

³ <http://www.sendpathfinder.co.uk/>

⁴ The concept of a 'School Offer' has emerged from the work of Pathfinders as a useful working reference to define the published information on provision and services expected from Education; similarly the 'Health Offer', 'Social Care Offer', 'Community Offer' etc have arisen. However, the legislation and guidance at time of writing remains with a consistent and broad umbrella term of 'Local Offer' that covers all aspects of service, provision and information from a range of disciplines

- *To make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly involving disabled children and those with SEN and their parents, and disabled young people and those with SEN, and service providers in its development and review (para 4.2, Draft SEN Code 2014)*

The Local Offer – Key Principles

The Local Offer should be:

- **collaborative:** *local authorities **must** involve parents, children and young people in developing and reviewing the Local Offer. They **must** also cooperate with those providing services*
- **accessible:** *the published Local Offer should be easy to understand, factual and jargon free. It should be structured in a way that relates to young people’s and parents’ needs (for example by broad age group or type of special educational provision). It should be well signposted and well publicised*
- **comprehensive:** *parents and young people should know what support is expected to be available across education, health and social care from age 0 to 25 and how to access it. The Local Offer **must** include eligibility criteria for services where relevant and make it clear where to go for information, advice and support, as well as how to make complaints about provision or appeal against decisions*
- **transparent:** *the Local Offer should be clear about how decisions are made and who is accountable and responsible for them (para 4.7, Draft SEN Code 2014)*

In Stockport, it is suggested that these four qualities provide a useful starting point and ‘litmus test’ for educational settings both in preparing the content of a School Offer for publication and in reviewing, amending and enhancing content at a later stage.

Involving Young People, Parents and Carers – Co-production

This is an essential and required element of compiling a School Offer. Further detail on co-production with children and young people with SEN or disabilities and parents can be found in paras 4.8 – 4.13 of the Draft SEN Code 2014.

In Stockport, the Parent Carer Forum **PIPS (Parents in Partnership in Stockport)** has worked with the Local Authority during the 0 – 25 Transformation Programme and can be contacted for advice⁵.

Stockport Parent Partnership can similarly be contacted for advice⁶

Education settings in Pathfinder Authorities have set up or worked with existing small representative parent/carers groups or panels from their own parent communities with opportunities such as coffee mornings or playgroups ideal gatherings to review or add to school offers. Pupil Councils, Student Forums and school newsletters can all be utilised in as creative a way as possible.

Publishing the Local Offer

It is envisaged that Stockport’s Local Offer will be web-based with a portal of borough-wide information⁷ containing links to individual settings and services in education, health and social care.

⁵ <http://www.pipstockport.org/>

⁶ <http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/education/parent-partnership-services/stockport>

⁷ The breadth of required information is detailed in paras 4.29 – 4.61 of the Draft SENCOP 2014

However, 'Local authorities **must** make their Local Offer widely accessible and on a website. They **must** publish their arrangements for enabling those without access to the internet to get the information. They **must** also enable access for different groups, including disabled people and those with different types of SEN'. (para 4.62, Draft SEN Code 2014)

Education settings in Stockport are welcome to seek advice from Ethnic Diversity Service⁸ or Sensory Support Service⁹ to ensure accessibility for speakers of community languages or for those with sensory impairments.

MAKING A START – YOUR SCHOOL, COLLEGE OR EARLY YEARS OFFER

Most Pathfinder exemplars start with a list of questions that reflect, typically, what a parent or carer, or young person themselves with SEN or a disability might ask in order to gain a picture or sense of how your school or setting might meet their needs. The answers - like a set of FAQs – become the 'school/ college / setting offer'.

