



South London Commissioning Programme



NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2020

## TEAM Update

2020 has been an exciting and challenging year for the SLCP. Like many organisations we have been forced to rethink the way that we work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our team of seven, including a newly appointed Business Development Manager and Apprentice Project Manager, have been hard at work adapting to the new challenges being faced.

### ➤ Diversity Equality and Inclusion

As a team we have been deeply touched by the events taking place across the world highlighting racial discrimination and the need for change. We will redouble our efforts to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusivity continues to be at the heart of the services that we provide. We remain committed as a team to ensure that open forums for difficult conversations continue as we aim to improve services and practice that meets the needs of all.



### ➤ A BIG Thank You

We want to send out a big thank you to all of our providers and member boroughs. During the Covid-19 pandemic everyone has worked extremely hard to maintain services to children and young people. This has been a remarkable effort by all concerned in very difficult circumstances.

Clearly, there will be major challenges ahead and we look forward to tackling these with you.

## 🔗 ENGAGEMENT UPDATE | Children Looked After

We have been busy engaging with young people across our partner boroughs; attending events, organising sessions, and running working groups. The programme has reached over two hundred young people, allowing them to feed into key areas, including placement processes and the development of some new and exciting documents.

The 'All About Me' document is a young person's profile that gives them the opportunity to have a voice and showcase who they feel they are. The 'All About Us' is a provider/carer profile to give young people information about the family or home and the people that live there. We are excited that boroughs have started using these documents and are looking forward to continuing our engagement with young people in the programme.

Our engagement has also been extended to representative bodies of fostering providers, the Nationwide Association of Fostering Providers (NAFP), and residential providers the Independent Children's Homes Association (ICHA). These close relations have helped us to better understand the needs of the sector. We are committed to embedding effective communications with service providers to ensure that we work closely for the benefit of children and young people in care.

In order to keep service users, providers and other stakeholders up to date on with our progress, we will be holding a series of provider events in the Autumn. Please stay tuned for updates.



## 🔗 ENGAGEMENT UPDATE | SEND

We are developing a robust plan for engaging with SEND children and young people and their families. We will work closely with our service users on their experience of the placement process and the services they receive. This will improve the current placement process and meaningfully shape our programme moving forward.

We have worked closely with our SEND schools in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Developing a shared understanding of the challenges faced by our providers, service users, and member boroughs has been vital for this work.

Over the next few months we will work closely with our SEND providers to recover services, develop our quality framework model and our approach to fee negotiation, and consider our future procurement models. We are planning events in September and October to share our learning and set out our plans for the future.

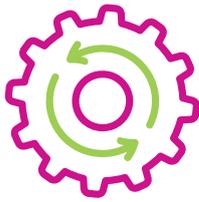


## 🔗 IT UPDATE

We launched a new SLCP website in October 2019. The website is more interactive and user friendly, featuring information about the SLCP, the work we do with young people, blogs from members of the team and much more.

In addition to our new website, we have also launched an external SharePoint site. This will allow our colleagues from the member boroughs of the SLCP partnership to work in a more collaborative and efficient way across our two project areas, Children Looked After and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, which will help us deliver the best results. The site has been designed to effectively share intelligence, essential documents and best practice.





## SEND UPDATE



**Our SEND programme is progressing rapidly, delivering key benefits for our partner boroughs, with an exciting plan of activity for coming months.**

We are also working closely with our member boroughs, providers and other stakeholders to develop a new commissioning approach as the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) contract for making placements in the non-maintained and independent (NMI) sector ended in May 2020. Our new commissioning approach will:

- Be based on a collaborative approach with providers to deliver excellent outcomes for children and young people whilst ensuring a strong focus on value for money.
- Improve quality through the implementation of new quality framework approach.

The SLCP successfully applied for £7k of funding from the Local Government Association (LGA) to engage the services of a specialist agency (PeopleToo) to support the programme in the development of our SEND commissioning strategy. PeopleToo consultancy have provided specialist support to the Programme over a six month period from February until July 2020. Key deliverables of this project are a new fee negotiation strategy based on a more collaborative approach with providers, a pricing matrix or banding system, standardised commissioning principles for the state-funded FE sector, and a quality assurance framework that maximises our boroughs resources.



## CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER (CLA) UPDATE



**The CLA work stream is pressing forward with a number of projects on behalf of the seven boroughs involved in this project.** Notable among them is the establishment of a new multi-provider framework known as the Approved Provider Panel Agreement (APPA). The APPA will be used to commission residential and fostering placements through Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA). The APPA has gone live with 44 Providers for a duration of 8 years, with an estimated contract value of £700 million.

To complement the newly established APPA, member boroughs are developing shared documents including:

- A standardised Individual Child Agreement and Placement form
- A shared outcomes framework
- A quality assurance and contract management approach

In recent months we have enhanced our pan-regional links to include London Directors, The Commissioning Alliance and the Local Government Association. The aim of this is to develop a collaborative working model with the aim of reducing duplication, facilitating learning and sharing best practice. This learning includes the development of a remand placements strategy, with the establishment of the South London Remand Working Group, a data review identifying need, and initial meetings with providers regarding new facilities with a retained bed/non-secure accommodation focus.



## ➤ QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

The SLCP have been working with our partner boroughs to create a single quality tool that will be used across the partnership. This work will be underpinned by biannual visits to all of our larger providers. The visits will be supportive and will be carried out by SEND specialists from SLCP member boroughs.

The quality template will provide a number of lasting benefits for the programme:

- Reducing the need of multiple visits to be conducted by individual boroughs, resulting in improved time and cost efficiencies for providers and local authorities.
- Provide valuable feedback to providers to assist in the continual improvement of services.
- Give assurance to all member boroughs about the quality of provision and the outcomes being achieved for pupils.
- Develop understanding between the SLCP and providers through sharing of information and expertise.

Through this collaborative tool, we look forward to working more closely with our non-maintained and independent schools to deliver improvements for our pupils.

## OUR REGULAR NEWSLETTER

The SLCP looks forward to sharing future updates with you regarding the status and upcoming activities taking place within the South London partnership.

We will produce the SLCP newsletter on a quarterly basis. Please let us know if there is anyone else you would like us to add to our circulation list.



South London Commissioning Programme

### Our Vision:

*“Together we will provide the opportunity for children and young people to reach their potential in a safe, caring & secure environment”.*

### Our Mission:

*“We will work in partnership to provide high quality services that are needs led, best value and deliver positive outcomes to children and young people”.*

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