



The Isles of Scilly community approach to inclusion

'How well are we doing at making the experience of all children, young people and families the heart of all we do?'



4th - 6th April 2022

Genuine Partnerships



Council of the
ISLES OF SCILLY

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Introduction and Context

This report documents narratives shared with *Genuine Partnerships* during the team's follow-up visit to the Isles of Scilly April 4th- 6th 2022. It builds upon co-production work undertaken on the islands since 2019, when the *Whole Community Approach to Inclusion* report was shared by *Genuine Partnership* following the team's initial visit commissioned by the Isles Scilly Director of Children's Services and the then Coordinator for the Isles of Scilly Parent Carer Group (Parent Carer Forum). Please refer to that report for more detailed background information about the Isles of Scilly and *Genuine Partnerships*.

The community vision for the original visit in 2019 was:

"To create a truly inclusive environment on the Isles of Scilly that makes the experience of all our children, young people and families the heart of all we do..."

The *Genuine Partnerships* team uses the Four Cornerstones Approach in working with partners to evaluate co-production and inclusive practice:

:

The Cornerstones have been recognised by national SEND partners, enabling a common language for co-production that cultivates equal partnership working so that expectations for inclusion across areas are shared and strengthened.

WELCOME AND CARE

VALUE AND INCLUDE

COMMUNICATE

WORK IN PARTNERSHIP

Developing and nurturing each of these to build

TRUST

The process: appreciative inquiry and the application of systemic, critical narrative practice

Genuine Partnerships projects are purposefully grounded in appreciative inquiry. Appreciative inquiry is an optimistic, strength-based model that supports organisational change and involves people in communities talking and working together towards common hopes and dreams. There is also an understanding that as they try to understand their own lives, and the lives of others, people tell stories (narratives) to express meaning. These stories are co-constructed with other people and can change over time.

Genuine Partnerships draws upon appreciative inquiry and narrative practice in working together with whole area partners to build upon community strengths and generate agreed next steps. This approach is systemic because it focuses on relationships within whole systems like families, organisations and communities. It is also critical, because power imbalances are acknowledged and adjusted so that all voices can be heard equally. Different versions of the same event can be validated and blame removed. By applying a systemic,

critical narrative approach the *Genuine Partnerships* team deliberately prioritises the voices and experiences of children and young people and their parents and carers.

Isles of Scilly Community Narratives 2019

The 2019 project highlighted a wealth of key narratives. Outlined here are those prioritised by the range of community partners we met, which included parent carers, children and young people:

What was going well

WELCOME AND CARE

- ✓ There was a positive approach to co-production and inclusive practice shared by the community, and a will to work together

VALUE AND INCLUDE

- ✓ Some practitioners were valued for demonstrating the Cornerstones in their practice, showing care and being open to constructive feedback

WORK IN PARTNERSHIP

- ✓ Some services were working particularly well together, which included some mainland partnerships
- ✓ There had been some examples of positive changes made as a result, for example the appointment of a new SENDCo based on the islands

What needed to be better?

WELCOME AND CARE

- Working together to consider and improve the impact of key transitional stages on the children and young people of the Isles of Scilly (particularly Preparing for Adulthood [PFA] and the end of Key Stage Four, increasing post 16 options for young people):
 - Gathering the views of young people who have been through the experience, and their families, to inform what works/does not work
 - Exploring creative ways to deliver a wider post 16 offer on Scilly as well as the mainland
 - Parent carers being included as equal partners in discussion

VALUE AND INCLUDE

- The right support being in place for young people's mental health needs

- Embedding a more individualised, person-centred approach so that parent carers do not feel they have to battle for their children and young people to have the support they need

COMMUNICATE

- Paperwork being more family and child/young person friendly
- Improved training and ICT resources to enhance communication and accessibility across the islands
- The Local Offer
- Having opportunities to meet more regularly face-to-face (eg via the Family Hub)

WORK IN PARTNERSHIP

- Enabling more children and young people to participate and have their voices heard in meetings, ensuring their feedback is discussed at a strategic level

How partners on the Isles of Scilly responded (2019-2022)

- ✓ **Some great examples of co-production**
 - **Shared vision:** *Every single child on the Isles of Scilly has the same opportunity as every other child to be part of and contribute to their community, to fulfil their dreams and aspirations and to lead successful and happy adult lives*
 - **SEND Strategy and 3 year Action Plan**
 - **10 shared strategic outcomes:**
 - Every child has their needs identified at the earliest possible stage
 - All children on the SEN register have appropriate, up to date and transferable documentation linked to need
 - All children have their needs met consistently by high quality provision that makes a measurable difference to their lives
 - The Isles of Scilly is seen by every child as a fantastic place to grow up where difference and diversity are celebrated
 - Parents are clear about the support pathways, information and guidance available to them and how to access those services
 - Parents are supported, listened to and respected, and their views valued
 - Services are designed by, and with, families, children and young people
 - Neurodiverse needs are identified and met using a wide range of tools
 - Children and young people are skilled and prepared for adult life
 - Families benefit from strong joint working by various agencies and professionals leading to a coordinated service for children
 - **Key developments**
 - The creation of the Isles of Scilly Inclusion Charter

- One Vision Partnership (Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Integrated Care System)
- New processes for Early Help support
- More of a multi-agency approach to improving health and emotional wellbeing (children, young people and families)
- Single point of access via the Family Hub
- Rethinking post 16
- Multi-agency Belonging and Inclusion strategic group (formerly SEND Liaison Group)
- SENSational Scilly group for children and young people with SEND (part of the Short Breaks offer)
- **Factors potentially impacting the pace of developments**
 - **COVID 19**
 - Particularly isolating for islanders
 - Implications for communications, particularly during lockdown periods
 - Impact on mental health of all partners - indications this is still manifesting
 - **Staffing changes - key strategic and operational roles**
 - Director of Children's Services (DCS) role extension to include Director of Adult Services (DAS) (also COVID recovery, airport [short-term] and Fire and Rescue)
 - New Head of the Family Services Team
 - New Head teacher
 - New Social worker
 - New SENDIASS team
 - **Reconstruction of the Isles of Scilly Parent Carer Forum**
 - The Isles of Scilly Parent Carer Group closed in December 2021 following the resignation of the coordinator and other steering group committee members
 - Supported by Contact, a new Parent Carer Forum was launched 5th April 2022 during our visit
- * **Formal evaluation and feedback mechanisms during this period**
 - Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review March 2021
 - Ofsted/CQC Local Area SEND Inspection March 2022 (report to be published)

The uniqueness of the Isles of Scilly

The 2022 return visit by *Genuine Partnerships* to the Isles of Scilly has re-emphasised important factors unique to the islands that feature strongly in many of the narratives shared, including from children, young people and their families. It is likely that some of these factors have been even more prominent during the pandemic. It seems appropriate to make reference to them here as they form another context to this evaluation in respect of co-production, inclusion and the experiences of Isles of Scilly children and young people with SEND and their families, Education, Health and Care practitioners, and their mainland partners:

- Local Authority and Health teams on the islands are small, some practitioners being casual workers who have other jobs, which means that unusually, individuals tend to carry multiple roles albeit for fewer children and young people
 - The new Head of the Children and Family Service has both a strategic and operational remit that encompasses Education and Care (including youth work and Early Help)
 - The SEND Inclusion and Commissioning Lead is the Inclusion Team Manager responsible for participation work, commissioning of universal and SEND support services from the mainland, and an Education, Health and Care (EHC) caseworker
 - The EHC case worker also has a PfA focus and has some responsibility for transport
 - The (part-time, mainland-based) Virtual Head teacher commissioned under a pilot scheme, now extended, has a broader role than typical, focusing on children known to a social worker and children and young people with SEND who do not have an EHC Plan, plus wider school improvement projects
 - The (part-time) Family Information Access Assistant supports the wider team (for example by taking notes at meetings), participation work and the Community Safety Partnership, and has responsibility for the Local Offer
 - The Social Worker is also responsible for Early Help and Short Breaks
 - The Community Nurse is a Health Visitor as well as a School Nurse (which involves a public health as well as medical role)
- Although the overall population of children and young people is small (there are 263 on roll at the Five Islands Academy Foundation Stage 2-Key Stage Four), 24 children and young people are on the SEND register and a further 12 have EHC Plans (in the main at secondary school) - which is much higher than the national average
- Some teams are mainland-based (for example the Special Education Needs Information, Support and Advice Service [SENDIASS] and Mental Health in Schools team) and others include Isles of Scilly and mainland practitioners (for example school nursing)

- Several practitioners have more than one line manager, for example the Community Nurse has a line manager on Scilly (the Health Visitor) as well as through the mainland School Nursing service; the Virtual Head teacher reports to the DCS and Head of Children and Family Service on Scilly
- Practitioners are in the uncommon position of living and working in the same small community, which means they are readily accessible, which can blur boundaries but also enable strong supportive collaborations (going "above and beyond")
- For children, young people and families this can be positive because they can contact practitioners easily and build strong relationships, but it can also be a barrier to openness and trust because of the exposure it might bring if friends and neighbours are also the ones to be involved professionally, and the additional tensions and anxiety that can be introduced by the prospect of challenge. One young person told us that it was "strange" because, "...you know your teacher's name and address, describing going on a social visit with a family friend to a teacher's house
- Face to face support and involvement from mainland specialists can be easily hampered by adverse weather or transport technical issues, which can also lead to significant delays
- Having only one school, the Five Islands Academy, on the islands, creates significant pressure on the setting as the sole focus for LA and Health involvement; conversely, this also ensures that the setting has much readier access to services than is typical on the mainland
- Some Health processes have been adjusted to meet the needs of families on the islands: the General (acute) Paediatrician will be the main link for EHC Annual Reviews rather than the Community Paediatrician because they already visit regularly to see children and young people with specific medical needs; when families go to the mainland for medical appointments there is an attempt to ensure that different family needs can be checked on the same visit
- The PfA model is very different on the Isles of Scilly as most young people leave school to go to college on the mainland at 16 (boarding or staying with host families)



The Isles of Scilly community approach to inclusion 2022:

'How well are we doing at making the experience of all children, young people and families the heart of all we do?'

