

Supporting Children and Young People's Mental Health

Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Overview of session

To provide members with information about the supporting children and young people's (CYP) mental health pilot including:

- Background and aims
- Work strands
- Evaluation and impact
- Roll out / next steps

Why are we doing this?

Feedback from young people, families and professionals has consistently suggested that:

- The current support offer is difficult to understand and navigate
- This can lead to inappropriate referrals and delays in young people accessing the support they need

Partners involved in the pilot

- Professionals from across the partnership and support system including Piece of Mind Team (Mental Health Support Team), Single Point of Access, Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Trust CAMHS teams, Early Help Service, SEND and Inclusion Teams, Public Health, Intensive Family Support Team, Harrogate and District NHS Trust Emotional Health and Resilience Team, GP's and Primary Care Nurses
- Schools in the Consett area
- Children and Families in the Consett locality
- Investing in Children
- United Voice

Background / Aims

A pilot project was agreed to develop a multi-agency, collaborative model of working and access to services and support in Consett which would more effectively support children's emotional wellbeing and mental health at the earliest opportunity.

This included:

- The involvement of stakeholders from all key providers in the area who deliver or support mental health and wellbeing support services (GP's, schools, health and social care services etc)
- The project was developed and subsequently implemented with CYP, Parents and Carers so that they were central to the work and had opportunities to feedback what was working and what was not
- The work was phased with the initial stage of the project focussing on developing a detailed understanding of the current services available and models of working which was then used to develop the focus of two operational work strands:
 - **Supporting neurodivergent children and young people in school (Work Strand 1)**
 - **Supporting the general mental health and wellbeing of children and young people (Work Strand 2)**

(The project group also considered the advice/information of other areas to understand potential models in existence and to learn from best practice).

Work Strand 1

Supporting neurodivergent (ND) children and young people (CYP) in School

Supporting ND CYP people through working with schools at a whole school level alongside targeting support for individual CYP when required. This element of the project included:

- a) **Improvements to wider community support systems including** the development of a needs led planning tool to facilitate conversations with families, to discuss and make plans at the earliest identified opportunity; huddles for professionals to identify the right needs-led support for the young person; information and development sessions for professionals from any service in the locality.
- b) **Whole school support for 10 partner schools:** staff training, audits of practice, action planning, drop-in surgeries for teachers to discuss their support for children with special educational needs and disabilities, coaching, peer support networks for teachers.
- c) **Targeted school, family and young person support** through bespoke workshops for staff; drop ins, coffee mornings and workshops for families; individual consultation and intervention for children and young people

