

SEND Commissioned Numbers Change Proposal

Report Title: Update on Local Government Association Peer Review of Special Educational Needs (SEND)

Agenda item:

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Partner Organisation:			
Date Prepared:	17th February 2025	Date of Meeting:	

1. Purpose

The Local Government Association Review took place in November 2024. This peer review was requested to support the Local Area in its aim to reset and review improvement in the following agreed key areas:

- Leadership and Governance of SEND across the local area.
- Statutory EHCP processes including identification, assessment and meeting needs of children and young people with special educational needs and /or disability.
- Sufficiency of provision to meet needs of children and young people with SEND.
- Lived Experience/Impact with a focus on children and young people with SEND and EHC plans to prepare them for adulthood and have their outcomes improved.
- How local area partners work together to coproduce with children and young people and their families to drive outcomes and improve the SEND system.
- Resilience of the Parent Carer Forum “Family Voice Torbay”

The team of peer challengers reviewed the following:

- Peers reviewed a range of detailed performance information and strategic documents to ensure we were familiar with the local area SEND partnership, the challenges it is facing and its plans for the future.
- Reviewed 16 EHCPs and associated documents.
- The peer team gathered information and views from more than 42 meetings and visits to schools and a range of other provision across the local area.
- We spoke to parents/carers and young people and more than 100 council and health staff, council members and external stakeholders.
- This peer challenge has been in depth, and we have devoted a total of 240 hours whilst we were on site in Torbay.

Data Analysis -

The Peer Review Team analysed our own data and reflected this back to the Partnership to show the areas of key concern:

1. 42% rise in EHCPs between 2017-22 and continued rise in requests to assess
2. Only 2 of 5 non-selective secondary schools are Ofsted Good or better with nearly 47% of Torbay resident secondary school students attending provision that is currently less than

good

3. Suspensions are rising rapidly with only Norfolk suspending a greater proportion at primary.
4. 75% of all exclusions are children with SEND (88% in primary schools)
5. Those excluded struggle to find mainstream places due to resistance from schools to accept pupils through Fair Access
6. Alternative Provision for children excluded is beyond capacity
7. EHE numbers have risen rapidly since 2019 and continue to rise at a rate of circa 8.3 per week
8. Of those EHE families who responded to a survey on reasons for EHE, 61% indicated a failure to meet SEND needs and to prevent mental health issue.
9. The number of EHE equates to a loss of £2.5mill to school budgets.
10. School absence including part-time timetables is high with absence due to illness being the highest of all local authorities in primary and the second highest in secondary
11. Children receiving education other than at school (EOTAS) include 39 on EHCPs, 28 of whom are of statutory school age
12. 682 children and young people are currently waiting for an initial assessment for their mental health needs.
13. We have been told of waiting times of two year for speech and language therapy and three years for neurodevelopmental assessments.

The Review culminated in a list of recommendations which were presented to the Partnership. Although we are still awaiting the official report from this review included here is the PowerPoint Presentation which shows their observations and recommendations.

See Appendix 1

Action Plan and Next Steps:

- The Partnership has formulated an Action Plan for the next steps for the Partnership.
- A copy of the action plan generated from the recommendations is attached here.
- For the actions which are specific to one agency the recommendations have been reviewed within the single agency, with some wider partnership recommendations being integrated into the new SEND Local Area Improvement Partnership Action Plan which has just been ratified to be developed under the new governance of this Board.

See Appendix 2