# Pinpoint Network Meetings

# *Meet the Assistant Director for SEND and Pinpoint’s CEO Sarah Conboy*

# May 2021

## Background

Upon coming into Post, Toni Bailey committed to regularly meeting with parent carers at Pinpoint’s suggestion. This is the third round of these meetings. Due to the pandemic, this round was held virtually. Toni was unable to join the first meeting at the agreed time due to technical issues and offered his apologies for a very late arrival.

**Issues raised**

* **Dissatisfaction with the offer from the Visual Impairment Team for some children and families.** Concern about the support on offer, support to manage transfer into a successful secondary phase and the lack of specialised school provision in county. There was a clear articulation of issues and a suggestion that there was widespread dissatisfaction and that issues should be well-known and addressed.
* **Concerns about successful mediation breaking down**. The issue was raised that when mediation works well it can be very positive and its particularly welcome when all professionals agree. Its then hugely frustrating and disappointing when agreements still result in the need to progress to Tribunal to secure provision. Its not a good use of resources and impacts greatly on the family.
* **Issues for schools and settings in using Liquid Logic** (the new Cambs SEND recording system online) is causing concerns – SENCOs and SEND leads in schools and setting are struggling - lack of training and ongoing training support and not sufficient time in the day job to complete records were reported as issues.
* **Issues arising from delays in receiving EHCPs** – some families are reporting significant delays in receiving drafts and final copies of EHCPs despite multiple requests.
* **Issues that schools appear to have incorrect advice from LA about statutory timescales.** It was reported that there are several examples of schools quoting incorrect advice.
* **Concerns that SENCOs may not have sufficient knowledge to spot autism in girls and may not access specialist support to assess in schools and settings** Schools are not asking for specialist teacher support to identify needs, particularly where girls are suspected to have autism. Families are turning to expensive private assessments.
* **Thresholds for paediatric assessments for autism don’t work where no evidence of behaviours in school setting but they are clear at home** Where children manage / mask at school, there is no support from school in supporting a parent’s request for a paediatric assessment.
* **Concern that health in EHCPs is not working well** it is difficult to get health advice and assessments. Some children are likely to have co-morbid / co-occurring conditions that would need to be assessed / identified and treated / managed but the worry it that this is not happening.
* **Isolation of parent carers of children with autism** – it’s not until you find other parents of children with additional needs / specific needs that ypu realise ypu are not alone
* **P-scales new replacement with Engagement model** – can we have support as families to understand the new model please?
* **Loneliness for children with SEND in social settings –** many families report that their children experience loneliness and find it difficult to feel and experience friendship. Play settings that support them are not widely available to all – Cam Play only accessible to a small group.
* **School Transitions in a pandemic:**
* **Post 16 issues:**
  + **Offer lack breadth and choice for SEND young people**. There do not appear to be sufficient options for young people with SEND – not only the choice but the type, locations, and scale of provision (particularly small class sizes).
  + **There is not enough support to prepare for transitions at 16**. Whilst the help of the Employment advisers has been available it seems slow and parent carers are anxious to have some certainty for their children.
  + **Managing the coordination of all the options and services at 16 is very difficult.** Seeking a reassessment of needs + looking at options +working with different colleagues around options+ local choices of courses and settings is very difficult (and stressful).
  + **Reassessments at 16 may be needed as needs change** Its difficult to get a reassessment of needs at 16 as needs / settings will change but its not an automatic process and perhaps it should / could be? Ypu need to make the case that there are ‘significant’ changes but that’s not well-known or understood and parent carers are not confident to make the request or, where they are, the request is refused.

**Positive Feedback**

* **Support for Down children and young people** - Thanks was expressed for the very positive and supportive work Pinpoint and Dr Joanna Stanbridge (CCC Education Psychologist) are doing to address the needs of Downs children.
* **Support from CCC lead Autism specialist** – Thanks was expressed for the personal support one family has received from Autism Lead Carla Stavrou (CCC Education Psychologist)

## Next Steps

## Toni addressed the issues raised with those who raised them and will take feedback to the relevant services.

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