Work Strand 1

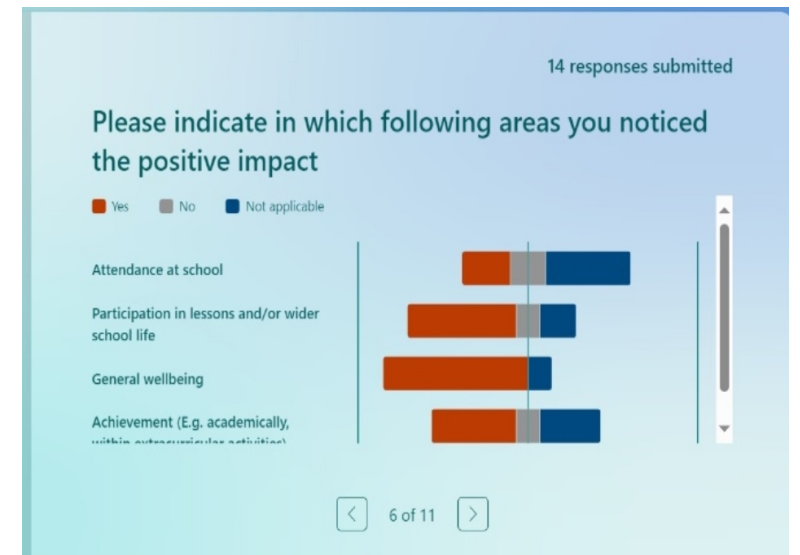
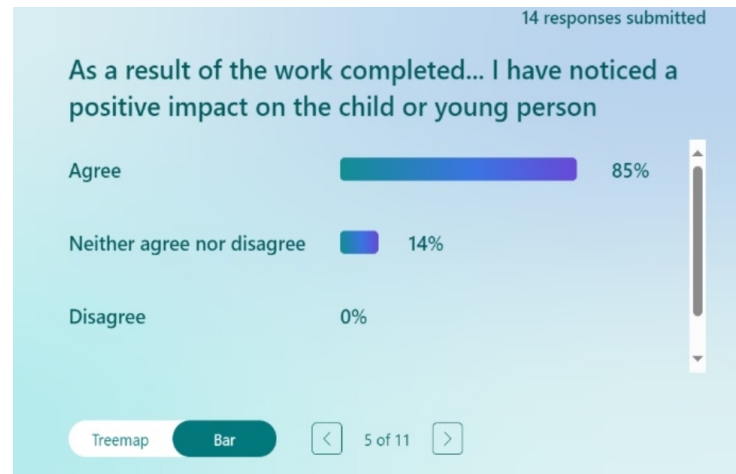
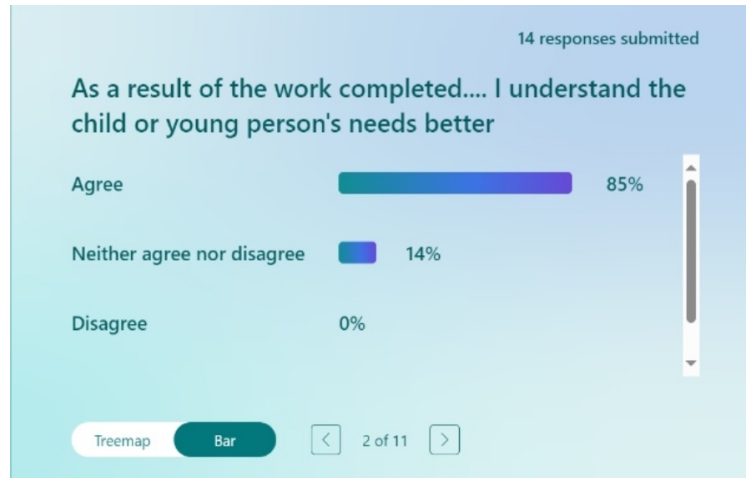
Supporting Neurodivergent (ND) CYP in School

- New commissioning for this work strand was gained via the existing multi-agency Valuing Neurodiversity in County Durham Board and £125k funding was secured for September 2023 – August 2024.
- Work overseen by the Board above and also the CYP Mental Health Partnership.
- Co-ordinated and supported by 0.1 FTE manager from the Communication and Interaction Team. Core facilitation team:
 - 1.2 FTE Advisory Inclusion Teachers
 - 0.1 Specialist Educational Psychologist
 - 0.2 assistant psychologist
 - 0.2 senior specialist inclusion support worker
- Benefitted from the increased service collaboration, and improved systems for communication about support available in the locality area.