Typically, the areas covered (in no specific order) are

- initial points of contact if a parent or carer has concerns
- how a school or setting might identify needs
- approaches for teaching, adaptations to curriculum or the learning environment for those with SEN; school's arrangements for securing professional SEN development for staff
- any other support arrangements (personnel or resources) to meet needs
- how progress towards outcomes for young people with SEN or disability are assessed and reviewed
- how parents or carers can work together with schools towards supporting progress
- how parents, carers and young people can become involved in shaping and contributing to the offer
- arrangements for admissions
- arrangements for any points of transition
- arrangements for enabling access to facilities and extra-curricular activities
- school's ethos on preparation for adulthood, employment and encouraging independence
- pastoral arrangements for supporting the emotional, mental and social development of those with SEN or a disability

A school or setting's access to specialist services, referral for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, arrangements for SEN Travel Assistance or signposting to independent advice are examples (not exhaustive) that will be supported by signposting links to the wider Stockport Local Offer.

It is envisaged that the core content of offers from Early Years settings and FE colleges reflect the above but will be adapted for age-range and audience.

⁸

<http://www.stockport.gov.uk/services/education/educationtrainingandemployment/servicessupportingpupilsinschools/supportpupilsadditionalneeds/ethnicdiversityservice2/>

⁹

<http://www.stockport.gov.uk/services/education/educationtrainingandemployment/servicessupportingpupilsinschools/supportpupilsadditionalneeds/sensorysupportservice/>

There remains a statutory duty on schools under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 to publish arrangements for the admission of disabled pupils; steps taken to prevent less favourable treatment for disabled pupils and facilities and planning to assist access for disabled pupils. This is information that is currently required and published by schools. (paras 4.34-36, Draft SEN Code 2014)

POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

Who will take a lead in your setting in compiling your offer? An individual, a group exercise or whole school involvement?

What opportunities or arrangements will you choose to involve parents, carers, children and young people?

Is there a clear opportunity to involve your Governing Body in the process?

Recalling the requirements for 'accessibility', is there a clear protocol for editing so that detail is concise and to the point?

Does the capacity / technical knowledge exist to publish on your school website or do you require support?

What arrangements need to be made for reviewing and/or enhancing the accuracy or detail on the offer? Beyond first publication, can the offer continue to develop and grow dynamically?

Sample Questions

A Stockport School Offer Development Group has considered sample questions from Manchester and the South East Seven (SE7) Pathfinder Authorities. They are reproduced here without any endorsement that Stockport colleagues adopt a specific model but rather with the intention of triggering your own creativity.

The models differ in format – the SE7 exemplar¹⁰ suggests questions from both parent/carer and young person perspectives; the Manchester one groups detail under specific topic headings. Usefully, in both examples, some prompts to shape an answer are included.

Finally, a set of questions from within Stockport is included, followed by some observations from the Stockport Development Group for your reflection.

SE7 Sample Questions – envisaged from the Parent or Carer viewpoint

1. How does the setting / school / college know if children/young people need extra help and what should I do if I think my child/young person may have special educational needs?

How do you identify children/young people with special educational needs? How will I be able to raise any concerns I may have? If the setting / school / college is specialist, which types of special educational need do you cater for?

2. How will early years setting / school / college staff support my child/young person?

Who will oversee and plan the education programme and who will be working with my child/young person and how often? What will be their roles? Who will explain this to me? How are the setting / school / college governors or trustees involved and what are their responsibilities? How does the setting / school / college know how effective its arrangements / its provision for children and young people with special educational needs are?

3. How will the curriculum be matched to my child's/young person's needs?

What are the setting's / school's / college's approaches to differentiation? How will that help my child/young person?

4. How will both you and I know how my child/young person is doing and how will you help me to support my child's/young person's learning?

In addition to the normal reporting arrangements what opportunities will there be for me to discuss his or her progress with the staff? How does the setting / school / college know how well my child/young person is doing? How will I know what progress my child/young person should be making? What opportunities will there be for regular contact about things that have happened at early years setting / school / college eg a home school book? How will you explain to me how his or her learning is planned and how I can help support this outside of the setting / school / college? How and when will I be involved in planning my child's/young person's education? Do you offer any parent training or learning events?

5. What support will there be for my child's/young person's overall well being?

¹⁰ <https://czone.eastsussex.gov.uk/specialneeds/localoffer/Pages/main.aspx>

What is the pastoral, medical and social support available in the setting / school / college for children with SEND? How does the setting / school / college manage the administration of medicines and providing personal care? What support is there for behaviour, avoiding exclusions and increasing attendance? How will my child/young person be able to contribute his or her views? How will the setting / school / college support my child / young person to do this?

