

Priority 2- Improving Autistic CYPs Access to Education & Transition Support

All Age Autism Strategy – Open Coproduction sessions 14th September

Summary Report for the open coproduction sessions

What happened?

Two open sessions were advertised and made available in the morning and evening of the 14th September. The purpose was to bring lived and service experience to the review of the priority 2 survey responses, and agree the priorities to be recommended through to the high level action plan and strategy.

A team comprising Parent Carer Forum, SENDIASS, Post 16, head teacher, advisory teaching service, data intelligence, facilitated the sessions and contributed to discussion. Not all who booked on attended. We were joined by 7 others including Community organisation, LA director, advisor, SENCos and parents.

This summary reflects the views of 15 people who reviewed the results of the 67 responses to the survey and brought their own experience and insights to the task.

The priorities captured below were agreed within the session. It was shared with attendees that this summary would be taken to the task group and the recommendations from that next discussion would be shared along with this summary with all that attended.

The task group have reviewed the advice from the coproduction sessions and proposed to forward the following to the All Age Autism Project Board:

Recommendations from Priority 2 Improving Autistic CYPs Access to Education & Transition Support

High level priorities What	How	What will be different?	Resource implications
<p>An area wide accreditation and quality standards system and campaign for education and community settings</p> <p>Education settings and community groups are supported, engaged and active in developing autism inclusive quality standards across Herefordshire so that an autism “kite mark” is valued, visible and everywhere.</p>	<p>Map Community groups/organisations for CYP across Herefordshire and use map to improve links with local schools so that there more schools and colleges have a broader programme of community groups coming into the learning environment</p> <p>Introduce a more comprehensive pathway to accreditation (autism quality mark) for education settings, staff and community providers using NAS and AET frameworks</p> <p>Schools look to community groups to come into schools, to become familiar to pupils before accessing community groups outside school, to increase curriculum opportunities and to build skills and confidence in the young people to try new groups and activities</p> <p>Area strategy and campaign to recruit support staff using young people’s voices and case studies and other incentives (chance to gain a qualification, to attend dedicated area workshops for support staff, business sponsored mentors) to address recruitment and retention issues</p> <p>An “obsession” with what autism inclusive looks like to include an area wide programme of events for autism awareness week</p>	<p>Schools/colleges will increase the number of community groups actively working with their pupils with autism. Increasing numbers of schools will be working with community groups to provide a safe bridge in to access outside of school for YP with autism</p> <p>Autism quality mark is understood and being awarded across education settings and community groups</p> <p>Relational practice will be supporting positive systems in schools an extended into colleges</p> <p>Good rate of applications for support roles</p> <p>The “kite mark” or quality standard will be a badge of honour in organisational publicity</p>	<p>Funding to support accreditation and support for education and community providers to achieve accreditation and to facilitate buddy and network connections- explore a commission for a development project</p>

High level priorities What	How	What will be different?	Resource implications
<p>A looking to my future plan is in place and working from the earliest point.</p> <p>Quality transition planning is in place to support all children with identified needs related to autism from the earliest point</p>	<p>There will be an expectation of a transition plan started and a named worker identified to facilitate that plan, from the earliest age. Others who are important to the child and to support the facilitator will be identified and share responsibility for the success of the plan</p> <p>A resource bank of information and case studies will be available to support transition planning from the earliest age, utilising the checklist in appendix two.</p> <p>The transition plan will focus on opportunities, experience and skill development to build confidence, self-advocacy and informed choice</p> <p>A safety net approach will be in place to support young people who are at risk of self-excluding from a work place when they first encounter barriers they see as insurmountable,</p> <p>All EHCPs annual reviews to have a section on planning for my future including how I would like to/am accessing community activities</p> <p>Specific guidance and support for inclusion of young people with autism in educational activities in personal and social education.</p> <p>Additional resources and support will be available to support young people with</p>	<p>A looking to my future plan is in place for all children from the earliest point with objectives and opportunities for experience and skill development appropriate to the age and development</p> <p>Pathways to employment will include a greater range of opportunities including supported internships and job carving, and information about these will be available at a much earlier age than 16 or 18.</p> <p>Young people with autism are sustaining participation after major transitions</p>	<p>A project programme with the opportunity to bid for best practice pilots – building on the examples at Brookfield/St David’s for example around sustaining engagement across key transitions.</p>