Work Strand 1

Engagement & Outcomes

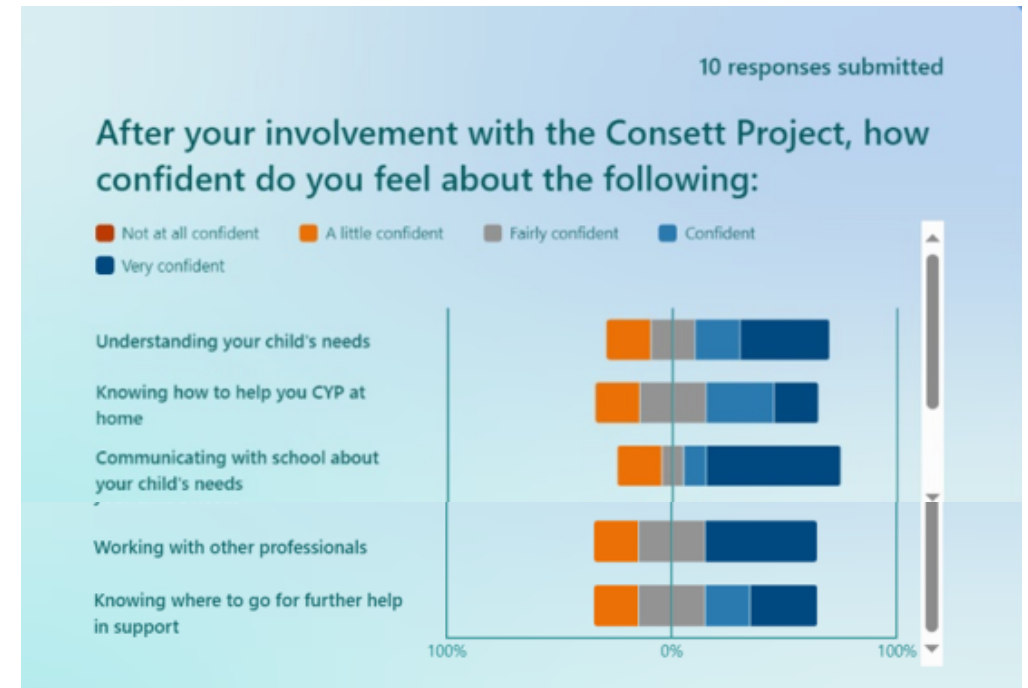
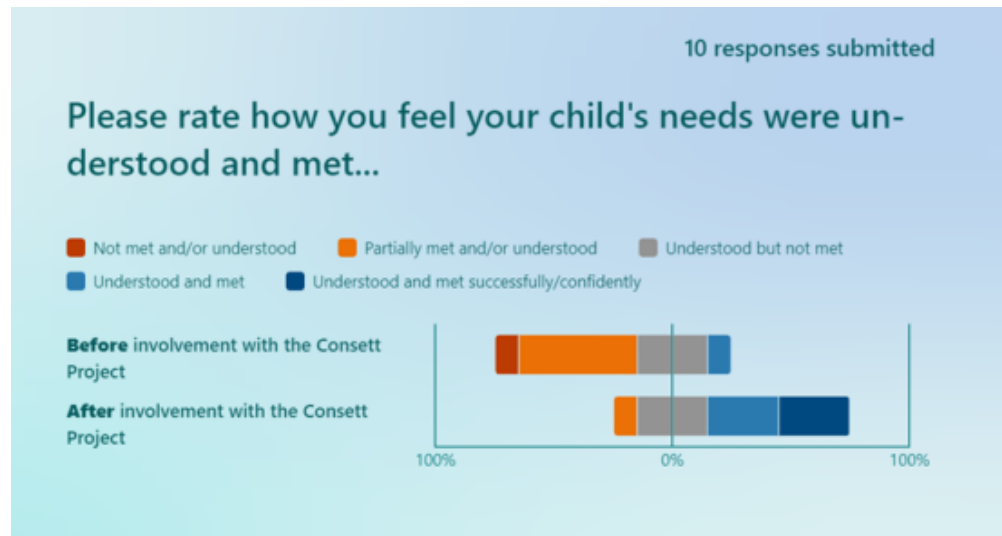
Impact and outcomes evidence was gathered from school, families and young people. School feedback came from 11 SENCOs and 3 head teachers:



Work Strand 1

Engagement & Outcomes

10 families participated in more in depth interviews.



Work Strand 1

Engagement & Outcomes

Family and YP feedback:

"I can recognise my feelings now and see what I feel by how I act. I know how I act now and realise that I shiver in the Blue Zone and shout or hit when I'm in the Red Zone. I can begin to help it."