Partners involved

Representing Genuine Partnerships:

Claire Whiting Genuine Partnerships Co-Strategic Lead, Educational Psychologist (Area Specialist), Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC), Placement Director, University of Sheffield Doctor of Educational and Child Psychology and Trustee, Rotherham Parent Carer's Forum

Jayne Fitzgerald Genuine Partnerships Co-Strategic Lead, Strategic Lead Rotherham Parent Carers Forum and member

Jemma Wilkinson Genuine Partnerships Strategic Management Group, Senior Educational Psychologist, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC)

Kayleigh Harrison Genuine Partnerships Strategic Management Group, Rotherham Parent Carers Forum Participation and Engagement Coordinator and member

Isles of Scilly key facilitator:

Helen McGuinness SEND Inclusion and Commissioning Lead

Planning meetings prior to the visit involving:

Tracy Smith Chair, Isles of Scilly Parent Carer Group (until December 2021)

Sarah-Jane Trubody Head of the Children and Family Service, Isles of Scilly

Emma Bennett Co-chair, Isles of Scilly Parent Carer Forum launched April 2022

Anthea Roberts Secretary, Isles of Scilly Parent Carer Forum launched April 2022

Representing the Isles of Scilly community 4th-6th April:

(please note that some of the individuals referred to below are represented in more than one group)

Children and young people *6 children and young people with SEND across the primary and secondary age range, including one off-island child, were interviewed as part of the SENsational Scilly group; the team also interviewed 12 siblings of children and young people with SEND and 4 children and young people attended and contributed to the evening workshop 'How is our community approach to inclusion still making the experience of children, young people and families the heart of all we do?'*

Parent carers *2 parent carers attended an interview and 6 parent carers representing the steering group of the Isles of Scilly Parent Carer Forum attended the launch and facilitated action planning activity; 8 parent carers attended and contributed to the evening workshop (including 1 elected member and 1 trauma informed school ['TIS'] practitioner)*

Five Islands Academy 3 practitioners including the Head teacher, SENDCo and boarding house parent attended the evening workshop; the team carried out a follow-up interview with the Head teacher and were escorted by the SENDCo on a tour of the school

Cherry Blossom Daycare 2 practitioners including the manager and SENDCo attended the evening workshop

Education and Care Services (Council of the Isles of Scilly) 5 practitioners attended a hybrid focus group interview including the Head of Children and Family Service, Virtual Head teacher, SEND Inclusion and Commissioning Lead, SEND caseworker, Family Information Access Assistant; 7 representatives from the Children and Family Services team (SEND Team Inclusion Workers and social workers) and 2 representatives from Learn Scilly (Team Manager and Supported Internship Job Coach/commissioned RSPB Nature Therapy Inclusion Worker) attended the evening workshop; a further interview was carried out involving the social worker (Isles of Scilly) and Mental Health in Schools practitioner (mainland based); the team met the DCS/DAS and Mentor for Quality Assurance and Audit informally

Health Services 1 practitioner attended the evening workshop (Integrated Manager, St. Mary's Hospital) and the team carried out a focus group interview virtually with 4 practitioners (Children's Area Manager (West) - Children's Community Health Services [mainland based]; Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) [mainland based], Community Nurse (0-19/25 [based on Isles of Scilly], Health Visitor [based on Isles of Scilly]); a further interview was carried out involving the Mental Health in Schools practitioner [mainland based] together with the social worker

A combination of COVID and adverse weather conditions meant that several parent carers and practitioners were unable to attend the face-to-face events and interviews. Where possible, alternative opportunities were offered to attend interviews virtually.



2022 Isles of Scilly Process

- Planning meetings over the last 18 months involving: the Local Authority SEND Inclusion and Commissioning Lead; former Chair, Isles of Scilly Parent Carer Group; new Co-Chair and Secretary, Isles of Scilly Parent Carer Forum; Head of Children and Family Services
- 7 focus group interviews drawing upon narrative approaches involving: 2 parent carers; the Children and Family Services team; SENDIASS; Health practitioners; children and young people from SENSational Scilly; siblings group; Isles of Scilly social worker and Education Mental Health in Schools practitioner
- An interview with Five Islands Academy Head teacher and tour of the school with the SENDCo
- Informal meetings and communications with the DCO/DAS and other partners
- Two evening workshops:
 - A presentation and whole community activities focusing on The Isles of Scilly community approach to inclusion - 'How well are we doing at making the experience of all children, young people and families the heart of all we do?
 - Official launch of the Parent Carers Forum and Mapping Action Plan (MAP) activity
- Feedback report

The use of focus group interviews as part of the process enables individuals likely to have common agendas to share their stories. Ground-rules are established at the beginning to ensure participants feel they are in a safe, supportive space in which they might voice the 'not yet said'. Questions are purposefully open and, to avoid assumptions being made, the agenda of the participant leads the way: In terms of the Four Cornerstones of Co-production, thinking about your experiences now, what is going well for you on Isles of Scilly? What could be even better? The voice of the researcher is acknowledged in informing the new narratives co-created.



Key narratives from the Isles of Scilly community

As in the 2019 report, the narratives presented below are organised under the Four Cornerstones headings. Priority has been given to the voices of the children and young people and parent carers. Their words and the key narratives co-constructed over the course of the three days of the 2022 visit shape this feedback.

It is important to recognise that this report will encompass some of the many narratives that potentially exist on the Isles of Scilly. It is inevitable that perspectives, and experiences, will differ, and likely that not everybody will be aware of all the developments and activities taking place. As before, these narratives should provide a starting point for discussion and the further strengthening of relationships, and trust. Continuing to strive to work together as equal partners will provide the best foundation for resolving any differences and restoring relationships.

Community Inclusion Paper Chain: What is working well, and what needs to be better?
Here are narratives shared by all the participants attending the first evening workshop:



Going Well (paper chain)

WELCOME AND CARE

Practitioners know all the children - supports an inclusive approach

There is funding for all two year olds to access provision

The SENDCo is here

In school we are using restorative practice to repair relationships

Recognising additional needs early (Early Years) - multi-agency working for example family support/Early Help parent partnership

Engagement at Early Years foundation stage is being developed in a practical way

The preparing for adulthood trips

VALUE AND INCLUDE

EHCP support from SEND caseworkers

Celebrating strengths

Mundesley boarding house shows genuine care and interest

Off island provision for SEND - there is more

We are good at finding solutions

Lots of progress has been made at school around how the system is adapted for everyone

The whole community is very supportive of one another - attitude of people on the island to help and make things work; resilience

COMMUNICATE

Listening and signposting

WORK IN PARTNERSHIP

Asking young people about what they think and want, our children are listened to and valued, they are representing themselves more openly and honestly

Formation of SENsational Scilly

Needs to be better (paper chain)

WELCOME AND CARE

ALL staff and the wider community to know and understand our children and young people

Ensure everyone acts with respect and consideration for each other

Structured Early Years foundation stage class transition work to be prioritised

Post 16 needs improving: more accommodation on mainland

Options for e staying at home also need extending - there is too much pressure for children to go to further education and it is expected by school and community for children to go away at 16; some are not ready

VALUE AND INCLUDE

Further understanding of individual needs

Sharing positives

The SENDCo is far too busy and not accessible

Inclusion workers do exist here now, but we need loads more with a mix of skills and abilities for a wider range of need

Improve mainland services attending the island; external professionals being able to visit to enhance family support; more thought through contingency plans for practitioners eg SALT when their visits are inevitably delayed and postponed for various reasons

Full time young person's worker instead of part time

More opportunities for young people to connect

Lots of clubs that welcome all, better understanding of SEND needs

Funding for transport for children and young people to access clubs

Need to embed further

COMMUNICATE

SEND Strategy that works but could be better if more simply written

WORK IN PARTNERSHIP

More child voice is needed

Young people and families designing their offer to have ownership

More opportunities for the SENsational group

When new parent forum up to speed

For co-production and inclusion to be more widely acknowledged

More co-production including discussion on tools to use





Narratives in more detail

WELCOME AND CARE

Going well

There is a real willingness to work together, and it is agreed this is a good time to do so

"The willingness is there" - it is felt that relationships are going in the right direction, it is now time to, "...to make the change and see the change." An example of this occurred recently when a young person was seeking a supported internship on the islands, which had not been achieved previously, "We as a team have all got together to organise and make that work."