6. What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the setting / school / college?

Are there specialist staff working at the setting / school / college and what are their qualifications? What other services does the setting / school / college access including health, therapy and social care services.

7. What training are the staff supporting children and young people with SEND had or are having?

This should include recent and future planned training and disability awareness.

8. How will my child/young person be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips?

Will he or she be able to access all of the activities of the setting / school / college and how will you assist him or her to do so? How do you involve parent carers in planning activities and trips?

9. How accessible is the setting / school / college environment?

Is the building fully wheelchair accessible? Have there been improvements in the auditory and visual environment? Are there disabled changing and toilet facilities? How does the setting /school / college communicate with parent carers whose first language is not English? How will equipment and facilities to support children and young people with special educational needs be secured?

10. How will the setting /school / college prepare and support my child/young person to join the setting /school / college, transfer to a new setting / school / college or the next stage of education and life?

What preparation will there be for both the setting / school / college and my child/young person before he or she joins the setting / school / college. How will he or she be prepared to move onto the next stage? What information will be provided to his or her new setting / school / college? How will you support a new setting / school / college to prepare for my child/young person?

11. How are the setting's / school's / college's resources allocated and matched to children's/young people's special educational needs?

How is the setting's / school's / college's special educational needs budget allocated?

12. How is the decision made about what type and how much support my child/young person will receive?

Describe the decision making process. Who will make the decision and on what basis? Who else will be involved? How will I be involved? How does the setting / school / college judge whether the support has had an impact?

13. How are parents involved in the setting / school / college? How can I be involved?

Describe the setting's / school's / college's approach to involving parents in decision making and day to day school life including for their own child or young person.

14. Who can I contact for further information?

Who would be my first point of contact if I want to discuss something about my child/young person? Who else has a role in my child's/young person education? Who can I talk to if I am worried? Who should I contact if I am considering whether child/young person should join the setting / school / college? Who is the SEN Coordinator and how can I contact them? What other support services are there who might help me and provide me with information and advice? Where can I find the local authority's Local Offer?

SE7 Sample Questions – envisaged from the Young Person's viewpoint (NB these reflect the views of young people moving on to college post 16 but could be adapted for upper KS4 or Sixth Form)

1. How does the setting / school / college know if I need extra help?

How do you identify young people with special educational needs?

2. What should I do if I think I need extra help?

How will I be able to raise any concerns I may have?

3. How will my course work be organised to meet my individual needs?

What are the setting's / school's / college's approaches to differentiation? How will that help me?

4. How will I be involved in planning for my needs and who will explain it and help me?

How will the young person be able to contribute his or her views? How will the setting / school / college support him or her to do this?

5. Who will tell me what I can do to help myself and be more independent?

Who will help me and what sorts of things are available?

6. What should I do if I am worried about something?

Who should I talk to? How will you help me?

7. How will I know if I am doing as well as I should?

In addition to the normal reporting arrangements what opportunities will there be for me to discuss my progress with the staff? How does the setting / school / college know how well I am doing? How will I know what progress I should be making? How will you explain to me how my learning is planned? How and when will I be involved in planning my education?

8. How can I get help if I am worried about things other than my course?

What is the pastoral, medical and social support available in the setting/ school / college for young people with SEND? How does the setting / school / college manage the administration of medicines and providing personal care? What support is there for behaviour, avoiding exclusions and increasing attendance?

9. Are there staff in the setting / school /college who have had special training to help young people who need extra help?

This should include recent and future planned training and disability awareness. Are there specialist staff working at the setting / school / college and what are their qualifications?

10. Can setting / school / college staff get extra help from external experts if they need to? (eg advice and training on medical conditions)

What other services does the setting / school / college access including health, therapy and social care services.

11. If I have difficulty in taking part in setting / school / college activities, what different arrangements can be made?

