

Aylsham Cluster of Schools SEND Statement of Procedure and Practice September 2015



“Making change happen is difficult. So, however, is the everyday job of SENCOs/ Inclusion co-ordinators and class room teachers as they struggle to implement the bureaucratic procedures that currently occupy most of the time and energy available to meet the needs of children with SEN or disabilities. Because of this, change is essential.”

(Gross 2008 page 163)

The Aylsham Cluster of SENCO’s firmly agrees with the identified quotation highlighted by the LA; change can and should equal progress, improvement and so improved outcomes for children. However, change needs to be understood, its purpose made clear so all stakeholders ‘buy into it’. This has been the challenge of implementing the changes to SEND funding since January 2012.

In January 2012, Norfolk County Councillors made the decision to change the way they distribute funding for learners with Special Educational Needs and disabilities (SEND) in mainstream settings. Instead of retaining funds for learners with Statements quantified with 20 hours or more support, the decision was made to distribute this fund to SEND focused clusters of schools. It was agreed to devolve the fund, previously known as ‘Pupil Specific Funding’ to clusters in 2012-13 and fully delegate this fund in 2013-14 and thereafter.

Mainstream schools in Norfolk, have for many years, received the delegated funding for learners with SEND at School Action, School Action Plus and with Statements of less than 20 hours, this was reduced to 2 categories of SEND in school under the implementation of the Children and Families Act September 2014. Now schools have pupils with SEND and pupil son Statement or Education Health and Care Plans. The decision to distribute the remaining funding to clusters was based on the principles of achieving early intervention and greater flexibility of resource allocation.

The Aylsham Cluster of Schools is in full agreement with the principles of the change, and indeed, despite a disparity over funding amounts, have devised a system of funding distribution between schools which promotes equity and fairness, and is also transparent to any scrutiny. The success of these systems has been, and continues to lie, in the unity within the cluster, the joint approach taken when introducing these changes to staff and parents – and children/students.

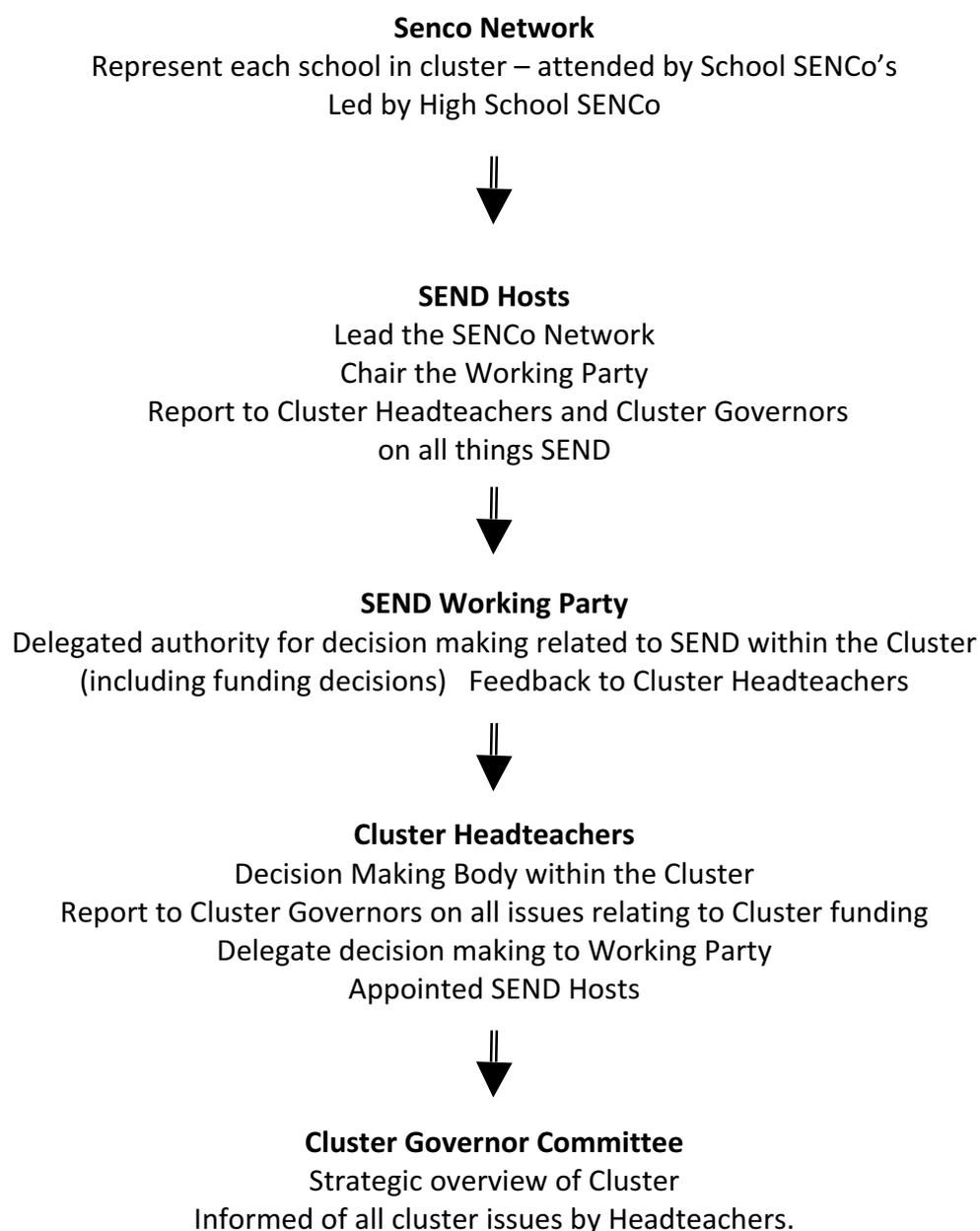
The Cluster Headteachers made two key decisions when implementing these compulsory changes: they nominated ‘two’ SEND Hosts for the cluster, and delegated decision making responsibility to a designated Working Party. The SEND Hosts come from the Primary and Secondary sectors, and work collaboratively. Kathryn Leeks (Aylsham High School SENCO) brings SEND expertise and knowledge, and confident Leadership of the cluster SENDco Network. Deborah Leahy (Headteacher Buxton Primary) brings primarily the strategic leadership knowledge required to lead a major change.

