

Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs

Pathfinder Application Form

*This completed application form must be sent to
SEND.contracts@education.gsi.gov.uk by Midday, 15 August 2011*

I – Applicant details

Name of local authority : Wigan Council	Signature of Chief Executive LA
	Signature of Director of Children's Services
Name of PCT: NHS Ashton, Leigh and Wigan	Signature Chief Executive Officer of PCT

II – Background information

Please provide figures below for each LA area in the pathfinder

Number of children and young people School population 44,089 0-19 74,600 0-24 93 800 0-25 98,000 est	% and number of children and young people with Statements of SEN 1.66% 1242 pupils												
% and number of Looked After Children 0.63% 473 children	% and number of Looked After Children placed out of area 27.9% 132 children												
% and number of Looked After Children placed in your area 72.1% 341 children	% and number of Children in Need 3.6% 2696 children												
Number of Tribunal cases and % successful 2007/08 = 2 2008/09 = 3 2009/10 = 2 2010/11 = 1	% SEN statements completed in 26 weeks <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>NI 103a</th> <th>NI103b</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2008/09</td> <td>100%</td> <td>99.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2009/10</td> <td>100%</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010/11</td> <td>100%</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	NI 103a	NI103b	2008/09	100%	99.3%	2009/10	100%	100%	2010/11	100%	100%
Year	NI 103a	NI103b											
2008/09	100%	99.3%											
2009/10	100%	100%											
2010/11	100%	100%											

All were found in favour of the applicants, however, some only in part.	
Please state whether this pathfinder is an NHS early implementer NO	Please state whether any partner in this pathfinder is already engaged in: a) piloting personal health budgets NO b) Piloting DfE Individual Budgets NO

Please describe the socio-economic make-up of your area (max 100 words)

Wigan is the second largest borough in Greater Manchester in terms of population, largest geographically.

In 2010, Wigan had highest reduction in unemployment of recent years and the highest in Greater Manchester.

Jobseeker allowance claims are 5% compared with 4% nationally, but wages are lower (16.6% in A/B class compared 22.2% and 40.8% in C2/D compared with 32%.

35% of the adult population have no qualifications in Wigan compared with 29% nationally.

Numbers from ethnic minority communities are low at 2-3% of the total population, but this is changing with an increasing number of non-White British pupils attending Wigan Schools.

Wigan was ranked 65 lowest out of 354 in terms of economic deprivation (2010)

III- Basic Information

Partnership arrangements

Regional

In planning and designing this proposal, we have consulted with other Greater Manchester Authorities - Manchester, Oldham/Rochdale and Trafford - who are submitting separate but aligned applications. In addition we have agreed to share our learning with other local authorities in the context of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority.

We have discussed areas that each authority will lead on to maximise sub-regional coverage of the issues to be tested, will test cross border arrangements and will engage in mutual learning opportunities. Processes to enable this to occur will be put in place once we learn about the successful bids.

Local

In Wigan Joint commissioning arrangements with pooled and aligned budgets across health and the council are in place. The Children’s Services Strategy and Commissioning Team incorporates all commissioning functions across community healthcare, public health, acute healthcare, SEN and social care (AHDC)

Children’s Trust arrangements have been maintained allowing a wide range of partners, including the voluntary sector to support the development of policy and strategy.

Good relationships exists between the Local Authority and both mainstream and special schools enabling innovative work to be developed (eg Outreach being tied into support services provision to enable a continuum)

A multi-agency group set up to consider the implications of the SEN Green Paper and formulate a local response will lead the pathfinder project and steer the work. The higher level partnership arrangements referred to above will support the pathfinder project.

Work with a range of front line services

Close work already occurs across education, health and social care teams, underpinned by the joint commissioning arrangements. The merging of Children's and Adults services into a People Directorate and the new departments focus on transition arrangements for young people with SEN and disabilities will support this area of the pathfinder work.

