

SEND Board Newsletter: Update and Feedback July 2024

The SEND Partnership Board is a meeting to implement and oversee the SEND strategy 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, and it is co-chaired by Melissa Caslake, Executive Director of Children's Services, and Cathy Starbuck, Director of Education and Inclusion.

Five subgroups report into SEND Board. The subgroups are Local Offer, Transitions, Neurodevelopmental Approach, Graduated Approach and EHCPs. Each subgroup reports on progress being made to the SEND Board on a rolling programme.

Below is a brief summary of the topic areas that were covered at our latest SEND Partnership board which took place on 2nd July 2024. At the next board there will be a focus on the work of the Transitions subgroup. 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>We heard about a young man referred to as 'Jonathon' who is coming to the end of Year 8. Jonathon had attended primary school with no specific needs identified but during Year 5 his teachers had noticed some unsettled behaviours. Jonathon was added to the SEND register receiving SEN support as he was finding it difficult to process what his teachers were saying as well as interact with his peers. Advice was sought from different professionals including STARLAC, SALT, EP and paediatrician. Jonathan, during Year 6 and Year 7 presented with more significant needs and despite careful transition planning he stopped verbally communicating with others and became reluctant to leave his house.</p> <p>To support Jonathon, he was referred to the EBSA pathway alongside an EHCP being issued. Jonathon's school have continued to put support in place with him accessing learning opportunities from home. Jonathon is looking to move towards a more specialist setting soon.</p>
Feedback from EHCP Subgroup	<p>The board heard from the EHCP subgroup which reported that there has been a 100% increase in EHC needs assessment requests since 2021. There has also been an increase in the number of specialist settings opening. The data presented indicates that the level of need will continue to rise.</p> <p>A piece of work that has been taking place via this group is the EHCP Quality Assurance Framework. This has been developed and looks at ensuring the quality of plans issued continues to improve in order to meet the needs of children and young people.</p>

	<p>The board heard how Annual Reviews are an area that now need to be considered further, particularly considerations on the timeliness of completion, the quality of the annual review and how it then links back to the EHCP issued.</p> <p>One area we did hear about was the increasing number of mediation requests being made, particularly linked to requests for a change of placement. The EHCP subgroup referenced the steps being undertaken to reduce this number including increasing the number of dispute resolution meetings to resolve any differences. A SEND Resolutions Officer role has also been introduced. Feedback from the Parent / Carer Forum indicated that less parents / carers are coming forward with concerns regarding EHCPs which indicates a positive impact and trends moving forward.</p>
Parent Carer Feedback	<p>The board reviewed the feedback received from parents / carers including a consultation event that took place on 17th May 2024. Some key themes referenced from the consultation event included robust transitions needed, shorter wait times for services / support, training and development for professionals, clearer and accurate information being available and better communication. This feedback forms the basis of our strategy documents and focus of work.</p>
Strategy documents	<p>Two of our strategy documents were considered:</p> <p>SEND Strategy: The board was asked to consider the refreshed SEND strategy which is currently being updated and being shared with Parent / Carer Forum for further feedback. The aim is for this to be shared more widely in September.</p> <p>Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: This document provides a strategic assessments of the strengths and needs found in Salford related to SEND. The board was asked to review the information to ensure it is capturing our needs and the most appropriate recommendations being made.</p>