

SEND and Alternative Provision Board Newsletter: November 2025

The SEND and Alternative Provision Board is a meeting to implement and oversee the SEND and Alternative Provision strategies for Salford. This is a shared partnership approach with representatives from health, education, children's and adults social care, voluntary sector, parents and carers, elected members, and the wider council. We aim to support and improve services so that all children with SEND can reach their full potential in Salford, it is currently chaired by Melissa Caslake Executive Director Children's Services and Cathy Starbuck, Director of Education and Inclusion.

A number of subgroups report into the board. The subgroups are Local Offer, Transitions, Neurodevelopmental Approach, Graduated Approach, EHCPs, Alternative Provision, Preparation for Adult Life, SEND Performance and Engagement and Participation. Each subgroup reports on progress being made to the SEND board on a rolling programme.

Below is a brief summary of the areas that were covered at our latest SEND and Alternative Provision Board which took place on the 4th November. We hope you find this update useful. Please send any feedback or if you have any ideas to nicola.robb@salford.gov.uk



Agenda	Key Points
Voice of the Child	<p>The board heard from two students. They shared their lived experiences of SEND support and transition to adult life.</p> <p>One young person highlighted several positives, including the 1:1 support she received in Year 6 and high school, and the in-class support she currently benefits from at college. The learning support and careers advice available is also valued, which have helped her feel more confident and experience fewer barriers.</p> <p>The young person also shared some challenges. Her EHCP reviews often focused on short-term goals, rather than independence and future planning. She noted that while there is plenty of information available, no one explained where to find it, leaving her feeling overwhelmed during transition. This uncertainty about next steps, qualifications, and the support needed to achieve her goals caused significant stress.</p> <p>Key takeaway: The young person's experience highlights the importance of clear communication, better signposting of resources, and planning for long-term independence.</p> <p>Another young person shared his journey through education and preparation for adult life. He attended Pendleton College, before studying at the University of Salford. The young person also volunteered to support Ben Andrews in writing a book for children, which he found extremely valuable. Through volunteering, university, and developing strong</p>

	<p>orientation skills, He shared that he feels more confident about adult life, even though nothing can fully prepare you for it!</p> <p>The young person has a visual impairment. He benefited greatly from the Salford VI Education Team and weekly mobility sessions, which supported his independence at university. Digital adaptation of materials was also essential.</p> <p>He outlined that he faced difficulties when teachers, particularly at University, forgot about his VI needs and recalls feeling excluded when younger. Later, volunteering and advocacy boosted his confidence.</p> <p>The young person's university experience taught him independence and self-advocacy. He values practical implementation of knowledge, understanding the law (e.g., reasonable adjustments), and working with VI teams. Today, he feels equipped with mobility, navigation, and advocacy skills.</p> <p>Key takeaway: Communication and disability awareness are essential. Practical skills and advocacy should be embedded earlier.</p>
<p>Deep Dive – Preparation for Adult Life</p>	<p>The board received an update on progress, achievements, and ongoing priorities for preparation for adult life.</p> <p>Progress so far</p> <p>The preparation for adult life role has been successfully recruited, and Esme has joined the team. Work so far includes planning a Week of Action for March 2026, regular working group meetings, and a secondary school consultation on vocational profiling. Draft outcomes and a policy are in development, aligned with the transitions strategy, and updates to the Local Offer are in progress.</p> <p>What next?</p> <p>The next steps include finalizing the preparation for adult life policy with leadership and ensuring it is accessible for children, young people, and parents. Key priorities are developing a training offer to improve annual reviews, creating practical resources like crib sheets, and mapping preparation for adult life into the curriculum. Preparations for the 2026 Week of Action will begin, alongside enhancing the Local Offer with engaging content such as videos.</p> <p>Draft preparation for adult life outcomes</p> <p>Professionals will understand the full breadth of preparation for adult life and feel confident having meaningful conversations with young people.</p> <p>Increasing numbers of young people will secure permanent employment after completing a supported internship.</p> <p>More young people across the city will participate in work-related experiences or secure volunteering roles.</p> <p>All Annual Reviews will include high-quality preparation for adult life outcomes and future planning.</p> <p>Professionals will identify and record where preparation for adult life is delivered within the curriculum or service.</p>

	<p>More young people will receive independent travel training and develop travel confidence.</p> <p>Young people and families will feel better prepared for adult life across the four preparation for adult life pillars.</p> <p>Young people will have access to a wide variety of clubs and activities.</p> <p>If you have any questions about preparation for adult life please get in contact with our new preparation for adult life lead Esme.</p> <p>Esme.williams@salford.gov.uk</p> <p>Save the date: Preparation for adult life week of action – 2nd – 6th March 2026. More information to follow.</p>
SEND scorecard	<p>The board were presented with some of the key messages from the SEND scorecard, specifically on data relating to quarter 2 of “Be healthy and safe”</p> <p>Average wait time in weeks for:</p> <p>Speech and language therapy : 17.83</p> <p>Physiotherapy: 4.85</p> <p>Occupational therapy: 3.76</p> <p>Dietetics: 17.74</p> <p>Community paediatrics 16.49</p> <p>% of 14-25 Year olds on Learning Disability register who have had a Health check completed by GP: 69%</p> <p>Number of referrals received requesting neurodevelopmental assessment: 332</p> <p>The SEND performance sub group meet monthly and will discuss whether there is a need for further data related to health.</p>
SEND self-assessment (SEF)	<p>The SEND self-assessment (often called the Self-Evaluation Framework – SEF) is a document that local authorities and their partners prepare for Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) as part of the Area SEND inspection process.</p> <p>It provides an overview of how the local area partnership is meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND. The updated self-assessment was shared by Cathy Starbuck, who informed the board that there are now named leads for each area and that termly review dates have been set up, to ensure this is a live document</p>
Recent SEND inspections	<p><u>ADCS SEND Inspection Outcomes</u></p> <p>Link to the recent SEND inspections for information.</p>