The Pathfinder Partnership Group (PPG) established to take the work forward encompasses managers from the full range of key services, the voluntary sector and parents. Leads on the group will act as champions for their areas which include:

- SEN assessment/commissioning
- SEN support services
- Educational Psychology
- Social care
- Health commissioning
- Health providers
- Learning and Transition
- All Age Guidance Service
- Early Learning and Childcare
- Mainstream and Special schools
- Local Voluntary Organisation
- Parent Partnership
- Finance
- Parent Representation
- Gateway Teams

As champions their role will include sign up from across their service areas to involvement in the pathfinder project.

The independent sector will be engaged through P&V nurseries and an approach to an independent school provider.

Existing links occurring around strategic planning, individual case planning and specific initiatives will be built upon as part of the pathfinder.

Role of VCS sector

We will maintain and further develop the joint working which has been established with a range of voluntary sector organisations.

The National Autistic Society (NAS), with whom we have developed the autism diagnostic pathway, and The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS), who support the local CHSWG, have expressed an interest in supporting the pathfinder by acting as "critical friends" and advocates for parents/carers, children and young people.

Local support group, Wigan and Leigh Embrace, are already engaged with the work through the Pathfinder Project Group.

Through the proposed model for separating assessment, commissioning and provision the role of the voluntary sector crucial in offering support and challenge to decision making (Appendix A)

Engagement of parents

The very low number of SEN tribunals reflects the generally excellent relationships with parents that occur in the borough through the current statutory processes. Engagement with parents and families begins at an early stage with mediation systematically built into the process, enabling resolutions to occur regarding most possible disagreements before they escalate.

Through the pathfinder we will develop a parent participation strategy which engages parents and carers as true partners and supports their involvement at all levels. Through this strategy we will ensure that the specific elements of any future system and processes are designed and modified to reflect parent / carer views. We will be encouraging a wider remit from the voluntary sector to develop the involvement of parent and carers alongside Parent Partnership and Parent Participation workers.

This will apply to both the overall strategy and individual plans for children and families.

Engagement of children and young people

There is consultation with children and young people within current systems through. for example :

- statutory assessment
- children friendly IEPs
- specific projects eg Dyslexia Friendly Schools initiative
- AHDC programme
- LAC (Voices for Choices)

Through the pathfinder we will build on these examples of good practice to widen the range of involvement to include groups such as those who cannot easily express their views verbally.

The draft pathway (Appendix A) proposes the involvement of children and young people throughout the process involving them in decision making including drawing up the plan.

Capacity to test and innovate

As a local area, Wigan has a history of innovative working in the area of SEN and disability

The National SEN strategy rated Wigan highly, especially the progress made. We were cited regionally and nationally as an example of good practice. Feedback stated that Wigan had *“innovative and forward thinking leadership with outstanding outcomes”*. The basis of this was a continual review of the data and stakeholder views, which led to strategic planning and changes where required.

Through the pathfinder, all partners will be engaged in identifying ways in which a new system can join up and improve outcomes for children young people and their families across all areas of need.

Project plans

Clear and comprehensive projects plans, including resource management for aspects of testing will be further developed if the bid is successful.

In the first instance we will develop the proposed pathway, separating assessment, commissioning and provision (Appendix A)

In addition the Pathway Partnership Group will establish sub-groups to test the range of areas in the bid application i.e

- Personalised Budgets
- Training and Development
- Coordination of plans and assessments, including governance arrangements
- Local offers
- Parent / carer and children and young people engagement
- Data sharing and recording including reducing bureaucracy

Evidence base

Quantitative and qualitative outcome data will be gathered throughout the project. (See Section IV – impact on children and young people of all ages / new single plan with a focus on outcomes for details of these)

The specific research questions will be further developed in consultation with the DfE, but will be initially in the areas :

1. Do the new Plans and pathway produce better health, social care and education outcomes for the specific CYP?
2. Do the Plans enable parents/ carers/ CYP to perceive that they have a positive role the process?
3. Are the Plans cost effective in terms of both the assessment process and provision?
4. Does the process enable greater choice and control for parents?
5. Are processes developed that enable the assessment, commissioning and provider parts of the process to be more independent from each other?