How will I know who can help me? Who can I talk to about getting involved in student activities if I need extra help? Will I be able to access all of the activities of the setting / school / college and how will you help me to do so? If I have a disability or additional need how can I join in college activities?

Is the building fully wheelchair accessible? Are there disabled changing and toilet facilities? Have there been improvements in the auditory and visual environment?

12. What help is there to help me get ready to start at the setting / school / college?

What preparation will there be for both the setting / school / college and the young person before he or she joins the setting / school / college. What information will be provided to his or her new setting / school / college? How will you support a new setting / school / college to prepare for my child/ young person?

13. I am coming to the setting / school / college to prepare for employment – how will I be supported?

How will I be prepared to move onto the next stage of my life including employment and life skills?

Manchester Sample Questions (nb. some are flagged as appropriate to secondary/college phase)

Teaching and Learning

- What additional support can be provided in the classroom?
- What provision do you offer to facilitate access to the curriculum and to develop independent learning?(This may include support from external agencies and equipment/facilities)
- Staff specialisms/expertise around SEN or disability
- What ongoing support and development is in place for staff regards supporting children and young people with SEN?
- What arrangements are made for reasonable adjustments and support to the child during tests and exams?
- How do you share educational progress and outcomes with parents?
- What external teaching and learning do you offer? (secondary phase)
- What arrangements are in place to ensure that support is maintained in 'offsite provision'? (secondary phase)
- What work experience opportunities do you offer? (secondary phase)

Annual Reviews

- What arrangements are in place for review meetings for children with Statements or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans?
- What arrangements are in place for children with other SEN support needs?

Keeping Children Safe

- How and when will a risk assessment be done? Who will carry out the risk assessment?
- What handover arrangements will be made at the start and end of the school day? Do you have parking areas for pick up and drop offs?
- What arrangements will be made to supervise a child during breaks and lunchtimes?
- How do you ensure my child stays safe outside the classroom? (e.g. during PE lessons and school trips)
- Where can parents find details of policies on bullying?

Health (including Emotional Health and Wellbeing)

- What is the school's policy on administering medication?
- How do you work with the family to draw up a care plan and ensure that all relevant staff are aware of the plan?
- What would the school do in the case of a medical emergency
- How do you ensure that staff are trained/qualified to deal with a child's particular needs?
- Which health or therapy services can children access on school premises?

Communication with Parents

- How do you ensure that parents know "who's who" and who they can contact if they have concerns about their child?
- Do parents have to make an appointment to meet with staff or do you have an Open Door policy?
- How do you keep parents updated with their child's progress?
- Do you offer Open Days?
- How can parents give feedback to the school?

Working Together

- Do you have home/school contracts?
- What opportunities do you offer for children to have their say? e.g. school council
- What opportunities are there for parents to have their say about their child's education?
- What opportunities are there for parents to get involved in the life of the school or become school governors?
- How does the Governing Body involve other agencies in meeting the needs of pupils with SEN and supporting their families? (e.g. health, social care, voluntary groups)

What Help and Support is available for the Family?

- Do you offer help with completing forms and paperwork? If yes, who normally provides this help and how would parents access this?
- What information, advice and guidance can parents access through the school? Who normally provides this help and how would parents access this?
- How does the school help parents with travel plans to get their child to and from school?

Transition to High School

- What support does the school offer around transition? (e.g. visits to the high school, buddying)

Transition from Primary School and School Leavers (secondary phase)

- What support does the school offer for year 6 pupils coming to the school? (e.g. visits to the school, buddying)

- What support is offered for young people leaving the school? (e.g. careers guidance, visits to colleges, apprenticeships, supported employment etc)
- What advice/support do you offer young people and their parents about preparing for adulthood?

Extra-Curricular Activities

- Do you offer school holiday and/or before and after school childcare? If yes, please give details.
- What lunchtime or after school activities do you offer? Do parents have to pay for these and if so, how much?
- How do you make sure clubs and activities are inclusive?
- How do you help children to make friends?