The whole community is warm, welcoming, inclusive and responsive, making it a great place in which to live and grow up

One young person told us that living on Scilly, "...you know everybody and they're like, 'Hello'." Practitioners said, "I love living here, it's a real privilege to live here, it's a real privilege to work here, actually, and I think people forget that we do appreciate what we have here"; "It is a lovely place to grow up. The kids here, and the community here, are kind and welcoming and non-judgemental and open"; "...everybody knows what's going on, there is that [community] support there."

Local businesses offer jobs, and support and understanding. They fed back to one young person, "You did a really good job and we will have you back when you are ready for another go." Eugene in the chip van will always take on children with additional needs: "You don't get businesses so willing to take on kids for Saturday jobs the way that you do in Scilly"; "People here are welcoming". A young person with SEND has just started work experience with the Children



and Families team. Some of the young people talked about the Duke of Edinburgh Award and other volunteering and work experience opportunities they have been able to do.

The welcoming approach includes the school. One practitioner said: "[I'm] always made to feel very welcome in the school - feel like I am part of that environment." There seems to be a strong emphasis on embedding whole school values like Hope, Dignity, Community, Wisdom, Knowledge and Peace in a range of ways and there is a commitment to rolling out restorative practice (to replace 'behaviour for learning'), not only in school but also with a view to extending the approach to the whole community. LA practitioners have now also attended training and the Head teacher sits on steering group with the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of the islands; a next step is involving parent carers and thinking about resourcing, "...it's really transformed the way I think about behaviour management, relationships with staff."



The house parents at Mundesley Boarding House are described as really skilled, "...it is great place to be...the kids have a fabulous time." [although it is hard for parents]

There are people you can trust you can go to

Some parent carers say that they would go to people they trust within the parent carer group. Some parent carers mentioned the previous Parent Carer Forum and being able to meet other parents through that group, thinking, "Thank god somebody understands me, understands what I am going through."

Some parent carers told us what they would like from a Parent Carer Forum: "Support, chat with other parents and get someone to advocate for us like Tracy [previous chair] did - she was absolutely brilliant." This support and advice role was undertaken in part by necessity, especially during COVID, when SENDIASS was experiencing significant staffing issues and less readily available to parent carers on the islands.

Some parent carers voice that if they had a problem with school, they would go to the SENDCo.

It is felt generally that, "In such a small community it is really important to protect relationships" which is why establishing trust is so important. Some practitioners voiced that they felt the informal relationships possible because they live in the community can strengthen relationships, "...our working with parents has strengthened because they have access to us in more than just a formal setting."

There is a commitment to person-centred working

The work of the Mental Health in Schools practitioner is very much led by the child and the family. We were advised that it was important the adults, including the cleaners, don't touch or change anything in the sensory rooms as the children and young people have asked that everything remains the same.

Practitioners expressed: "Everybody...really wants to put the child at the heart of everything..."; "they really want to do their best for every child, above and beyond, and being creative" and [they work so hard]"; "We do have children at the centre of what we do...we absolutely go above and beyond, quite rightly, because we can, here."

There is more of a focus on transition planning

The 'collaboration days' which support off-island children and young people to prepare for boarding on St. Mary's in Year 7 continue to be facilitated. It is felt that having a through school really helps.

The SENDCo understands what needs to happen to support post 16 transitions and there is now an EHC caseworker with a remit to support PfA. Recently, a young person was supported to explore a range of options which included college on the mainland as well as staying on Scilly; this has led to the first supported internship on the islands.

There have been some success stories - and it is felt this aspiration needs to extend to all Scilly young people. It is perceived that 16/17 year olds on the mainland are very much part of the community still even though the LA is not legally obliged to offer support. The commitment is evident, for example where young people are staying is tracked so that they are not on the mainland and out of sight, out of mind. There is also work taking place to embed Health questions into feedback ('Have you registered with a GP?' for example).

During lockdown a collaborative activity involving all partners including parent carers and young people took place to map out PfA pathways and include them in the Local Offer, communicating what happens dependent on need and identifying where the gaps are, for example it was felt that a more specialist SEND focus within the curriculum would be helpful (travel training and identification of intervention and support on the mainland).

There is empathy for the challenges some families have experienced and the impact, then, on how they feel they might need to approach situations

"I know that for an awful lot of SEND families, they feel like they've had to fight for what they've got, and I think that then becomes part of the way...that they communicate and the way that they respond to things and I...have a huge amount of empathy for that...it must be exhausting for people"

The inviting school environment celebrates and reflects the environment of the islands, making great use of the natural resources, which support the calm ethos and encourage positive relationships

Care for environmental concerns is encouraged. The playgrounds are a treasure trove of natural spaces and there is plenty of seating to enable quiet reflection, as well as a plethora of activity which seems well resourced. There are bike racks which encourage the children and young people to cycle to school, and plenty do. The school dog also supports emotional health and wellbeing! We observed older and younger children playing happily together.



Could be better

Developing contingency processes and communications to reduce the stress for all created by delayed and cancelled transport from, and to, the mainland due to the weather

Working there - all day waiting for a flight and it gets cancelled - "it's hard"

It is perceived that there is not always an understanding of how difficult it can be for practitioners to get over to the islands. It can be incredibly frustrating for parents, too, especially as it [an appointment] can be cancelled more than once in the winter months.

Working in partnership with the Parent Carer Forum and individual parent carers to discuss SEND sufficiency and provision on the islands to ensure the most effective use of resources, together with a focus on PFA

One practitioner described the SEND offer on Scilly as a, "...double-edged sword of being on the Isles of Scilly" as there are several young people with a significant level of provision, including EHC Plans, who would probably have remained supported at the graduated response level on the mainland, so balancing expectations with what it is realistically possible to provide, and what is in the child or young person's best long-term interests, needs to be discussed more widely. It is felt that the support sometimes facilitated does not always prepare young people for the transition to college on the mainland.

Involving all partners as equals in strengthening planning and systems to prepare the young people of Scilly for their transition post 16 and beyond, encouraging their aspirations, at the same time enabling realistic choices and managing risks to wellbeing

There is still anxiety from parent carers and practitioners regarding the transition to the mainland for young people aged 16, for example finding a host family or equivalent, having enough visits, support and understanding for the young person when they arrive. It is important to include parent carers and consider their important role in the planning in order to ensure equality of opportunity on the mainland. Some young people transfer to boarding school and can access pastoral support and after school activities. The experience of other young people, with host families, who are only at college three days a week, can potentially be very different. There is no set accommodation, rather it often happens by word of mouth. It

is important to work together to make sure the young people are aware of every opportunity, source of support and intervention. Safeguarding also needs to be a consideration, especially as young people from Scilly may be naïve to potential risks on the mainland, so partnership working to ensure that there are systems in place to keep the young people safe is essential, which might include explicitly teaching stranger danger.

It is felt that some young people get in a mess managing their time and things can quickly get out of control, "It's really hard as a parent to keep tabs on that...it is really difficult...we can't forget them, and if they come back, they need support." Some young people have engaged in college but then come home and stopped engaging as they were feeling overwhelmed, and COVID made, "...something they all see as a right of passage at 16 harder." Truro, for example, is a massive place, "As a parent - a really scary thought is not being able to get to your children as the weather is too bad." The Scillonian doesn't sail from late October/early November as the sea is too rough. - if you can't get on a plane, you are stuck. The potential for mental health problems to arise when young people are away from the support of their family is understood.

It is also recognised that a balanced approach is required: "[we] don't want to put constraints on our young people based on us thinking they are not going to make it but also don't want to set them up to fail. How are they actually feeling? Do they want to go? Looking at a plan - we need some apprenticeships on the Island." It is felt that realistic expectations are required from all partners and opportunities on Scilly extended without "putting a lid" on where the young people are going.

It is agreed that PFA needs to be an earlier focus, just as children on the off-islands are prepared for their transition to St. Mary's at the age of 11 (these children, including those with EHCs) tend to make a more successful transition to the mainland when they are older, "It is our responsibility to make sure that they make that transition over there." Building a relationship with the mainland school nursing team in that transition would be helpful, "We need to continue and develop and push [some work already started by Scilly school nurse]" but it is felt, "...we haven't got there yet...those young people come here [mainland] and they're very isolated...we want to do some drop-in type sessional work with young people once they've been here for three months to see how things are going...there's room for real development there. "

There can be a tendency to overly focus on the negatives and be critical; there is much to celebrate on the islands, where people work hard, work together and go 'above and beyond'; it is important to give space to joint evaluation and reflection

"We don't realise how much people go above and beyond...well above what our job role is...we almost need to celebrate that...it's what we do on Scilly...sometimes it becomes part of the routine, well they haven't done this, they've done that...the challenge [for everybody working for the LA] is that they are so busy doing it on a day-to-day basis that it's about making sure

the LA builds in time for those people to step back and reflect upon the things that they do...that's always going to be a challenge when there's not very many of you and there's a level of need that's been identified and everybody does work together to address that need, you've got to be able to step back and say, 'Well actually, let's see what we're doing and how well we're doing it' [and for this to be ongoing, combined with external scrutiny]...to make sure that everybody on the islands recognises the damn fine job that these people do."

