

SEND and Alternative Provision Board Newsletter: January 2026

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 6th January. 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>A video was presented to board members sharing Jayden's experience. When he was first excluded, Jayden felt extremely upset and believed he had let his parents down. The exclusion took place on the last day of term following some concerning comments and behaviours, including frequent swearing. Jayden explained that some of this behaviour stemmed from ongoing bullying.</p> <p>He described three occasions where another student followed him home from school and unfortunately he felt unsupported and unsafe.</p> <p>Since attending the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), Jayden has received the support he needed and has begun to rebuild his confidence. He explained that the environment feels calmer and less pressured. The pastoral team provided him with a five-minute pass he could use whenever he felt overwhelmed, and he shared how helpful and reassuring this simple strategy has been.</p>
Deep Dive – Inclusion (Suspensions and Exclusions)	<p>Dani Lang presented data to the board regarding suspensions and permanent exclusions. Some of the data included:</p> <p>Suspension rates for young people in primary schools on SEN support have remained below national figures.</p> <p>Suspension rates for young people in secondary schools on SEN support is now above national. The autumn/spring data for 24/25 shows that this gap is closing.</p>

	<p>Permanent exclusion rates for young people at SEN support in primary schools substantially increased in 22/23 and continues to be significantly above both national and statistical neighbour figures.</p> <p>Permanent exclusion rates for young people at a secondary school with an Education Health and Care Plan remained at zero until 23/24. Since then there has been an increase but this remains below both national and statistical neighbours.</p> <p>The board also saw the results of a survey which had been shared with young people who had been permanently excluded. Some of their comments about the support that they receive from the PRU were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ People speaking to me a lot more and actually caring about me and what I have to say. ▶ The work is more at my level, I enjoy going out on Bolt and then I am not stuck in the classroom all week, I get a break and get to explore new places. ▶ There is always a teaching assistant in class and I get more help with the work. Less people in my class because I never did good in big classes. <p>The board also heard about the current strategies that are being used in order to improve inclusion and suspensions and exclusions.</p>
<p>Parent/Carer Survey</p>	<p>Viv Omrod, the parent carer forum lead, discussed the results from the Annual SEND Survey and the key messages which are feeding into our sub group action plans.</p> <p>This is the 4th year that the forum have organised the parent carer survey and there were 343 responses. 54% of parents and carers that responded, had a young person with an Education, Health and Care Plan and 225 responses were from parents and carers who had a young person with an autism spectrum condition. Questions included:</p> <p>How would you rate the support that your young person receives in school?</p> <p>16.37% - school have exceeded expectations 39.18% - school have met expectations 44.44% - school are below expectations</p> <p>How would you rate the support your child/young person receives from health? (for example: Occupational Therapy , Speech and Language, Paediatricians, CAMHS, 0-19 team)</p> <p>7.58% – Health have exceeded expectations 36.15% - Health have met expectations 55.97% - Health are below expectations</p> <p>Do you feel your Child/Young Person is prepared or developing skills for Independent living, Employment, Keeping themselves healthy or being part of the community?</p> <p>22.2% - Not at all prepared 22% - Poorly prepared</p>

	<p>26% - A moderate amount</p> <p>7% - Prepared</p> <p>4% - Very well prepared</p> <p>19% - Not Applicable</p> <p>The results of the Parent Carer Forum survey play a vital role in helping the board develop the SEND Strategy and the SEND Improvement Action Plan. They also inform key decisions that directly impact children and young people with SEND.</p> <p>During the meeting, the board also discussed the importance of providing clear and meaningful feedback to parent/carers. Honest dialogue remains a priority to strengthen our partnership with families.</p>
AOB – New Primary Special School	<p>An emergency meeting took place with the City Mayor before Christmas as the Local Authority had to officially accept funding from the Department for Education to open up a primary special school. Hopefully the school will be opened within 3 years.</p>
Recent SEND inspections	<p><u>ADCS SEND Inspection Outcomes</u></p> <p>Link to the recent SEND inspections for information.</p>