"I got help with seeing what my child's needs are "

"Quite a big impact - he was a lot more confident in being able to ask for help to ask for things such as pencil toppers. Use the resources from C (support worker). Resources/strategies for C in the classroom have been great"

"The team listened and gave really good advice. I have learnt loads from the meeting. I am going to start doing stuff tonight. I know these things will really help and will work. "

This was a very welcome intervention at a very difficult time for us and our child ... The work undertaken helped us and school get a better understanding of our child, and appreciation of the types of support we can all implement to consistently help her both at home and school.....Opening this intervention to children without formal diagnosis may well have prevented us from reaching a crisis of full on school refusal...Thankfully together we have supported our child to get back on track

Work Strand 1

Next Steps

Elements of the work strand which have worked well and should be taken forward include:

- All of the whole school development work, including audits and action planning, drop in surgeries for staff, whole school staff training, bespoke workshops and the peer support networks
- Pupil profiles
- Family drop ins and coffee mornings with themed focus, including more personalised invitations
- Strengthening community service networks and communication systems

Although the needs led planning tool was in development during the project, it is anticipated that this will form a key part of any future project work, providing a consistent approach to needs-led conversations with families.

What is the Neurodivergence Mental Health Needs Led Planning Tool ?

- Developed as part of the Consett Mental Health Pilot and Neurodivergent Support for Schools Project.
- Overarching goal of both strands is to ensure that CYP and their families can access the help, advice, and support they need – in the right place, and at the right time.
- This tool has a particular focus on **facilitating communication** and **enabling collaboration** with families, ensuring their views directly support planning for their child needs

The 8 Broad Areas of Need

1. Speech, Language, and Communication
2. Interacting, Empathising, and Developing Relationships
3. Flexibility, Adaptability, and Managing Transitions
4. Energy, Attention, and Impulse Control
5. Understanding, Communicating, and Regulating Emotions
6. Self-Esteem, Resilience, and Emotional Wellbeing
7. Seeking, Avoiding, and Sensory Processing
8. Thinking, Learning, and Processing Information



Step 1: Profile Needs

- A parent/carer (or potentially a young person themselves) raises concerns with a professional about possible neurodivergence and/or mental health needs. As part of an initial conversation, they use the Needs-Led Planning Tool to begin to explore issues of concern together.
- They start by using the Needs Profile (Part 1 of the document) to identify relevant contextual information, to recognise the CYP's underlying strengths, and to detail and prioritise areas of concern. The professional records these discussion points on the document.



Step 2: Plan & Implement Next Steps

- Having completed the Needs Profile and identified areas of priority, the professional and the parent/carer (and/or young person) consults the relevant sections of the Planning Tool (Part 2 of the document) for recommended strategies, resources, and other helpful information.
- All those involved make a plan of action based on these recommendations and commit to implement some changes over the coming weeks. They agree to come back together again after an agreed period (4-6 weeks) to review progress and impact. All of this is recorded on the document.

Step 3: Review & Plan Additional Steps

- Often, focusing on the specific needs of the CYP and implementing targeted strategies in this way will be sufficient to bring about meaningful, positive change. In this case, no further action may be required beyond maintaining and regularly reviewing the agreed plan.
- If it is felt upon review that significant concerns remain despite the implementation of targeted strategies, the professional may navigate the parent/carer (and/or young person) to an appropriate service for further advice and support, using the referral information in Part 2.

Work Strand 2

Supporting the general mental health and wellbeing of CYP

Aim of this work strand are to explore ways of improving access to and support from services by:

1. Improving understanding of the mental health support available across all stakeholder groups
2. Strengthening existing mechanisms for navigating young people and their families to the right support, in the right place and at the right time
3. Clarifying the obstacles that need to be overcome to ensure this happens sustainably over time
4. Ensuring groups that don't currently get good access to support are factored into future planning

This work strand has been undertaken within existing budgets – a partnership services agreement was secured to explore opportunities to work collaboratively and strengthen / reconfigure existing resources.