VALUE AND INCLUDE

Going well

The SENDCo at the Five Islands Academy is valued and trusted by many young people, parent carers, service practitioners and her Head teacher

Some parent carers feel this was especially important during COVID: "...the most supportive SENDCo, not only to school but to us as a family she is really good. She knows your kids inside out and boy does she fight their corner." Acknowledging that things are not always perfect, they say that the children and young people really trust her - they open up to her: "They trust Rebecca so much."

"Tireless work of the SENDCO...she's made a phenomenal difference...she's really skilled at listening to people and she goes into every kind of meeting, with the approach of, ' Okay, so what are we going to do right now to make this better for you?'...her approach is that the outcome of this meeting is that people will feel safer, they'll feel more secure, they'll feel more trusting, it will have an immediate and beneficial impact on the child because the child is right in there...she is usually the first port of call."

It is felt that SEND provision at the school has improved; adjustments including different arrangements are made in response to individual needs, working closely with the children, young people and their families to enable a personalised approach, including through the Harbour alternative provision and regular Individual Provision Maps (IPMs)

Practitioners commented, "...children and young people are getting a really good deal in terms of what they get and how they get it"; "Because the school is so small, our system is bespoke for every single child"; "We're incredibly well resourced...what we have here is what everybody should have but it would probably be too expensive...we've got these resources, and we use them, we use them really well." This includes taking advantage of the small class sizes. The school organises the curriculum via a 10 week 'quadrimester' system that culminates in a creative 'project week'. The SENDCo talks to individual families to check out how a child or young person might manage the project weeks- if they then don't want to access it this is not considered weak or a failure, rather alternative experiences are created. A young person told us that they had not wanted to participate in one of the project weeks but instead, "I did my own thing" and went to one of the off islands. Another young person's individualised project is

celebrated on a display in the hall. A secondary-aged young person is currently coming to school from an off-island daily, by boat at the moment (rather than boarding).

Young people described the Harbour alternative provision as being, "...like our chill out zone"; "fun" ...; "for lessons that don't work for us...[so that we can]...take a break"; [when it] "gets too much." Our visit to the primary and secondary Harbour emphasised the relaxed ethos of the provision, combined with 'guided study'. It was reported that all the young people access lessons at least some of the time. A range of alternative qualifications that draw upon the strengths of individuals, enabling them to succeed, are also encouraged, for example vocational unit awards and the Arts Award, which was recently achieved by a young person with an EHC Plan.

There are now primary and secondary sensory rooms which include work stations and outside spaces.

The school and COVID - it has been hard, but they are doing all they can

"A lot of SEND students were in school during first lockdown and this gave Rebecca [SENDCo] the breathing space to develop a lot of the relationships with the families; 90% of our parents would say she is doing a fabulous job, she deploys resources really well, she is really skilled at that...you can see the fruits of that coming through."

Parent carers described how the school has recently been really hard hit by staff absence due to COVID and the impact on support for the children and young people with SEND, especially those with EHC Plans who have funding for full-time support, but there is also sense that: "They have done their best with what they have got I feel." One parent carer said, "Putting my reasonable head on I have to say, I couldn't have done a better job of that so I'm not going to moan. The kids are happy so I'm going to take that as a win actually."

Support for social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) in school

Practitioners express that the Headteacher feels it is important that SEMH needs are considered and supported at an early stage, "Rachel Gibb as a leader - it is something that she tries to embed quite naturally." The school is perceived to be responsive to suggestions about whole school support and training.

The SEMH offer includes a more graduated response and systemic support (training, supervision/consultation, an anonymous 'space to reflect') with the aim of building the capacity and skills of more staff in school. This is valued by external agencies, "Think it's going amazingly." There is a school link via the TIS practitioner (who is described as "very good, responsive") as well as the Mental Health in Schools practitioner on the mainland. Psycho education (for example on preparation for transition) is co-delivered by both practitioners to enable greater access. This model ensures that support is embedded in

systems rather than one person, "...a real move towards school providing depth of service [in the last year and a half].

In school, there are a range of ways achievements of all kinds are celebrated



The school walls are filled with celebrations of children and young people's creativity and artwork. We also noticed a display of Stars of the Week

SENsational Scilly

SENsational Scilly - through the group young people have enjoyed a wide range of experiences, for example swimming, pool, darts, snooker, off-island kayaking and horse riding.

The young people say they especially like the chance to, "hang out" socially with each other, "It's a chance to connect with other people and socialise." This can prevent the potential social isolation some of the young people hinted at, "It gets me out of my bedroom on Saturdays."

The group seem to be supportive and accepting of each other. We observed them engage in gentle, good-humoured banter.

The multiple skills of experienced practitioners who know island families and span several roles are valued and enable mutual support; roles are often broader than is typical of the mainland, which can be an advantage

The SEND caseworker has a wide remit and will see young people on a regular basis and follow them up through the year: "...continuous work, it's [Annual Review] not just a one off event...I need to be on it all the time to help these yp succeed"

Practitioners are viewed to "...have a plethora of their experience and knowledge"; "...we wear so many different hats across a range of services, it does mean we are multi-faceted and that we can support each other really strongly"; "What you've got now is a much more advanced and refined, creative and flexible organisation that can meet the needs of individuals, than ever it was before..."

There is a sense that the islands are well-resourced when it comes to SEND

"The Isles of Scilly are very good at buying in [specialist Health] services, because they can."

Could be better

There are times needs might be better, or more consistently, understood, and further development of the Harbour

A young person described a trip to another island and how they had a "meltdown...the teachers were chasing me." The young person had been seeking a quiet spot they knew but the staff had not understood. Another young person talked about how, "Some of my ideas just spiral out of control."

The new primary and secondary rooms for the Harbour are appreciated, and this includes the desks facing the wall although not every child or young person who wants a desk has been allocated one, "I want a desk...I want to work in there." Some of the young people said that although they had been able to choose their desks, they had not been asked about what was needed in the room. One young person did not like that they now had to turn to chat to others.

It would be helpful to work together to explore ways young people who are currently unable to attend school can continue to be included in the community, and for peers to be supported to understand their needs supportively, and keep them in mind'

Improving the accessibility of universal activities to avoid marginalisation and a negative impact on mental health is a shared view

One young person talked about having to access Cherry Blossom for childcare when his mum was busy working and how this made him feel: "It's really annoying, you're 8 and everyone else is under 5..." Another young person suggested that a lot of the clubs at school are sporty and there needed to be clubs for others with different interests.

A practitioner said that they, "...often thought we need to look at activities that include everybody and don't marginalise the SENsational group". The spotlight seems to be on all the children on Scilly as it is a very small place - everybody is going to know what they are up to. Another voiced that it is important to be mindful of this in terms of their mental health; it is a, "...fine line the children walk here in terms of emotional health." It was felt that winter can be especially isolating.

Some parent carers referred to *Move Scilly* and *Active Scilly* and how they might include and support individual SEN young people more so that they are offered the same opportunities as others, because when this has happened it has been successful. Parents need to go with their child or young person to *Move Scilly* but shared that the sessions are too busy and therefore inappropriate because of the potential for sensory overload. In the past some "brilliant" SEND specific sessions have taken place. Children and young people can go alone to *Active Scilly* but it is felt that parent carers cannot send them because there is nobody to support them; "If you go with them you are singling them out." One young person suggested that it would be good to have a swimming club.

Focusing more on outcomes: strengthening skills and independence as part of the commitment to PFA, which might mean conversations about reducing dependency on support over time

Although work has been done to co-produce plans, a new focus is how progress towards achieving outcomes are evidenced.

There is also a sense that more needs to be done to support the SEN young people to think about the skills and strategies that they are going to need as they get older, for example managing anxiety, independence, coping with change. There are ideas for facilitating more trips to the mainland, practising travel training but, "...make it fun, help young people feel more confident on the mainland." Introducing the Wave Project (using the power of the ocean to improve young people's mental health) has been suggested.

Ongoing dialogue about increasing independence in school is also important. Sometimes parent carers report different experiences, especially if the child or young person seems to be 'masking'; equally, there can be a tendency to seek individual support without reviewing the impact, until the day that young person leaves school, "...our job is to help a young person lead a really full life, to be as independent as possible, to be resilient and willing to take on appropriate challenges." This might mean asking the young person to move out of their comfort zone, which can create anxiety for parent carers. SENDIASS practitioners suggest that it would therefore be helpful for parent carers to have the Graduated Response information to start with, as then everybody benefits. Instead, it is quite common that there is a focus on EHC Plans. It is indicated that this is often because parent carers are not necessarily signposted to the right support or information, "People get to us and say, 'I wish I'd known about you ages ago...I've only just found out about you but I've got to this point now'."