High level priorities What	How	What will be different?	Resource implications
	autism who need more personalised help with puberty and relationships.		
<p>Parents and young people views and experiences shape all that we do</p> <p>Practice is improved across all settings in relation to positive partnership with parents and young people</p>	<p>Link to the work in children’s services to change and improve parent and young people’s experience of meetings and planning with practitioners.</p> <p>Coproduce an accessible training module on reasonable adjustments for all education and community providers</p> <p>Coproduce a more robust proforma/process for capturing parent views in the EHC statutory processes.</p> <p>Multi-agency workshops co-facilitated by parents on personally appropriate outcomes for CYP with autism</p>	<p>Parents will report that meetings are safe places, and that parental and young people’s views are treated with respect and clearly shape/determine and influence what happens for children and young people.</p> <p>All staff that work with children and young people have taken part in an appropriate level of approved training which will include coproduced and co-presented modules on reasonable adjustments and ensuring a welcoming front door.</p> <p>Outcomes in EHCPs are more personalised and less generalised in respect to autism</p>	<p>Funding/commissioning of a training resource for all practitioners /community groups from awareness to accreditation that is flexible in delivery model to suit different organisations</p>

Appendix 1: Summary of findings and recommendations from the two open sessions 14th September 2023

What did the groups say?

Focus	Key discussion headlines	Proposed priorities
<p>Education and EHCPs morning</p>	<p>Autism is a spectrum- those around CYP need understanding that autism can be different for different individuals, for girls, where part of a range of needs</p> <p>Outcomes can be generally applied – making eye-contact for a set time is not always appropriate or that useful</p> <p>Parents feel listened to but not heard- why parents views matter needs to be better understood and valued- child’s presentation at home is not always same as at school- parent voice should have equal standing and respect</p> <p>In meetings a throw away comment can be used later out of context and can feel thrown back at a parent</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a workshop approach on outcomes for children and young people on the Autistic spectrum, EHCP advice givers and plan writers – multi-agency-co-led /strong parent voice in mix 2. Coproduce a proforma for capturing parental advice for an EHC assessment 3. Develop a more robust set of standards for recording meetings and respectful working with parents
<p>Education and EHCPs afternoon</p>	<p>All staff important so that YP has a consistent experience across a school or college day</p> <p>EHCP or diagnosis is a gateway or threshold for a few relatively speaking and can mean that CYP are invisible, needs not responded to, not recognised, even if in waiting for gateway- can get stuck in an over-whelmed system</p> <p>National expectations of all children work against flexible , personalised education offers and deliver poor attendance and under-achievement</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Widen the engagement and awareness training into post 16/colleges and beyond teaching and teaching support staff. Scenario training focusing on “getting through the door” – the door could be back to full time school, the football team, a place at college 2. Develop an offer between schools and the community for staging a return back to full time education- look for more creative ways of delivering the curriculum working with community groups and organisations= work around standard achievement criteria – attendance etc. Think about what different

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		<p>places can offer and map across Herefordshire – sensory environments etc.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Celebrate good practice with a focus on YP voice and utilising such as World Autism Acceptance week asking every school to take some action
<p>Social Care Assessment and Transition morning</p>	<p>Transition starts from the point a child is identified- useful to look at skills and opportunities each age phase Adaptations and adjustments are key- early and well Evidence base of good practice – key features and exemplars e.g. St David’s and Brookfields transition support first term after leaving school School staff are all staff- want confidence and skills in all adult encounters so that consistent experience across school day. Awareness training good, role for some topic specific training that also provides that awareness as a by product. Key success measure- CYP sustains progression after leaving school</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start formal transition planning at an earlier age- support this with a plan framework and resource/information offer that is informed by the list provided by survey responses (List 1 2. Develop specific training offer for schools around autism puberty and relationships so that staff can include all CYP with confidence and suitable adjustments. Consider what additionally might be available for an individual. 3. Establish the lead role for a formal transition plan and the roles of those in the TAC including how to support the lead- develop and build on good practice examples and ensure sustainability for targeted additional support
<p>Social Care Assessment and Transition afternoon</p>	<p>Parents need confidence that is ok to “let go”- they are the protective factor so they need to be confident to take some risks and trust others Transition is so much more than a move on to the next stage of education and transition planning is needed for broader group of youngsters than those with EHCP Need skills or somewhere to go for help when hit a barrier that can lead to YP self-excluding like</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Plan early and look for the opportunities out there 2. Get better at showcasing role models and case studies and promoting employment flexibility like job carving which is an example of how a PP with autism adds value to a business (or an educational setting) 3. Develop a safety net (maybe volunteer scheme) for YP who need to find a way past a barrier not seen or understood by others in the work place