Work Strand 2

Key areas identified for development	Actions
Meaningful engagement of CYP and co-production	CYP focus discussion group established at Consett Academy to inform all elements of the project
Family support	Parent carer panel informed all developments Flyer to inform families of local support co-produced with families CAMHS drop-in sessions established in family hubs
Communications	Consett Partnership News for all schools and services termly with info around key identified areas of need emerging from consultations
Process for schools and services to access advice and support at the earliest opportunity	Consett Partnership Huddle – multi-disciplinary fortnightly meetings for professionals to access advice, guidance and navigating families to the support offer in a timely manner
Consistency for families who have concerns at the first point of contact; getting the right help at the right time	Durham Neurodivergence Mental Health Needs Led Planning Tool co-produced
Workforce Development	Facilitation of professional sessions to engage and develop knowledge, skills and confidence in schools and partnership services

Work Strand 2

Impact

- Strengthened relationships and communications across teams, schools and services in the locality
- Needs of 17 CYP discussed at Consett Partnership Huddle (13 secondary school, 2 primary school, 2 not attending school) to support identification of needs, next steps and a bespoke support offer to the CYP and their families
- Developed collaborative approaches and practice through regular opportunities to come together to reflect on shared agendas
- Neurodivergence Mental Health Needs Led Planning Tool co-produced
- Established CAMHS drop in sessions for families to support waiting well
- Established communication systems for partnership professionals and schools bespoke to the identified needs within the local community

Work Strand 2

Impact

Neurodivergence Mental Health Needs Led Planning Tool

*Easy to use, good guidance examples and was easy enough to adapt to the SEND setting
[Special School staff]*

I attended the webinar on Durham Neurodivergence Mental Health Needs Led Planning Tool it has some really good links for resources and tips we can use with parents [Early Help Practitioner]

I used some of the ten tips from two areas to have a discussion with a parent today and there was some super advice I'm excited for it to become generally available! [SENDIASS]

Consett Partnership Huddle

I feel confident I have a good understanding of the needs and next steps. Increased knowledge about what teams and services in my area can offer [Family Centre Manager]

Parent was thrilled with outcome having felt she had repeated herself many times until this point and lots of support was given following 2nd huddle meeting [Specialist SEND and Inclusion Advisory Teacher]

Work Strand 2

Lessons learned and Next Steps

What have we learned	Impact and future steps
The importance of strengthening communication	Integrating local information into the Emotional Wellbeing locality newsletters
<p>Consett Partnership Huddle</p> <p>Although targeted to Consett locality, established Early Help Conversation forum provides this service across Durham</p>	<p>Strengthened relationships and knowledge of schools and partnership workforce re the local support offer</p> <p>Early Help Conversation forum reviewed their referral information and processes to improve accessibility through the portal</p>
To improve the experiences of CYP and their families a needs focused, consistent response from schools and all partnership at initial point of contact when families raise concerns is required.	<p>The Needs Led Planning tool has supported the wider workforce to develop knowledge, skills and confidence around identifying and meeting needs</p> <p>Durham Neurodivergence Mental Health Needs Led Planning Tool to be rolled out across all Co Durham schools and the partnership workforce through briefing sessions, neuro needs led support offer and Neurodivergence in schools project</p>

Work Strand 2

Lessons learned and Next Steps

What have we learned	Impact and future steps
<p>Workforce development can be enhanced through a range of accessible and established processes e.g. Managers at team meetings, Senior leads in schools, Emotional Wellbeing locality forums, Communities of Learning meetings etc.</p>	<p>Briefing sessions and professional development opportunities will continue with the inclusion of sharing presentations across the partnership for facilitation by managers at established team meetings</p>
<p>Strengthening relationships and partnership working through meeting and communicating regularly around shared agenda's and areas of need is vital</p>	<p>Established relationships and increased knowledge of the support offer across the partnership will inform future practice and has created opportunities for collaborative working</p>
<p>CYP and family views and involvement are key to inform practice developments YP focus discussion groups and parent forums such as Making Changes Together vital to all elements of the project work</p>	<p>Principle of co-production and including CYP and families in developments of all teams offers taken forward</p>

Wider General Next Steps / Roll Out

- Roll out of The Neurodivergence Mental Health Needs Led Planning Tool across the county
- Roll out of Neurodivergence in Schools project in areas where there are higher referral numbers to the Neuro assessment pathway:
 - Stanley
 - Shotton Hall
 - Newton Aycliffe
- Strengthen VCS/third sector involvement in provision of mental health and wellbeing activities/interventions as part of Work Strand 2 expansion.

Thank you – any questions?

