



# SEND Update - Schools Forum

December 2024

TORBAY COUNCIL

# Background

- In November 2021 Torbay was inspected under the SEND Local Area Inspection Framework and the report published in January 2022.
- The Inspection found 8 'serious weaknesses' that needed addressing through a Written Statement of Action (WSOA).
- Work commenced on co-producing the WSOA in mid February
- The Final WSOA was produced in April 2022 and was accepted by Ofsted and CQC as appropriate

## WSoA content

- The co-produced analysis of the serious weaknesses identified in the WSoA 18 key actions to address those weaknesses.
- It was identified that the current governance of the Local Authority followed a concept of 8 Pillars and it was therefore requested that the 18 actions be allocated within the Pillars.
- This was against the advice of the Strategic Leads for the WSoA. However, this went ahead and 8 working parties were established.
- Working parties met regularly and some progress was made against certain actions.

## WSoA content cont'd

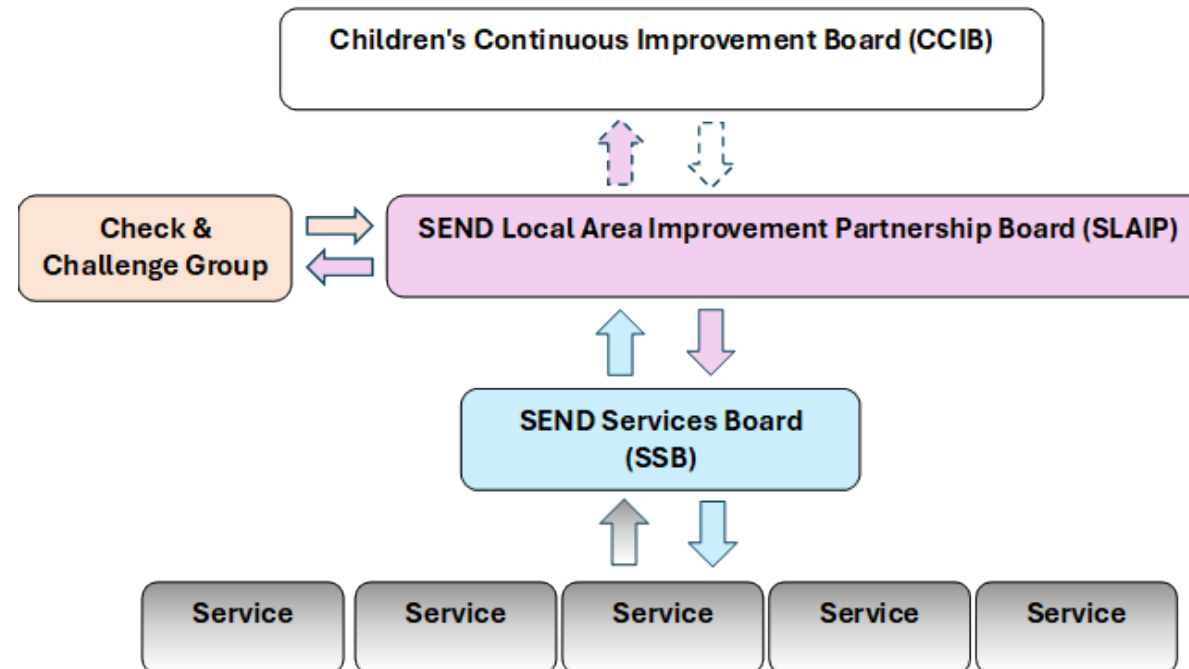
- One of the first actions completed was the production of a SEND Strategy.
- The SEND Strategy created 5 Priority Areas.
- It was then decided that the 18 WSoA actions, contained in the 8 Pillars be subsumed into the 5 Priority Actions.
- The SEND Strategic Lead wrote to the DCS in mid June 2024 expressing concern over:
  - *'the poor progress from the point of completion of the WSOA with a lack of emphasis on progress, actions and accountability, not helped by transitioning from the Pillars through to the 5 priorities of the SEND Strategy..... the lack of focus on the meetings necessary, their direction and purpose...'*

# Need for change

- In early July the LGA associate produced a report:
- *This WSoA had 8 areas of improvement (not aware there had previously been 18 actions) which were broad and a clear message to the system .....It appears to me, on limited exposure, that many of these 8 WSoA areas have remained stubborn issues for the system to address and there has been limited progress.*
- *The ambition to meet all these 8 WSoA areas, ...has led to a system that continues to 'add more' rather than stand back and think about the big issues that need a clear joint focus.*
- *....system of Boards, Priorities, Pillars, Pledges, Charters is so complicated it is hard to understand from the outside which board does what, who is accountable and who is driving the change needed. It feels like a lot of time, energy, effort and good will goes into serving and attending Boards and sub-meetings leaving too little time for the follow through actions.*

# New SEND Governance structure

- LGA Review outcome – simplify, embed and make BAU activity.
- SEF and Local Area Inclusion Plan embedded in new structure:





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SEND Sufficiency

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# SEND Sufficiency Project

- Over the last six months LA has reviewed all of our special and enhanced resources now that we are secure in the judgements about need from our JSNA.
- Hearing Impairment Unit –reconfiguring delivery - allows us to re-utilise 16 special school places.
  1. Increasing SEMH spaces
  2. Increase in SLD spaces.
  3. EOTAS Review – “Torbay EOTAS Offer” will provide more robust programme.
  4. Post 16 provision project – “Pathways Model” aims to fill gaps in post16 provision – Bridging course, Supported Internship pathway, pathways to employment for SEMH.

We are still challenged with no ASC special provision in our Local Area.





# Update on Locality consultation

- Closes on 8<sup>th</sup> December
- Further events have happened / are planned –
  - Health,
  - Some groups of schools have come forward and additional discussions have begun
  - Further visits / discussions about MySpace.
  - Children and young people
  - Early Years.
- Dates are in the diary for the LA to feedback general thoughts before going to Cabinet in January.
- Any 'blueprint' for a new model will also return to school's forum (post Cabinet).



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6 Day Provision, Section  
19 & MTS Provision

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# 6<sup>th</sup> Day Provision

- Primary Provision is Full plus 3 on EOTAS
- Secondary Provision is projected to be at 50/55 by Schools Forum
- The trend year on year would suggest that there will be a further 3 Primary places needed by January 2025
- Similarly, the trend would suggest that, without mainstream reintegration, all 55 places would be full by March 2025

# Section 19 and MTS

- S19 Demand continues to rise with particular pressure around:
  - ASC presentation and anxiety before assessment
  - Parent reported dysregulation on attempting to take the child to school.
- This is accompanied by an increase in complaints where the Medical Panel has deemed need can be met without S19 support.
- S100 support in schools is variable. A recent Schools Forum decision prevents LA activity to understand this and/or share best practice.
- 4 children remain being taught on site with Reach support to 64 others last year.



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LGA Review & Inspection  
Readiness

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# LGA Peer Review & Inspection Preparation

- Ofsted preparation work well underway on both Annex A documentation readiness and multi-agency audits.
  - Mock multi agency audit completed in September & LGA case review completed with a number of areas to address.
  - Internal audits & LGA suggest good progress in quality of plans.
  - Focus on timeliness – improvements in Appendix D quality and timeliness has started with appointment of PEP.
  - SEF continues to be developed – now integral to our new SEND improvement governance.
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