Stockport example (thanks to Headteacher, Lum Head Primary School)

- How does the school know when a child needs extra help?
- How will I share information with the school about my child's needs?
- How does the school support a child with SEN?
- How are the governors involved and what is their responsibility?
- How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?
- How can I work with the school to support my child's learning?
- How does the school know how well my child is doing?
- What support will there be for my child's overall wellbeing?
- How does the school manage the administering of medicines?
- What support is there for behaviour, avoiding exclusions and increasing attendance?
- How will my child be able to contribute their views?
- Is there a range of services that the school can liaise with?
- How will my child be included in activities outside of the classroom?
- How accessible is the school environment?
- How will the school prepare my child for joining the school and transferring to a new school?
- How are the school's resources allocated and matched to the needs of an SEN child?
- How are decisions made about the type and level of support that my child will need?
- How will I know if the provision has had an impact on my child's development?
- Who can I contact for further information?

Observations from Stockport School Offer Development Group

These observations followed a collective proofreading of this guidance.

- **'Visibility'** – it was felt that the term 'School Offer' could be somewhat unfamiliar for a parent or carer searching for information and support. There was a consensus that a button / marquee / title / link called **Support For Learners** would be a helpful gateway to signpost the Offer. The word 'support' is widely recognised. 'Learners' describes all who are entering our educational settings regardless of age or need
- **Involvement of Parents, Carers & Young People** – it is suggested that settings, schools and colleges outline how they have involved parents, carers and young people in the process of compiling the offer and what arrangements there are for constructive comments, additions and review from users.
- **Definition of SEN-** settings / schools/ colleges might find it useful to include the definition of SEN (likely to be already in your setting's SEN Policy) as outlined in the SEN Code of Practice.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- *has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or*
- *has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions*

A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if he or she is likely to fall within the definition in the paragraph above when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014).

- **Points of Transition** – given the aim of the 0 – 25 SEN Transformation Programme to remove existing ‘cliff edges’ at problematic points of transition, it was felt that settings/schools / colleges should reflect specifically in their offers on both the degree and type of **support** offered and the **timescales** behind any arrangements.

At appropriate points, when discussing preparation for adulthood, colleagues have suggested consideration to the question: *How do you support my child into employment i.e career guidance, work experience, supported internship, job centre plus, self-employment, traineeships, apprenticeships & supported employment?*

For **Early Years Settings**, colleagues highlighted the point of transition between home and the setting and suggested that an offer should reference any arrangements for home visits that could be made.

- **Mediation / Disagreement Resolution** – there is significant detail within the Code of Practice (Chapter 11) about resolving disagreement and it is envisaged that there will be a dedicated section within Stockport’s overarching Local Offer. However, settings, schools and colleges might wish to consider referencing their own existing internal arrangements and processes for raising or reporting concerns. It will important to clarify that initial contacts to resolve the vast majority of individual concern can be on a graduated response through the class or subject teacher, SENCO etc before any resort to more formal process.
- **Behaviour** – there is a distinctive category of **Social, emotional and mental health difficulties** within the new Code of Practice (paras 6.29,6.30) and descriptions of positive support and arrangements offered through settings, schools and colleges should be mindful of this terminology.

Next Steps

There is a national requirement for educational settings to publish a ‘School / College Offer’ from September 2014.

It is hoped that this guidance, together with schools and settings’ own research and planning, will be helpful in shaping some content. Where experience of this process has been shared, schools and settings often already have the bulk of information readily available within their website, communications or prospectus. The ‘Offer’ gives a sensible platform to collate, revise and add value to that information by making it far more accessible and transparent for parents and carers.

At time of writing, there are some interdependencies that are still under development. Progress on these will be communicated as they emerge.

- the umbrella 'architecture' and structure of Stockport's Local Offer, harnessing education, health, social care and the services and support offered by community groups is in development. The joining of links from the first-tier Local Offer to individual school, college and settings is dependent on that development.
- The SEN Code of Practice (Final) 2014 is yet to be published and may contain further revision, clarification or detail
- Future local arrangements for monitoring progress and maintenance of School Offers have yet to be decided and require consultation.