

Early Outcomes Fund – A summary of the work linked to the creation of a Speech, Language and Communication Strategy for Nottingham City

Context and background

- A local Needs Analysis has evidenced children and young people of Nottingham are not developing speech, language and communication (SLC) to the best of their potential, which impacts on their attachment, attainment, leisure, mental health, well-being, later employment and life chances.
- Through Department for Education funding under the Early Outcomes Fund, Nottingham City Council Children's Services has been involved in ground-breaking work, in partnership with Leicester and Derby City Councils and the Better Communication CIC.
- In 2019, Nottingham took part in the Local Government Associations' Early Years Peer Challenge programme, which focussed on SLC. This work presents the opportunity for real strategic change, to make that significant difference to children and families.
- Alongside this paper are 2 further documents to provide context and background for this work:
 - 'Talking About A Generation' was published by The Communication Trust and Better Communication CIC in February 2017 and explores the development of SLC skills in children, especially those who struggle to communicate. It also examines the impact of SLC needs on **health and wellbeing**, educational progress and employability beyond school.
 - 'Identification and Intervention for Speech, Language and Communication in the Early Years: A Summary of the Early Outcomes Fund Project in Leicester, Derby and Nottingham Cities' was published by Better Communication CIC in March 2020 as an overview of work to date.

Vision

- To develop a **city-wide, shared strategy**, based on outcomes across the whole system and **joint commissioning** of all areas of the system that relate to SLC development for children and young people. Joint commissioning of SLT and other parts of SLC offer is crucial to this work and the outcomes can only be achieved through engagement with partners.
- For this strategy and change programme to focus on **measurable impact**, not input, and to be jointly owned and delivered by all partners and for the leadership of delivering these integrated services to be based on the understanding of need rather than demand, with the tailoring of equity of outcome rather than equality of input.
- For there to be a **clear offer** which empowers families and professionals to navigate the best support to access the best offer to meet the needs of children and their families.

- To develop a **dashboard of impact measures** bringing together impact data across the whole system, informing ongoing joint commissioning of services and leading to improved outcomes for individuals, settings and cohorts.
- For SLC to be **embedded as a key issue** across all agendas, supported by a clear understanding of funding and commissioning arrangements, informed by subject experts who are ambitious for change for children and young people in Nottingham City and their life chances.

Timescale

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| ➤ January – April 2021 | Strategy development overseen by the Health and Wellbeing Board |
| ➤ March 2021 | Launch of SLCN pathway to support the delivery of the Strategy |
| ➤ April 2021 – March 2022 | Establish joint commissioning strategic group with a view to jointly commissioned SLT and other SLC support services |

Requirements of the Health and Wellbeing Board

- To support a Task and Finish Group for joint commissioning, with the Board having oversight of development, delivery and overall ownership of the strategy, providing necessary engagement in relation to involvement from key commissioners, governance and accountability.
- To consider expanding the age range of this work to develop a 0-25 years joint strategy for SLC across all agencies.
- To consider the draft strategy aiming to be presented to the Board in March 2021.
- To maintain oversight of the strategy during the embedding process.