

**Minutes of Dacorum Area DSPL Board Meeting  
Date: Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2022, 9:30am  
Hobbs Hill Wood Primary School, Hemel Hempstead**

**Present:**

Katharine Ellwood - Head, Greenway Primary and Nursery and DSPL Dacorum Operational Lead  
 Angela Hughes - Head, George Street Primary School  
 Sue Dyer - Head, Hobletts Manor Infant & nursery School  
 James Shapland - Head, Ashlyns School  
 Lorna Elkes - Head, Little Gaddesden C of E VA School  
 Allan Maher - Head, Nash Mills C of E Primary School  
 Kate Marrs-Gant - Special School Headteacher, Woodfield School  
 Sara Lalis - Head, Dacorum Education Support Centre (DESC)  
 Claire Rees - Senior Early Start Worker/SEND Champion, Dacorum Family Centre Service  
 Sue Sheffield - ISL Area Manager, St Albans and Dacorum (maternity cover)  
 Patricia Walker - ISL Area Manager, St Albans and Dacorum  
 Su Hurren - SEND Casework Manager – Resolution, ISL  
 Kate Hudson - Parent Representative  
 Pauline Paul - Parent Representative  
 Carole Hassell - DSPL8 & Partnership of Dacorum Schools Manager  
 Ruth Mason - DSPL8 SEND Lead  
 Ashley Fabray - DSPL8 & Partnership of Dacorum Schools Support Officer (Minutes)

**Apologies Received:**

David Fisher - Head, Kings Langley School and DSPL Dacorum Lead (Chair)  
 Richard Haynes - Head, Hobbs Hill Wood and DSPL Dacorum Operational Lead  
 Hayley Yendell - Head, Heath Lane Nursery  
 Tim Jordan - Deputy Headteacher, The Hemel Hempstead School  
 Gareth Styles - Post 16, West Herts College  
 Melanie Flay - Principal Educational Psychologist (West)/Strategic Lead (ISL)  
 Sharon Coubray - County Specialism Lead SLCN & Autism and Area Lead, SEND SAS, ISL  
 Deena Wallworth - Specialism Lead for Early Years and Local Area Lead, ISL

Agenda Items	Actions
<p><b>1. Welcome and Introductions</b>            KE chaired the board meeting on David Fisher’s behalf, and introductions were made; Patricia Walker has returned following maternity leave and is currently on a hand over with SS. Allan Maher has joined the board as a new board member.</p> <p><b>2. Matters Arising from minutes of previous meetings 12.10.2022</b>            Discussed the matters arising from the previous meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SS raised a correction to the minutes under agenda item 7 on page 3: The Educational Psychology Service is not on hold; they do not have link EP’s in schools and the support is reduce but they will still support with emergency cases, and they do have prioritise statutory assessments. AF will amend this correction on the previous minutes.</li> <li>• Schools in who were part of the V-SEND pilot are not required to attend the training, which has also been recorded and will be available as a webinar in January.</li> <li>• The acronym for SMA2 is Spinal muscular atrophy type 2.</li> <li>• SH &amp; SS will follow up on a flow chart of what Headteachers and SENCo’s need to use and where to go and for the policy to include what schools should do if their EHCCo is off sick. SH recommended for schools to familiarise themselves with the escalation protocol, within the ISL communication policy, if they receive no response from their EHCCo.</li> <li>• KH shared the EBSA guidance is not suitable to children with SEND and advised to use it</li> </ul>	

with caution.

All other actions have been completed.

**AF**

**Action – AF to amend the correction to the ISL item on the previous minutes**

**Minutes were approved by the DSPL Board as presented, with the amendment to the ISL item above.**

**3. Finance**

- a) Local School Partnership Budget 2022/23**
- b) DSPL budget 2022/23**
- c) PoDS budget 2022/23**

CH presented the finance update; see pages 2-4 in the DSPL8 Board PowerPoint presentation.

**4. DSPL/PoDS Managers update & SEND Lead update:**

CH/RM presented a PowerPoint presentation on the DSPL8 update and a copy will be circulated with the minutes. The following comments were discussed:

- SS shared ISL attended the Information Fayre, and both were a success. The Autumn Term Information Fayre had a different atmosphere with children in attendance and parents could talk about concerns important to them without feeling intimidated; it was a useful event.
- Requests from the Information Fayre were for more parent groups/SEND support groups; AH shared she is considering setting up a SEND coffee morning and KH shared details of the Speech Language and Autism Team drop-in sessions aligned with a support group in DSPL9. The board discussed this and agreed for RM to investigate models and framework for parent groups and liaise with AH, Sharon Coubray & DSPL9.
- Impower are providing drop-in sessions following the V-SEND training and they have not been well attended; SS recommend for schools to use these as they will build peer support from them.
- The descriptors of provision have changed and SENCo's need to be aware of what is universal and what is not when preparing an application for provision panel and EHCP application and to include this as evidence.
- SS shared in a recently ISL survey, where schools were asked about the tools they use in Hertfordshire and what is useful and effective, one of the most effective was DSPL's and there were specific comments about how effective DSPL8 is.
- PW shared she is aware of SENCo's in other areas who are not aware of the ISL Communicaton protocol, which was initially circulated with the ISL Newsletter. SH has fed this back for this to be re-circulated and out in the School Bulletin. SENCo's email vary greatly; which causes issue in emailing, and all agreed it would be useful for them to have a 'senco@' email address. The board discussed how there is lots of information available locally to professionals, which can be difficult to navigate and for DSPL8 to consider a way to streamline the information with a directory and where to sign post to.
- KE shared details of a computerised programme her school has bought into for screening and identifying speech and language gaps, due to the long waiting lists with the Speech and Language service and will share details of the programme.
- SH updated the Provisional panel process has been streamlined. Panels were paused and currently there are two trial panels taking place and new panels should start in January 2023 in the new format. Panel dates cannot be provided as they are subject to change.



- SH updated the Assessment team are working on drafts and finals for EHCP's with 168 being issued, all with an end goal. The team are still working on reviews. Since SH has taken over the team only 5% of cases of mediation have gone to appeal.

**Action – PW to clarify if all schools can access Therapeutic Approach to Behaviour (TAB) training and is there refresher training available**

**7. Primary SRP's & Mental Health Support Team Hub**

The Specialist Resource provision for primary was identified at Maple Grove and Headteachers would like to know if this is continuing. Longdean is the confirmed Secondary SRP.

Schools who submitted their Kitemark application before it was put on hold, have received an email to confirm their submissions will still be accepted. New submissions will be from January.

**8. Woodfield Outreach Service**

KM-G presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Woodfield Outreach Service and a copy will be circulated with the minutes. The following comments were discussed:

- KM-G asked when the board would like the detailed annual report and it was agreed for the end of the Spring Term.
- The satellite provision has an identified list of children awaiting SLD specialist provision; these children will be on role at Woodfield School and based on another site. The group discussed how this would work and mixed feedback from parents on their children attending a satellite provision. KM-G has another meeting today to discuss this further.
- RM shared details of DSPL8/ Impower Consultation session for Year 5, 6 & 7 awaiting specialist provision to share provision, resources and what they can offer. This is the first project in DSPL and if this works well RM will also organise this for Early Years, Key Stage 1 and years 3 & 4.

AF

**Action – AF to circulate a copy of the presentation with the minutes**

**9. Headteachers Wellbeing**

KE acknowledge the pressures everyone is facing currently; Headteachers, practitioners, agency and parent/cares and would like to look at proactive ways to support with positive impact. SENCo & TA wellbeing is also at its lowest and staff are leaving their job roles.

SS commented HCC are aware of the pressure and Hero Slim is visiting schools to schools to support. SL shared frustration with the timings of emails coming from HCC and has requested for them to be more mindful when sending requests.

Agreed this will remain a standing agenda item.

**10. AOB**

KH shared HPCI launched its first annual SEND survey this autumn and responses were received from 1140 families across Hertfordshire. 123 responses were received from families in the DSPL8 area, although these responses include 12 responses where the young person was aged 17-25 and a number where the CYP was not in a mainstream provision, so will be outside the DSPL cohort. In general, the responses mirrored those seen across the county, with families' top five concerns being 1) SEN officers, 2) EHCPs, 3) CAMHS, 4) Therapies and 5) PALMs. Families also flagged difficulties in understanding how to get help and what services are available, with only 10% of responses saying they found this easy or very easy.

HCC are currently preparing for an Ofsted CQC inspection and when the inspection is announced, KH requested for schools to be ready to share this with families with children age 11+.

SS updated there will be training on the Local offer for Early Years parents in January. SD requested further discussions on early years children entering the schools with extreme needs; the early years group will be focusing on this, and RM will liaise directly with SD. CR reminded schools to sign post families to the Family Centers as the first step before education for course on SEND.

KE thanked SS for her support to the DSPL8 board and SS shared she is available in her DPL8 capacity if anyone wants to contact her.

KE also thanked Lisa Thomas, parent representative on the Autism sub group, for her support to the Early Years sub group as she is now standing down as a representative.

**Dates for Board meetings 2022-23:**

Day	Date	Time	Venue
Wednesday	01/02/2023	9:30am	Hobbs Hill Wood Primary School
Wednesday	22/03/2023	9:30am	Hobbs Hill Wood Primary School
Wednesday	17/05/2023	9:30am	Hobbs Hill Wood Primary School
Wednesday	12/07/2023	9:30am	Hobbs Hill Wood Primary School

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.30am.