Opportunities for sibling support need re-establishing

The large group of siblings introduced to the Genuine Partnerships team did not appear to meet up regularly - some of the children said it was the first time they had been to such a group. The team is aware that the group had not met for a while because of COVID; it seems a good time to reconvene the group but also ensure that communication about the aims and activities is clear. Structured sessions can be helpful, and there are SIBS training courses

and materials so that the group can facilitate the right mix of developing understanding, feeling supported and also doing some fun activities. One young person said that, it would be good to "learn about stuff and also do fun stuff." It might also be helpful to have sessions for different age groups.

It has been questioned whether there is enough emotional health and wellbeing support for families; it might be that resources that are on offer are not known or being taken up

"Actually, what a lot of parent's need is, they need mental health support because their own mental health must be a real challenge for them. Until those mechanisms are in place, I think the culture shift is a real challenge." It is perceived that staffing changes combined with COVID has not helped the wider role of the school nurse, and potential access to support from the mainland, to be fully understood by young people and families.

COMMUNICATE

Going well

Virtual and hybrid working improved experience during COVID and has the potential to extend access to mainstream practitioners

Parent carers told us about great contact with the SENDCo on Teams calls during the pandemic. It is perceived that hybrid approaches have improved since COVID.

Communication systems and processes have been established between school and several services which has been of benefit to the children and young people and their families

There is an easy flow of information between school and social care valued by both parties, "If I pick up the phone she is pretty much at the end of it, or she is half an hour away"- this kind of accessibility is very different to the mainland. There is a perception that social care thresholds are, "...a bit all over the place to be honest with you" but greater focus on systems in relation to social care means that there is now a better graduated response and less reliance on triggering a Section 17 and Child in Need plan to enable a short break. Personal budgets can be utilised for this and do not warrant children being known to social care, "Hopefully this moves from a reactive approach to a proactive one." By investing in Early Help, the social care workload has gone down from 15 cases to 6, "I feel it has been liberating for families."

There is uncertainty about how many families were involved in initial discussions about changing the systems, and there is some wariness about no longer having Child in Need meetings, but conversations with families are currently taking place so that it feels more of a, "...proportionate response to parents at a correct and comfortable level." There have been thoughts about moving the responsibility of short breaks away from social care altogether, but it is acknowledged that this would need careful consideration given the breadth of everybody's responsibilities.

It is felt that communication between school and Health can work well, "...it works really well...school are pretty good at taking me up on offers of health promotion or sessions that I can offer the young people" (for example assemblies on how to get a good night's sleep have been delivered across the school). The community nurse has also started to meet more regularly with the school SENDCo and a positive relationship has developed. There is a desire to formalise it, create a more organised approach that also involves other relevant services (a Team Around the School type model, which happens in Cornwall); plan is in place to meet to discuss this, together with the TIS practitioner.

The close network of services on the islands means that quick responses are possible, so that can be restored confidence quickly when issues arise

It was reported to us that when a young person had issues going to SENSational Scilly, a caseworker was able to have conversations with their parent carers to ask what would help so that they were able to come back for a few sessions, "...hopefully we can build on that."

The community nurse is readily available (a family or young person would only need to wait a day or two).

The Five Islands Head teacher is open to hearing concerns and makes herself accessible in person each morning

"When you've got a problem or you've got a concern you just need to let me know...I'm on the gate every single morning...if there's a parent who wants to come and talk to me ..." Mrs Gibbs will ask parents to wait in reception so that she can talk to them more privately; she always keeps the first 20 minutes of the day available to talk with any parents who want to, "...or if it is a bigger one [issue], come back later to talk to us or come back later today when it's convenient" and she will make sure either she or the right colleague is available, whether digitally, or on the phone.

There are also electronic systems (apps) to support communication with parent carers about their children and young people's day-to-day achievements, and to provide information: "We use See Saw in primary, which is a really good parent communication thing, we use Tapestry in reception."

There has previously been collaborative work on the Local Offer to identify pathways

The Local Offer was originally co-produced with the Parent Carer Forum and young people; workshops were run.

Could be better

To support co-production parent carers and children and young people need clear basic information, as well as to understand practitioner roles, responsibilities and boundaries, and how key practitioners might be involved in their lives, and pathways and processes

Work on communication about roles and responsibilities has started - a poster has been created introducing key staff, but it is understood there is more to do to avoid processes

seeming mysterious and that the LA is being secretive, "Make sure people understand the right person to go to...the route to go to get the right support at the right time." Given the multiple roles people have it is also essential to build into processes who else you can turn to if one person is not available, "If one person is off, the whole deck of cards [tumbles]." As indicated, the nature of the community can blur boundaries, "It's fine that you can speak to the Directors of Children's Services in the Co-op when you're queuing up to pay for something but actually there's a process, and we need to be pushing that back and saying, 'This is the process'." Some of these processes might exist already but there is still a tendency to ask somebody instead, which, "...muddies the water." However, given the small community it is also important that included in processes are opportunities for informal resolution. Ideally, the processes themselves will be agreed in co-production.

It is important that access to, and the involvement of, mainland practitioners is included in this thinking, so that families can seek support beyond the practitioners on the islands if need be but also duplication is avoided, "...it's about embedding the systems in, the processes in...tightening up on, making things simpler and easier and young people and families know where to get that support without thinking, 'I'll have to ask P and A and I was having coffee with them last week or whatever'." The example of the Best Start in Life team on the mainland being integrated into the community health team on Scilly was suggested - could that also be utilised? "Making it a joined-up picture so that we can learn." It is suggested that communications between Health, social care and school could be improved in this respect, "I don't think they're as good as they were...I don't get as much communication...as I did previously, and there is a real under use of the school nursing service...other agencies...aren't encouraging families or making those referrals...that really needs strengthening, and there are families out there who could really do with some Health input who aren't really getting it." The mainland advice line, for example, has had poor take-up from families on the Isles of Scilly.

It will also be important to factor in the role of SENDIASS now that staffing issues in the team have been addressed; the service is better placed to take on some of the previous informal role of the Chair of the former Parent Carer Forum, which might be helpful to the new Forum in formulating a clear identity and aims. This includes early intervention and prevention work and training with practitioners, "We've been giving talks in Cornwall, Early Years SENDCos and child minding teams, because we want to get in there early" and support for individual young people on the mainland post 16, and their families (although this is not currently targeted to young people on the Isles of Scilly). A recent example of involvement with a family from the islands has in the main been restorative, when an issue had arisen that seemed based on misunderstanding about support. However currently, few parent carers are seeking support from the service, which is felt to be a legacy, "...parents really didn't know what to do, probably...if you've got somebody there on the island whose got a bit of knowledge, you're going to go to them first, aren't you? But then you don't have impartiality."

Or is there less need? SENDIASS practitioners told us, "...the majority of parents who come to us are in crisis." This does not mean they can't access the service if they are not in crisis; it is better to seek support early, when needs are first identified. Pressures on SENDIASS mean, however, that the service is still currently carrying almost double the recommended caseload.

There seems to be inconsistency from staff at the school in how they communicate with parent carers - a positive whole school approach would be helpful

One teacher wrote: "Good luck at home he is unteachable"; the SENDCo needed to step in. A parent carer said, "...things haven't always been communicated quite as well as they could have been..." in relation to the pandemic. When there is a breakdown in communication, "...things can quickly escalate, can't they?"

Despite virtual working, face to face contact with mainland practitioners is still important

The visits are important: "Don't forget us." There is a feeling that more needs to be done to get practitioners over in a timely manner: "I think it is really hard for people to understand what it is like on Scilly...I still don't think that they really grasp that disconnect between us and Cornwall". Mainland specialists (for example Occupational Therapists or Educational Psychologists) are described as being, "Like gold dust" because they will wait until there are two or more days' worth of work, and then the weather might intervene, or the children might be sick that day, so the visit is cancelled. This seems less of an issue if the child is undergoing an EHC needs assessment.

There is a desire to work towards more open and supportive dialogue, moving away from aggressive or manipulative communication, which is unhelpful for co-production and can be damaging to wellbeing and relationships

"The biggest challenge is...we still get this sense of attack...[for example a] shouty, shouty email"; "...when people attack my colleagues, you get quite cross about that...there's no need to attack each other as people...we are all human and I think that gets forgotten." It is perceived that social media can be especially destructive, "...toxic" and manipulative.