The SEND Working Party is made up of 3 primary Headteachers, Secondary Deputy Headteacher, High School SENCO, High School Finance Manager and the High school’s Director of Business and Community Strategy. The SEND Hosts undertake all the operational duties that enable the Working Party to make informed strategic funding decisions. The

working party has delegated responsibility from the Cluster Headteachers for all cluster SEND decisions.

On an operational level, the Cluster Hosts are supported by the strong Cluster Network of SENCOs. This network involves all SENCO's from each of the cluster schools – they are responsible for the implementation of new systems and procedures at an individual school level. Together they have undertaken a cluster wide provision map, ensured a uniformed approach to identifying additional needs in pupils, identified key resources and expertise within the cluster, collated a cluster SEN Register and they will continue to ensure that the SEND provision across the cluster is as good as it can be so that all children/students achieve as well as they can

Hierarchy of SEND responsibility within the Cluster.



DELEGATION OF FUNDING

Annually each school is allocated a dedicated SEND budget, directly into their school budget. This constitutes an amount to support all SEND in school for school action, school action plus and statemented pupils. School Budgets are also allocated an additional £10,000 for high level SEND. It is expected that schools will be able to show how this additional £10,000 has been used to meet pupil need before application for additional SEND funding can be made to the cluster.

In addition to the school allocated SEND funding, the cluster receives SEND funding also, which is to be used to support high level SEND in schools and across the cluster. Our cluster SEND allocation is for supporting ALL SEND in schools in a varied way: resources, buying in advise and support and implementing specific interventions, for example.

Currently, the working party agreed that each school with statemented children or children with an EHCP, will be entitled to a proportion of the Cluster SEND allocation. This year we extended the provision to include ALL pupils on the SEND Register. The Cluster Headteachers agreed.

When a school requires additional funding, the Working Party has devised (based on LA recommendations/examples) application forms, impact forms and response forms. An application form should be completed for each intervention that a school wishes to implement to support pupils. This application is checked by the SEND Host, and submitted for consideration to the Cluster Working Party. The SENCO network has been trained in completing these forms (completed examples provided) and is aware of the deadline dates for application submissions.

After funding has been allocated to a school(s) for an intervention, at the end of the intervention period the working party will receive an impact form which details – in a measurable way – the success (or not) of the intervention. This information is collated by the working party and shared with cluster headteachers. A summary of impact is also shared with Cluster Governors – showing value for cluster delegated money.

Produced by D Leahy and K Leeks

Aylsham Cluster SEND Hosts

September 2013

Updated January 2015

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