IV – Core testing areas

Objectives of the Pathfinder

This Pathfinder will :

- establish a process which will support the development of Education, Health and Care plans for a cohort of children and young people with a range of ages and needs
- engage children and young people and their families in the new process incorporating their views and aspirations into planning and assessment and using feedback about each stage of the process as a learning tool
- produce a local offer of support with services and schools and use this to encompass a “Local Offer” for children and young people with SEN and disabilities
- consider how support for children and young people can be delivered, including through services and personal budgets
- include the voluntary sector throughout the process to support children, young people and their families and also professionals to challenge and reform the system
- identify training and development needs for all those involved in the new process including professionals, parents, children and young people

Through this project and those of our partner authorities, we will consider the whole age range specified, with a cohort of at least 20 - 30 cases from birth to the age of 25. There will be a concentration on key transitions, from birth to early years, starting school, moving into secondary education and transition planning from age 14 to life beyond school.

Impact on Children and Young People of All Ages / New Single Plan with a Focus on Outcomes

The cohort of children and young people involved will cover different geographical areas of the borough, children and young people from different socio-economic background and who have different types of need. At the minimum these needs will cover, complex learning needs, sensory, physical/ medical, autism, dyslexia and ADHD.

Working with partner agencies, parent groups and consulting with children and young people themselves we will identify individual cases to test out the new system. The aim will be to reduce the number of separate assessments which children and young people and their families must undergo, by establishing systems of data sharing at the earliest stage and protocols for the use of joint assessments, where appropriate.

The impact of the plans will be tested against data relating to improvements in the educational attainments, health and wellbeing of children, young people and their families measured for example through :

- P scale and national curriculum progression,
- progress against specific therapy / medical interventions,
- impact of short break services
- access to positive activities
- destinations post 16
- the views of CYP and parents

These outcomes will be built in as an intrinsic part of plans, and will be done in conjunction with the overall evaluation of the Pathfinder projects.

Support services within the borough have been using outcome based accountability approaches for at least two years, and these will form part of the planning process in relation to both the pathfinder project and around individual plans. Plans will be developed jointly and will be outcomes focussed. In addition other approaches used within the borough, such as goal attainment scaling will be utilised where appropriate.

Person Centred Planning Approaches

Building upon the development of Person Centred Planning (PCP) approaches for transition from school for children and young people with complex needs, we will use this approach with all those cases with whom we are testing out the new plans. A range of facilitators have been trained across services and the intention will be to allocate a trained PCP facilitator to each case who will ensure that each stage of the assessment is undertaken in PCP way. This support will also be utilised to develop skills in PCP approaches across services therefore reducing the need for separate facilitators in the longer term. In utilising this approach we will ensure that children and young people and their families will be a the centre of our work

Links Between Planning and Assessment / Plans for More Transparency About What is Provided

A considerable degree of multi-agency work has already occurred within the borough to link planning and assessment processes whilst ensuring that assessment identifies need, rather than reflecting the available resources. An example of this is the work undertaken by a multi – agency group established, following the Lamb Inquiry, to look at improving the quality of advice and statements to increase parental confidence.

Through the pathfinder we intend to explore the separation of the following areas:

- assessment
- commissioning
- provision

This will lead to clearer roles and accountability within the process and the development of a clearer link between assessment and commissioning. (Appendix A)

Provision mapping has been widely used in the past by schools. Working with a group of mainstream, resourced and special schools we will initiate the development of a local offer, sharing this approach across services and building up to cover the full offer across the Borough. This will be developed to include other areas, such as ethos and specialist staff skills. We envisage that the voluntary and community sector, children and young people and parents will be involved to make these plans meaningful and specific in terms of what is offered.

The Pathfinder Partnership Group includes senior representatives from key agencies as outlined previously i.e.:

- SEN assessment/commissioning
- SEN support services
- Educational Psychology
- Social care
- Health commissioning
- Health providers

- Learning and Transition
- All Age Guidance Service
- Early Learning and Childcare
- Mainstream and Special schools
- Local Voluntary Organisation
- Parent Partnership
- Business Support Service
- Gateway Teams

Front line workers from these areas will be closely involved in the development of the new plans. The key role of management in ensuring that front line staff are trained, operate in the newly agreed systems and deliver against the plans has been recognised by the Pathfinder Partnership Group.