WORK IN PARTNERSHIP

Going well

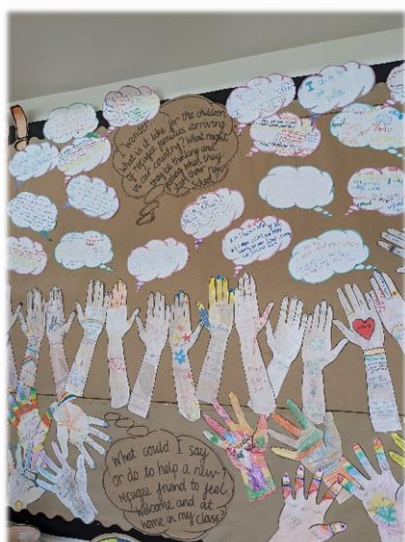
The Belonging and Inclusion Group is being prioritised by strategic partners on Scilly and the mainland and it is hoped that change will happen as a result and clear outcomes established and communicated

"We haven't had a chance yet to see how the agenda for that will pan out, because it's a new group ...so that has changed, which is really beneficial really...they're going to be once a term but I think they're going to be quite chunky meetings...which has a benefit; you put aside 2 or 3 hours to go to that meeting." It is felt that enabling this different type of dialogue, "...seems to have been helpful."

Seeking and acting upon the thoughts and ideas of children and young people, which has included celebrating diversity and considering the experiences of others; there is confidence young people will say what they think

"I think the voice of the child [when they are given the opportunity] young people will tell us what they think - they will hold us to account..." "I just love them." There has been a focus on establishing the voice of the child or young person within the EHC process, which is perceived to have been helpful in establishing greater understanding of their experiences, and the experiences of their families: "We know our families...I've got a real understanding of some of those issues, some of the background." Plans now include a picture, the words of the young person and their family, and their aspirations: "I'd like to think that I understand this family and I'd like to think I can hear their voices coming out"; "we've been able to embed the voice of the child in those plans ...those children come to life on the page."

At school children and young people asked for a LGBTQ+ group and the school provided one. Religion and World Views is also recognised by young people as a curriculum space in which they are often asked their views.



Pre-covid there was a youth hub which was really popular: Covid stopped that but a steering group for young people has been set up recently to try and look at what the young people want that to look like now.

In Health, there is a desire to work with young people to determine what they want the school nurse to do so that its beneficial. This is especially important at transition time on the mainland: "...its working out what the young people who are going actually want...when I speak to them there's a lot of bravado...they're in a group with their friends and don't want to look as though they don't know it all...really getting to the bottom of what it is that would be useful to them would make that a better approach [in]...developing that mainland support for young people post 16." SENDIASS, equally, would like to make links with the group to

communicate what they do and get more involved in their Annual Reviews, thinking about how they might have a more of a voice.

Opportunities for children and young people to extend their relationships beyond their own classes occur naturally at break times but are also encouraged at the end of each term when there are mixed class celebrations

There is support for the new Parent Carer Forum and a will to make it work for all parent carers; the importance of supporting the group to enable co-production to be meaningful is understood

One parent carer suggested that the role of a Forum is to represent the views of ALL the parents in the Forum and to be a supportive arena and a safe space for everyone. A practitioner voiced, "Parents know their children incredibly well, of course they do" implying the importance of parent carers as key partners. There has been support for the emerging group from Children and Family Services, initially focusing on building relationships so that parent carers can input to decision-making, "...co-production is the way forward, absolutely, building those relationships is something that I've really tried to concentrate on...it's got to be about relationships...and being approachable"; "I hope the parent carer group get going and get supported."

There are examples of strong partnership processes being established on Scilly

It is recognised that there is good partnership working within Early Years, "The Early Years is really strong over there and [Health] connections with the Early Years team is really good." It is felt that there is strong partnership involving mainland specialists (for example speech and language and community paediatrics), Isles of Scilly practitioners, Cherry Blossom nursery setting and childminders which enables good early identification of children with additional needs, good uptake of all core reviews, and that it is important to build on that, "Particularly for the younger children the uptake is always really, really good, for our core reviews, the health visiting, it is generally 100%."

Partnership with the school SENDCo has also strengthened. There are weekly meetings with the EHC caseworker which has helped establish mutual responsibilities, drawing on strengths to enable statutory timelines to be met, eradicating blame.

The community nurse and health visitor attend all the Health and Partnership meetings. If there is an initial diagnosis of a medical issue, the school nurse or health visitor will be involved initially to ensure the right specialist team is identified, or a Guiding Care Plan is implemented in the school or nursery, training the relevant staff, "...just ensuring really that they know what to do to be safe." Recently, some multi-disciplinary autism spectrum assessments have been happening on the islands, which families have preferred - and more are planned.

Partnerships with mainland practitioners and services are perceived to be essential

"There is a good and strong offer from the mainland when occasional situations arise."

There has been some particularly strong partnership working with the Designated Clinical Officer [DCO]: "...she is really involved with all the EHCP processes...I can go to her with any Health questions that I might have." The DCO has visited twice since starting her role in September and is keen to get to know the islands and understand the bespoke nature of the offer. She has reviewed all the EHC plans and developed Health prompt sheets to encourage discussions with families, "It was basically suggested reworking for the Health sections...they have been used to update plans that have had Annual Reviews this academic year...I am keen to get [the community nurse and health visitor] much more involved in the EHC process here because they can, because we are small numbers for Scilly, much more opportunity, the way it should be... they often know the children quite well."

A poster has been designed to explain 'This is your school nurse team' which includes school nurses on the mainland, which is felt to be essential because of the small community on the islands and importance of preserving trust, "You don't want to talk to your friend's mum about something personal." Parent carers are able to request somebody from the mainland team, "I always tell them that they can request it." The team on the islands feel that being able to draw on the expertise of a team of school nurses on the mainland is helpful, and is relatively new.

There is also a health visiting and school nursing advice line based in Truro open 9am - 5pm, which can then be followed up by a practitioner on the islands or the mainland if this is agreed with a family or young person. This was established during COVID but has continued.

At an individual level, there seems to be strengthening trust as needs are being identified earlier; relationships are building with families so that the right support can be made available more quickly through SEND support and the involvement of the right services

It is felt that having earlier discussions with parent carers to ensure the right support is being put in place, whether it is for the child or family, involves good co-production.

Could be better

Some young people would like more opportunity to give their views (anonymously)

Some young people expressed the desire to have more opportunities to give feedback anonymously given that the small numbers of children and young people with SEND on Scilly makes them easily identifiable. They told us that they tend to feedback to their parent carers, which indicates that they trust their parent carers to advocate on their behalf, but the potential for other, 'safe' ways for young people to express their views more independently would also be helpful to explore: "I would like more opportunity...anonymously...to say what you really think."

It is felt by practitioners there is still more to do to make sure the voice of the child is embedded and feeds into processes and systems and that this is not tokenistic, "...making

sure the children have the opportunity to speak, not everyone's good at doing that, so it needs to be embedded, given the opportunity they will tell us, and they need to be confident that what they tell us we act on...we could make that a little bit better." In 2019/2020 there were some co-production workshops with children and young people but COVID stopped them; they need to start up again. Increasing the participation of young people with SEND, so that their voice is being heard at strategic meetings, is therefore an area for development, "...children and young people on the Isles of Scilly are very articulate...they want to be heard, and I think it is making sure the ones who are articulate but...don't put themselves forward to be heard get heard as well...and what you get in terms of representation of voice is actually a broad representation, not those with an axe to grind"; "...supporting individuals who want to do that to have that confidence - that's a great life skill...going into adulthood... putting the child at the heart of it all." This may be through the SENSational group, but the young people indicated that they preferred this group to be a social activity. Does it need to happen a different way?

All partners working together to create systems and processes that work for everybody and don't overload any one partner, including the one school and the relatively small number of children and young people and their families

There is recognition that lots of services want to work with the children and young people on Scilly, which can lead to a disproportionate demand on the only school to be involved in initiatives. Quite often school staff have had the same conversation about one child with a number of different people, ending up repeating the conversation, which can be frustrating, "I've told them that already." More clarity is needed around discussions with the Head teacher, who is dealing with a myriad of issues mainland Head teachers are not having to deal with, and how these can be streamlined and the purpose/agenda and outcomes for the meeting clear.

It is felt striking a balance can be hard, as it is important not to overlook the school as a very distinct community, but at the same time, not to overload the setting and impact on learning, "Our children still need to learn." Lots of requests for involvement can be a distraction from learning and some of the administration (for example form-filling) can be time consuming. It is important to ensure that these demands are about meeting the needs of children and young people and not services: "What we have heard from children, quite clearly, is that they don't want to constantly be asked for questions, to fill out/tick boxes about their views"; "It can be a hard balance for the teachers as well as they are often invited into all different types of meetings. We do need to protect them"; "When I first came, I felt that I was going to lots of meetings that were saying the same things, and it would be like three or four a week."

It is felt that it is important everybody signposts to the right service, including the Forum - raising the profile of services but also being aware of overload for new parent carers.

Ensuring that the right partners are invited to be involved to support individual children and young people and their families, and that they are included in the right meetings (strategic and operational), to make the best use of the universal resources and skills on the islands, some of which might be being under-utilised

The Head of SEND has started having regular meetings with the school - Health would like to be integral to that strategic thinking, "What are the key priorities...that bigger picture?..."

We need to strengthen those relationship [COVID has slowed this down]."

