

## DMAT SEND Overview

January 2020

SEND has been identified as a priority area within the DMAT.

Across the 16 schools within the trust the leadership of SEN is arranged in various ways. Not all schools have 'their own' SENCO, some of the smaller schools share this role. The table below tries to draw together this information and is based on information received or on scrutiny of the schools website;

School	SENCO	SEN Gov	LGB Board
Okehampton Primary	Full time, non-class based  Beverley Pickett-Jones	Yes, new to SEN Gov role supported by CoG	Okehampton AC
Chagford	Ashley Smith (Y2/3 Class Teacher)  SENCO Time - 1 pm per week	No  Fiona Elsworth (new to role of SEN Governor)	3 Hares AC
North Tawton	Helen Martin  1 day a week (Thursday)	No  Fiona Elsworth (new to role of SEN Governor)	3 Hares AC
South Tawton	Emma Bennett (Class 2 Teacher)	No  Fiona Elsworth (new to role of SEN Governor)	3 Hares AC
Boasley Cross	Federation schools share a SENCO  Steve Williams	Yes - Mary Ellory (plus Tania Skeaping (COG) as deputy SEN Lead)	Dartmoor Federation AC
Bridestowe	Federation schools share a SENCO  Steve Williams	Yes - Mary Ellory (plus Tania Skeaping (COG) as deputy SEN Lead)	Dartmoor Federation AC
Exbourne	Federation schools share a SENCO	Yes - Mary Ellory (plus Tania Skeaping (COG) as deputy SEN Lead)	Dartmoor Federation AC

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	Steve Williams/ Fiona Williams?		
Northlew & Ashbury	Federation schools share a SENCO Steve Williams	Yes - Mary Ellory (plus Tania Skeaping (COG) as deputy SEN Lead)	Dartmoor Federation AC
Lydford	Federation schools share a SENCO Steve Williams	Yes - Mary Ellory (plus Tania Skeaping (COG) as deputy SEN Lead)	Dartmoor Federation AC
Highampton	Federation schools share a SENCO Steve Williams	Yes - Mary Ellory (plus Tania Skeaping (COG) as deputy SEN Lead)	Dartmoor Federation AC
Bridegrule	Holsworthy cluster primary schools share a SENCO - Anne Bunning	No- Co-Chair has attended SEND meetings	Holsworthy AC
Black Torrington	Holsworthy cluster primary schools share a SENCO - Anne Bunning	No- Co-Chair has attended SEND meetings	Holsworthy AC
Bradford	Holsworthy cluster primary schools share a SENCO - Anne Bunning	No- Co-Chair has attended SEND meetings	Holsworthy AC
Okehampton College	Karen Moore	Yes - Mary Ellory (plus Tania Skeaping (COG) as deputy SEN Lead)	Dartmoor Federation AC
Tavistock College	Zoe Baring	No - Caroline Jordan (co-Vice chair) is holding temp	Tavistock AC
Holsworthy College	Sam Williams	No- Co-Chair has attended SEND meetings	Holsworthy AC

As SEND Trustee I invited SEN Governors/CoG on each AC to meet with me. The initial meeting was an introductory one to establish who was in the role and their level of experience, confidence and engagement with SEN provision and schools.

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It was very quickly obvious that with the exception of one Governor who had been in the role of SEN Governor for a year everyone else was **either** new to SEN Governor, new to any Governor roles **or** experienced CoG who were 'holding' the role due to transition.

The first session looked at the key messages within the SEND Code of Practice (CoP) and we discussed key role of SEN Governors, signposting to a couple of online and face to face training options. Overall the group felt that they did not have the confidence or knowledge that they would like to hold for SEN. They all felt that challenging the SENCO and/or senior leaders within school would be difficult with their current level of knowledge and information.

A SEN Governor's framework of questions was shared with the group prior to the initial meeting. Some Governors used this to reflect on what they already knew about the identification and provision for learners with SEND and where they would find the evidence within their school. It was felt that this was a valuable tool as it supported Governors to know what questions/information to look for. It is envisaged that this framework tool will be used as a developmental tool to support and capture good practice.

The second meeting in the autumn term was less well-attended but feedback remained strong with those attending being able to articulate some of the strengths and challenges for their schools with meeting the needs of learners with SEND. Details of this meeting were recorded on a visit note.

### **Strengths of SEND Governance**

- New group who are committed and keen to understand the role, to develop their knowledge and to work with the SENCO and senior leaders to strengthen the quality of SEN provision in school.
- Commitment to meeting termly as a group to support one another and to learn from best practice.

### **Challenges to SEN Governance**

- Not all AC's have a clear lead for SEN.
- Are we (Governors and Trustees) getting the right information from leaders on SEN identification, provision and outcomes? is it in an accessible format? For example - Outcome data and attendance data broken down into SEND groups
- 'Clusters' result in Governors needing to understand the specific strengths and challenges of more than one school; the tendency can be for the largest school or the one with most need to dominate, leaving the level of understanding of the other schools SEN provision vulnerable and weaker.
- Shared SENCO position of some of our schools can increase the meeting burden on SENCO's, who have limited time and capacity for the role. This can contribute to the SEN Governor not having a clear picture of need and provision in **all** schools.

### **Proposal**

- Termly agenda meetings for SEN Governors and CoG (all are welcome)
- Rotational focus on schools or topics

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- Encourage SEN Governors to make contact with Lead SEND Trustee with questions and concerns at the time of arising for on-going support.
- Use SEND Governance framework to audit current knowledge and support governors to plan a cycle of meetings to address areas needing development
- Review current structure within AC's for SEN
- Look at reporting format used by schools/SENCO's to ensure it provides the information needed and the timing of this cycle
- Work with school leaders / central executive team to produce an annual DMAT SEND report including data on SEN profile (numbers and types of need) outcomes, attendance, exclusions (FTE and PeX), use of part-time timetables, off-site provision and number of learners with SEN becoming EHE. The report should also capture training and resource investment and should be used to identify key priority areas for the following year for the trust and at school level (where appropriate).

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