A training and development strategy will be drawn up, through a sub group of the partnership. Other subgroups will include

- involving children and young people
- parent participation
- developing the role of VCS as key partners
- developing the local offer,
- provision, including personal budgets
- monitoring and evaluation.

Key professionals working on a face to face basis will include:

- commissioners, education, health and social care
- SEN case officers
- educational psychologists
- SEN support services
- health providers,
- schools
- social care professionals

We will test if new system can operate under current management arrangements or whether these would need to be re-designed. The role of the key professional - who could undertake this role and how this would be developed through the new system - will be explored.

Alignment of Resources

Joint commissioning arrangements with pooled and aligned budgets across health and the council are in place. The Children's Services Strategy and Commissioning Team incorporates all commissioning functions across community healthcare, public health, acute healthcare, SEN and social care (AHDC).

Use of Mediation

Mediation techniques will be used at each stage as the new processes develop to ensure that the majority of disagreements are mutually resolved as soon as they occur. This will be provided through the direct front line workers having mediation as part of their key role. If issues develop to need more formal techniques these will be provided either by the exiting processes using support systems e.g. Parent Partnership and Disagreement Resolution or by developing the role of local VCS. Links with PALS and social care processes will be developed

Transferability of the Plan

The pathfinder will consider how standard formats for reports, advice and plans may be developed, that :

- reduce bureaucracy
- support local decision making,
- are clear and easily understood by families

In achieving this, plans should be more easily transferable both at transition points in the child / young person's life and across local authority boundaries if necessary. It is envisaged that some of this work will be shared with other pathfinders so that a national process can be adopted from the outset.

Value for Money and Assessment of Cost of Change

Clear processes will be established to cost all parts of the plan, and during the course of the project what would need to change to enable it to occur for all children and young people who need the support of a plan. This will include:

- savings made by the avoidance of the duplication of work,
- savings in regard to greater parental confidence
- cost of any service re-design required to support the multi agency assessment process
- cost of changes to the delivery of provision e.g. through personal budgets

Value for money will also be explored through testing ways in which bureaucracy can be reduced, including the development of electronic systems for reducing paperwork and sharing information.

V – Optional areas

Please rank from 1 to 5 (1= favourite to test, 5 = least favourite) the optional testing areas in order of preference. It is acceptable choose more than one 'favourite' option: please make sure your ranking reflects this. Please note that we will prioritise applications from pathfinders wishing to work on children's personal budgets. Please indicate how many additional options your pathfinder could reasonably test.

Number of options	3
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Personal Budgets	1
Banded Funding	
Age Range & Employment	
Support to parents and young people	3
Support to vulnerable children	2

VI - Contact details

Please provide a lead contact for the pathfinder as a whole and for each local authority and PCT cluster engaged in this bid

Lead Pathfinder Officer

Name of local authority	Wigan
Name of lead contact	[REDACTED]
Position of lead contact	[REDACTED]
E-mail of lead contact	[REDACTED]
Tel of lead contact	[REDACTED]

Address of lead contact	[REDACTED]
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Local authority 1

Name of local authority	Wigan
Name of lead contact	[REDACTED]
Position of lead contact	
E-mail of lead contact	
Tel of lead contact	
Address of lead contact	[REDACTED]

Local authority 2

Name of local authority	
Name of lead contact	
Position of lead contact	
E-mail of lead contact	
Tel of lead contact	
Address of lead contact	

PCT 1

Name of PCT	NHS Ashton, Leigh and Wigan
Name of lead contact	[REDACTED]
Position of lead contact	[REDACTED]
E-mail of lead contact	[REDACTED]
Tel of lead contact	[REDACTED]
Address of lead contact	

PCT2

Name of PCT	
Name of lead contact	
Position of lead contact	
E-mail of lead contact	
Tel of lead contact	
Address of lead contact	

PCT3

Name of local authority	
Name of lead contact	
Position of lead contact	
E-mail of lead contact	
Tel of lead contact	
Address of lead contact	