Operationally, there is potential for more school nursing support as a first port of call for older young people at an early intervention/prevention level, including emotional health and wellbeing. This might relate to misunderstanding of this aspect of the role which is, "...for lots of things, not just purely around health [medical needs]." It is understood that, "...there are people in school who have key roles related to this" but it is felt that it would be helpful to liaise with them and establish a place within those processes, for example in terms of accessing training. It might be that practitioners who have come from the mainland are used to having to "get on with it" and that further dialogue will enable the potential more extensive role for the school nurse to be better utilised, "...it's about that working together, that partnership working, mutual respect of roles, and what can be offered" and not confining the offer to services bought in or waiting for a crisis. Clarity of communication about roles in this respect, is once again crucial.

There is agreement that there needs to be more evaluation of SENSational Scilly, including seeking the views of the young people and parent carers so that they can shape its development

Although there has been discussion about the potential for SENSational Scilly to feed into Voice and Influence, the value the young people give to the group focuses on meeting socially. Ideally, they would like to meet more than once a month. Although the young people did not mention this, the team wondered whether it would be better to have two groups in order not to 'cramp the style' of the older young people and ensure that everybody's needs are met. Some parent carers suggested that the group is not really appealing to all the young people because of where the group meets (Cherry Blossom). One older young person was clear that he disliked meeting at the nursery setting, saying, "It feels condescending knowing you're nearly an adult and you have to go to a nursery." The Scillonian Club is preferred by many of the young people, although they also suggested they would like their own venue.

One young person was not able to attend SENSational sessions because there wasn't anybody trained who could support him, and it takes a long time to build up his trust. Simple strategies such as turn-taking and the use of visual supports would be helpful. A suggestion was made that his parent carer could accompany him, but this was felt to defeat the object.

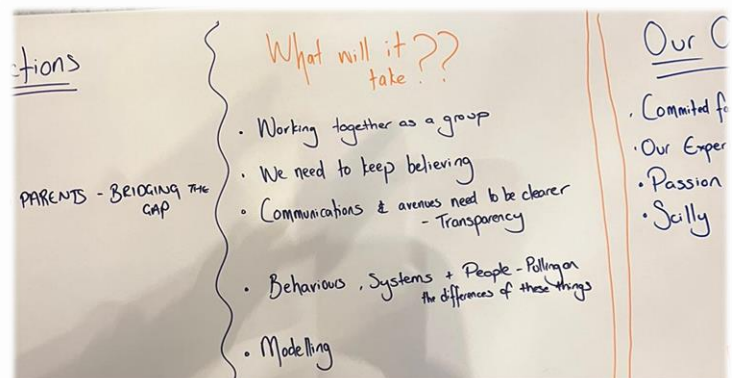
One young person felt that because the community is so small, "It's difficult/awkward" if your relationship with one person breaks down. There is recognition that some of the adults

also have multiple roles and empathy for the stress they are experiencing can make young people reluctant to approach them, "She's very busy." It was felt that more feedback was needed from parent carers, especially to find out why some groups of young people are not attending. It was suggested by some parent carers that more opportunities for social activities the young people can do without their parents could be explored such as when skilled adults are engaged to support the young people in some of the activities they might want to do, for example climbing and swimming. There is a young person's worker on the islands - could they be more involved? This issue is understood by the LA and it will be important to discuss potential solutions together with the young people and their parent carers.

There is a plan to develop the group by working with young people to design the service (for example the logo) so that they, "...really take ownership of that group", and work with families on so that they feel communication is good. It will be important to ensure the young people are asked whether they want to participate in this way.

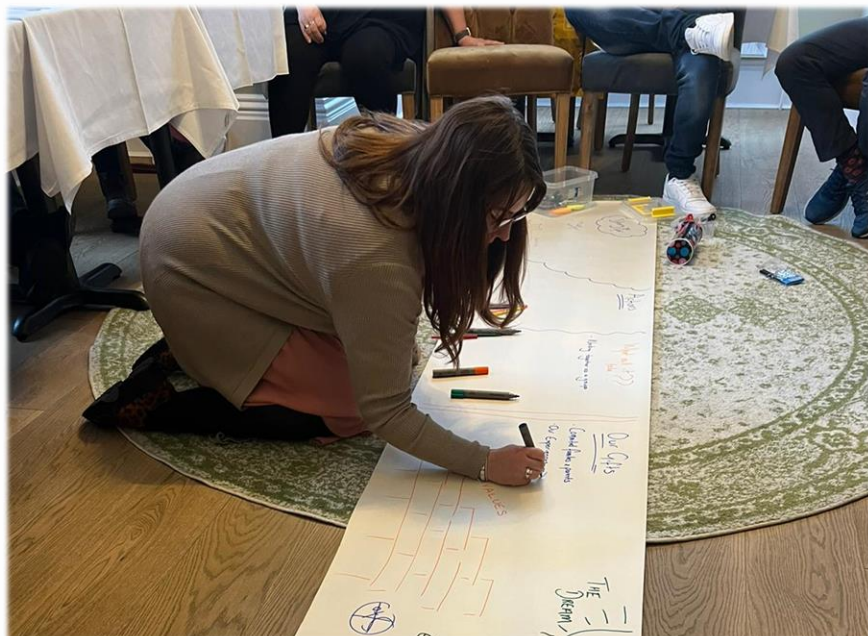
The new Parent Carer Forum has been working hard to learn processes, establish its own identity; it will be imperative for everybody to keep progressing in a solution-focused way, with a view to building genuine partnerships with all key partners, to be representative, and in turn for partners to involve the new Forum in meaningful co-production

During the course of one Forum folding and another emerging, there have been some inevitable difficult conversations to address concerns and agree the best route forward. The new Forum is keen to engage and involve more parent carers so that the group can move beyond talk to having real influence, working in true co-production with other partners.

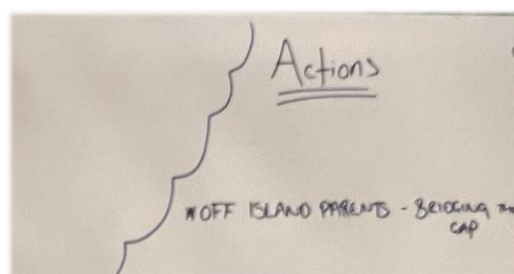


The new steering group has been finding out which historical resources and materials they can utilise, recognising that much good work was previously established, including the commitment to co-production coming to fruition through this work. The group is liaising regularly with Contact, which is offering support and guidance and it is hoped that any initial concerns have been addressed. The steering group intends to seek the views of the wider membership on a range of issues and continue the MAP process started with Genuine Partnerships, for example to create and communicate clear aims, values and an action plan that is realistic and establishes priorities. The Cornerstones would be a constructive approach to follow and has already been suggested by the Forum as a framework for the Belonging and Inclusion Group. Working closely with SENDIASS to ensure and communicate a

clearer strategic role for the Forum should also be helpful; SENDIASS can then focus on supporting families with individual concerns.



There is a desire to build stronger relationships with off-island families.



The importance of building relationships, and trust, given the complexities of partnership working on the islands, is being acknowledged by all partners and was highlighted by the LGA Peer Review; there is a sense this will take time and still needs work; it should be possible for people to have different perspectives and still work collaboratively as equal partners

Some practitioners feel there is still a lot to do: "The lack of trust is massive, and it's actually quite debilitating...we just need a different rhetoric around this, and it needs to be more supportive of each other." Attendance, behaviour, safeguarding, pastoral - it is suggested that the relevant practitioners need to work better together and the question needs to be asked, "Is it a special educational need?"

It is perceived that some parent carers have had such a bad experience themselves, for example when they attended the Boarding House when they were younger, that this also influences trust in what is on offer now. There are added geographical pressures, for example off-island parent carers are not that far away but they are because there is a stretch of water between them, which can create anxiety. If a parent carer phones and the child or young person is upset and it is 9pm, there is nothing they can do. It is felt that the house parents have to respond sensitively to and manage "...other peoples' lived experiences."

Others describe some positive steps, "I would like to think that is how we all work, as professionals"; "I've managed to build a two-way conversation and that mutual trust with the emerging Parent Carer Forum, I believe."

SENDIASS practitioners have found that the exposure families potentially fear if they seek support from the service can stop them from utilising face to face conversations offered on the islands. However, virtual working has been helpful by enabling a more flexible and confidential response.

It is acknowledged that the school has had turbulent times and that work has needed to be done to ensure there is progression, but it is also important to work in partnership at a strategic planning level "...so the relatively new Head teacher understands the pivotal role she plays inside the community" and that relationships with providers on the mainland also strengthen. There is already commitment to this, but as it has been expressed, "...those relationships take a huge amount of time, to build up the trust that things have changed"; "...the will is there from all sides [school and services] but it will take time" [to build mutual respect/trust].

The Isles of Scilly Community Approach to Inclusion

'How well are we doing at making the experience of all children, young people and families the heart of all we do?'

Once again, the Genuine Partnerships team was warmly welcomed by the Isles of Scilly, illustrative of the commitment of the whole community to evaluating practice and building on strengths to further improve inclusion and co-production. The visit was timely, coming a week after the CQC/Ofsted Local Area SEND inspection and providing the opportunity for the launch of a new Parent Carer Forum.