Focus	Key discussion headlines	Proposed priorities
	chipped mugs in the kitchen, or open office all day when would do better in a space with a door when can chose when to come out	
Access to Vocational Education morning	Reasonable adjustments not in place enough or early- extensions of assignments , use of fidget toys, familiar person as mentor, sipping water in an exam Lack of understanding leads to resistance and rejection Need more supported options for moving on from school- not always ready to be a self-advocating young adult Support staff recruitment in colleges in=s a significant issue To get best for young people we need to play to strengths# Don't forget home schooled and off rolled- plan for all YP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a recruitment campaign for Herefordshire colleges and schools 2. Practical training offer on reasonable adjustments 3. Develop supported internships as a local opportunity
Access to Vocational Education afternoon	Autistic girls network , relational approaches all good for resources to support the best, calm approach and reasonable adjustments Adjustments may need extra capacity- recruitment challenges Knowing what is a reasonable adjustment is a major priority- if known providers will gain in confidence, skills and inspire confidence in YP There needs to be a clear pathway tpo support social inclusion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Instil confidence in providers through effective use of reasonable adjustments and understand the importance of keeping promises, 2. Extend the Relational policy/ training to colleges 3. Develop new and extended opportunities and pathways- job coaches, supported internships 4. Drive interest in support roles by adding value to jobs, not thinking just £. Value of role models, young people's voice and celebration of achievements

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<p>Participation in the Community morning</p>	<p>Strengths in Herefordshire developing e.g. HAF – school a safe place to learn how to interact and behave in new situations, reality that these support roles are not well paid</p> <p>Impact of Covid – increased number and level of need for autism , ACS ceased during pandemic and only now building back up- reality of having enough adults for a community activity means parents often need to accompany YP which limits range of social interactions, relationships and independence learning and means parents always on call, providing transport etc.</p> <p>Tracking groups of children into activities in community is part of the school Ofsted – opportunity to work with school partners on how schools can reflect their inclusivity this way</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a programme of community groups coming into school so that skills, expectations, relationships for YP and community staff/volunteers are developed in both directions 2. Actively teach the YP skills they need e.g. ASDAN accredited travel training 3. Re-invigorate the inclusive after school offer
<p>Participation in the Community afternoon</p>	<p>Hard when you a YP or parent have to take the initiative especially when you are knocked back</p> <p>Value of an Autism Tzar to support a network and individual community groups, overcome the fear factor and enjoy providing a successful experience</p> <p>can top up funding be used more creatively to fund access to the community activities?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sustainable models of holiday and community activities which are truly inclusive and offer step by step and tailored development opportunities 2. Ensure a sustainable and responsive support for community groups provision (NAS offer is there) and enable buddying between providers and showcase what is working well- needs to include accreditation option and guidance on how to overtly communicate and publicise inclusivity-

Appendix 2: Key features of a good transition plan- based on the analysis of survey responses summer 2023 (n=67)

List (1) How Can transitions be improved

- **Parental and Carer Support:**
 1. Facilitate access to funding and care for parents and caregivers.
 2. Offer guidance on finding appropriate services, education, and employment

- **Holistic Training for Professionals:**
 1. Equip professionals with understanding of autism and effective communication skills
 2. Establish consistent and named points of contact for families

- **Community and School Acceptance:**
 1. Foster understanding and acceptance of autism in schools and communities
 2. Avoid overwhelming individuals with excessive options

- **Individual Centric Approach:**
 1. Focus on individual preferences, needs, and strengths during support.
 2. Avoid overwhelming individuals with excessive options

- **Post 16 and Post 18 Support:**
 1. Provide accessible and relevant support for individuals after age 16 and 18.
 2. Offer a range of education and qualification options

- **Sensory Passports and Mental Health Accessibility:**
 1. Create sensory passports and communication documents to aid in transitions
 2. Ensure accessible mental health services for young people

- **Early Diagnosis and Prompt Intervention:**
 1. Recognize the importance of timely diagnosis to prevent harm.
 2. Swift access to support and intervention services for newly diagnosed individuals.

- **Comprehensive Transition Planning:**
 1. Plan and support the transition from childhood to adulthood with care and clarity.
 2. Address psychoeducation, skill development, and independence.

- **Clear Communication and Resources:**
 1. Provide accessible information about social care, services, and available resources.
 2. Offer information about autism in adults, career adaptation, and building relationships.

- **Tailored Puberty and Relationships Education:**
 1. Create specific, adapted, and clear puberty and relationships education for autistic individuals.
 2. Emphasize understanding and navigating social nuances.

- **Consistent and Long-Term Support:**
 1. Ensure continuous support beyond diagnosis stage.
 2. Address support gaps that can occur during transitions.