The team has maintained contact with the Isles of Scilly team since the last visit in 2019. It has been evident that many of the recommendations made at the time were embraced by the community and acted upon with enthusiasm, introducing opportunities for strategic and operational co-production involving a range of practitioners, parent carers and young people. The SEND Strategy, Action Plan, Inclusion Charter, creation of the SENSation Scilly young people's group, plus a range of other activities achieved in co-production, are illustrative of a partnership approach other communities can only aspire to achieve.

This visit, however, also emphasised the unique context of the Isles of Scilly, particularly during COVID, when geographical and social isolation combined with key staffing changes and the closure of the former Parent Carer Forum created challenges that are still being processed, particularly by children and young people with additional needs and SEND, and their families. The challenges of living and working within this small community, which during COVID necessarily had to rely significantly on its own resources, highlights how the potential blurring of personal and professional boundaries can be simultaneously supportive and at times destructive. Trust, which is essential in co-production and underpins the Four Cornerstones model, takes on a more significant meaning on the islands. The multiple roles practitioners and families undertake can feel exhausting to an outsider; the focus on a relatively small number of children and young people, their families, and the one school and nursery setting, can feel intense.

It is to their credit that during COVID the people of the Isles of Scilly seem to have demonstrated incredible resilience and retained their optimism. Dialogue and developments have continued, and there seems to be even greater determination to keep working at making systems right for everybody, building on what is already working and introducing creative new developments. Processes are being reviewed and fresh partnerships are being forged, including with mainland partners, with the intention of developing and communicating new processes and identities, continuing with the commitment to ensure that the experiences of the children, young people and families of the Isles of Scilly will be at the heart of every decision. We would agree with partners on the islands that the current context is providing a great opportunity to highlight this agenda.

It is advised that the summary of strengths and areas for development outlined below is considered together with some of the detailed narratives shared by the Isles of Scilly SEND partners during the Genuine Partnerships' 2022 visit (above), which illustrate the some of the complexities behind the experiences described.

Overarching recommendations:

- The willingness of the whole community to work together to include children and young people with SEND should be celebrated
- There needs to be continued determination to strengthen relationships even when there are differences of opinion
- The restorative approach being advocated by the school should be considered by the whole community; implied is a collective momentum to work together to understand and respond to the emotional impact of everybody's lived experience, and therefore reduce blame; this is best modelled by everybody in a lead role
- All partners need to commit to communicating openly, honestly and supportively, and to discuss together how this might work, sensitively taking into account different needs and pressures
- Support must be put in place so that all partners can participate as equals (for example making sure they have the information and resources they need to make meaningful decisions)
- There should be a renewed focus on co-producing short-term and longer-term outcomes (strategic, operational and for individual children, young people and their families) - and to agree priorities so that actions feel achievable rather than overwhelming
- There must be commitment to making best use of the resources available on the Isles of Scilly, and on the mainland, which will involve working on, and communicating, clearer identities, processes and pathways that will embed positive practice in systems rather than people
- At the same time, it will be important to work together on how some of the unique benefits to living on the Isles of Scilly can still be maximised

Summary of what is going well

- ✓ Willingness of partners in the community to work together, and agreement this is a good time to do so
- ✓ The whole community is warm, welcoming, inclusive and responsive, making the islands a great place in which to live and grow up
- ✓ There are people you can trust you can go to
- ✓ There is a commitment to person-centred working
- ✓ There is much more of a focus on transition planning
- ✓ There is empathy for the challenges some families have experienced and the impact, then, on their wellbeing and how they feel they might need to approach situations
- ✓ The inviting school environment celebrates and reflects the environment of the islands, making great use of the natural resources, which support the calm ethos and encourage positive relationships
- ✓ The multiple skills of experienced practitioners who know island families and span several roles are valued and enable mutual support; roles are often broader than is typical of the mainland, which can be an advantage
- ✓ There is a sense that the islands are well-resourced when it comes to SEND
- ✓ The SENDCo at the Five Islands Academy is valued and trusted

- ✓ SEND provision at the school has improved; adjustments including different arrangements are made in response to individual needs, working closely with the children, young people and their families to enable a personalised approach, including through the Harbour alternative provision and regular Individual Provision Maps (IPMs)
- ✓ COVID has impacted on staffing at the school, which has been hard for everybody, but it is recognised they are doing all they can
- ✓ Support for social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) in school is better
- ✓ There are a range of ways achievements of all kinds are celebrated in school
- ✓ SENSational Scilly young people's short breaks group has been established
- ✓ Virtual and hybrid working improved experience during COVID and has the potential to extend access to mainstream practitioners
- ✓ Communication systems and processes have been established between school and several services, which has been of benefit to the children and young people and their families
- ✓ The close network of services on the islands means that quick responses are possible, so that confidence can be restored quickly when issues arise
- ✓ The Five Islands Head teacher is open to hearing concerns and makes herself accessible in person each morning
- ✓ There has previously been collaborative work on the Local Offer to identify pathways
- ✓ The Belonging and Inclusion Group is being prioritised by strategic partners on Scilly and the mainland
- ✓ Seeking, and acting upon, the thoughts and ideas of children and young people has more focus, which has included celebrating diversity and considering the experiences of others; there is confidence young people will say what they think
- ✓ Opportunities for children and young people to extend their relationships beyond their own classes occur naturally at break times but are also encouraged at the end of each term when there are mixed class celebrations
- ✓ There is support for the new Parent Carer Forum and a will to make it work for all parent carers; the importance of supporting the group to enable co-production to be meaningful is understood
- ✓ There are examples of strong partnership processes being established on Scilly
- ✓ Partnerships with mainland practitioners and services are also perceived to be essential
- ✓ At an individual level, there seems to be strengthening trust as needs are being identified earlier; relationships are building with families so that the right support can be made available more quickly through SEND support and the involvement of the right services
- ✓ To support co-production, parent carers and children and young people need clear basic information, as well as to understand practitioner roles, responsibilities and boundaries, how key practitioners might be involved in their lives, and pathways and processes

Summary of areas for development

- The importance of building relationships, and trust, given the complexities of partnership working on the islands, is being acknowledged by all partners and was highlighted by the LGA Peer Review; there is a sense this will take time and still needs work; it should be possible for people to have different perspectives and still work collaboratively as equal partners
- Some young people would like more opportunity to give their views (but anonymously). There is agreement that there needs to be more evaluation of SENsational Scilly, including seeking the views of the young people and parent carers so that they can shape its development
- It is recognised that the new Parent Carer Forum is working hard to establish its own fresh identity; it will be imperative to keep moving forwards with a view to building genuine partnerships with all partners, to be representative, and in turn for partners to involve the new Forum in meaningful co-production
- Working in partnership with the Parent Carer Forum and individual parent carers to discuss SEND sufficiency and provision on the islands to ensure the most effective use of resources, together with a focus on Preparing for Adulthood (PFA) - focusing more on outcomes; strengthening skills and independence as part of this commitment, which might also mean conversations about reducing dependency on support over time
- Involving all partners as equals in strengthening planning and systems to prepare the young people of Scilly for their transition post 16 and beyond, encouraging their aspirations, at the same time enabling realistic choices and managing risks to wellbeing (for example by extending current tracking systems to include a wellbeing focus so that appropriate interventions can be implemented if needed)
- There can be a tendency to overly focus on the negatives and be critical; there is much to celebrate on the islands, where people work hard, work together and go 'above and beyond'; it is important to give space to joint evaluation and reflection
- There are times needs might be better, or more consistently, understood, for example the Harbour provision might be further evaluated
- It would be helpful to work together to explore ways young people who are currently unable to attend school can continue to be included in the community, and for peers to be supported to understand their needs supportively, and keep them in mind'
- Improving the accessibility of universal activities to avoid marginalisation and a negative impact on mental health
- Opportunities for sibling support need re-establishing
- It has been questioned whether there is enough emotional health and wellbeing support for families; it might be that resources that are on offer are not known or being taken up
- There seems to be inconsistency from staff at the school in how they communicate with parent carers - a positive whole school approach would be helpful
- Despite virtual working, face to face contact with mainland practitioners is still important - developing contingency processes and communications to reduce the stress

for all created by delayed and cancelled transport from, and to, the mainland due to the weather would be helpful

- There is a common desire to work towards more open and supportive dialogue, moving away from aggressive or manipulative communication, which is unhelpful for co-production and can be damaging to wellbeing and relationships
- All partners need to work together to create systems and processes that work for everybody and don't overload any one partner, including the one school and the relatively small number of children and young people and their families
- Ensuring that the right partners are invited to be involved to support individual children and young people and their families, and that they are included in the right meetings (strategic and operational), to make the best use of the universal resources and skills on the islands, some of which might be being under-utilised

It will be important that a collaborative, community approach is adopted in responding to these recommendations and summaries of what is working well and areas for development. Together, priorities need to be identified, outcomes agreed and an action plan created which clarifies who will be involved strategically and how this will be organised, and who will be responsible operationally and how this will also be organised.

Genuine Partnerships team

27th June 2022 (final version agreed)