

## Slough Borough Council

<b>Report To:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date</b>	Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Update
<b>Lead Member:</b>	Paul Kelly – Lead Member for Education, Children’s Services and Lifelong Learning
<b>Chief Officer:</b>	Sue Butcher – Executive Director for People – Children
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Neil Hoskinson – Associate Director of Education
<b>Ward(s):</b>	<u>All</u>
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Exempt:</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Decision Subject To Call In:</b>	<b>YES</b> <u>Appendix 1</u> –Draft SEND Improvement Action Plan Summary of Key Actions
<b>Appendices:</b>	<u>Appendix 2</u> - July Position Statement Report <u>Appendix 3</u> – <u>Department for Education Statutory Direction</u>

### 1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 In Autumn 2021 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) services in Slough were inspected by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC). As a result of weaknesses identified in the local area, it was determined that a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) was required to address these. As part of the oversight of the SEND improvement journey, the Department of Education holds quarterly monitoring visits. Since the last report to Cabinet in January 2023 year, the DfE has undertaken a further visit in February and one in July.
- 1.2 The WSoA was presented to Cabinet in February 2022 and members requested regular progress reports. Updates were submitted in September 2022 and January 2023.
- 1.3 When DfE officials visited in February it was judged that, despite the length of time since the inspection and the high level of support provided to Slough, there had been a failure to make sufficient progress against any of the areas of significant weaknesses identified in the WSoA. As a result, Minister Coutinho stated that a Statutory Direction would be issued to Slough in relation to its SEND 0-25 functions

under section 497A(4B) of the Education Act 1996. This was published on 4 August 2023 and is contained in Appendix 3.

1.4 The individual actions in the WSoA have been reorganised into a new Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Improvement Action Plan appended at Appendix 1. Additional budget monitoring reporting actions relating to monitoring of the High Needs Block and the Safety Valve Agreement have also been agreed. This report shares the key aspects of the plan, and the budget monitoring actions to ensure that Cabinet members are fully informed.

#### 1.5 **Recommendations:**

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the statutory direction made by the Secretary of State for Education set out at Appendix 3.
2. Note the progress made to date, including the position as at July 2023 contained in Appendix 2.
3. Note the draft SEND Improvement Action Plan at Appendix 1.
4. Receive a report setting out the full financial implications of the proposed actions at the November cabinet meeting.
5. Receive SEND update reports on a quarterly basis.

#### 1.6 **Reason:**

- To seek approval for the action plan to deliver improvements to the service in accordance with the requirements of the WSoA, the safety valve agreement and the statutory direction.
- To ensure that Cabinet is proactively informed and involved in securing necessary improvements in SEND services.

#### 1.7 **Commissioner Review**

Commissioners note the focus on this area and the implications of the new DfE directions. They look forward to seeing the completed action plan and the detailed financial implications when they are shortly produced.

## 2. Report

### Introductory paragraph

- 2.1 In Autumn 2021 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) services in Slough were inspected by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC). As a result of weaknesses identified in the local area, it was determined that a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) was required to address them. As part of the oversight of the SEND improvement journey, the DfE undertakes quarterly monitoring visits. Since the last report to Cabinet in January this year, there have been two further visits in February and in July.
- 2.2 A new SEND Improvement Action Plan has been drafted in partnership with the DfE advisor and overseen by the Strategic SEND Inclusion Partnership Board. This plan aligns to the priority areas and the 94 separate actions within the WSoA to give greater pace and rigour to our improvement journey. This report shares the five new SEND workstreams within the draft improvement plan that align the WSoA actions into more coherent areas to support monitoring and reporting. There are also several budget monitoring reporting actions relating to monitoring of the High Needs Block and the Safety Valve Agreement.

### 2.3 Options considered:

- Option 1 Continue with the existing WSoA as originally approved – this is not recommended. Whilst the WSoA published in February 2022 and reported to Cabinet on 21<sup>st</sup> of the same month, contained details of the improvements required, there is a lack of detail and focus on the improvement activity and progress against this has not always happened at pace.
- Option 2 Agree a new Improvement Action Plan to sit alongside the existing WSoA. This is recommended. The plan will contain the same 94 individual actions in the WSoA document with the same impact measures. The Improvement Action plan is in draft and capable of amendment to take account of any member concerns. This action plan will be kept under review and can form the basis of a regular reporting mechanism to Cabinet.

### Background

- 2.4 The Autumn 2021 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) inspection report by Ofsted and the CQC recognised several strengths, however inspectors identified seven areas of weakness and determined that a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) was required to address them.
- 2.5 The WSoA document was co-produced with social care colleagues, health partners, families and school leaders and was “underpinned by our common purpose and shared values and principles, which are embedded in our desire to reduce inequality, remove barriers to learning and enable children and young people to flourish” (Introduction to the Slough WSoA document). It set out a shared ambition to secure real change through the concerted and combined efforts of all our partners across the local area to improve the outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

- 2.6 Unfortunately, despite the inspection taking place in Autumn 2021 and the results of the inspection being sent to the Council on 9 November 2021, the WSoA was submitted without formal member approval and a report was only taken to Cabinet on 21 February 2022. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) commissioners commented that it was unfortunate that the report was not brought to Cabinet sooner given the severity of the weaknesses identified and the vulnerability of the children supported by the service. Cabinet agreed that a detailed action plan was incorporated into the Council's wider Recovery and Improvement Plan and that regular update reports were provided.

#### Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Safety Valve Agreement

- 2.7 Slough Council has entered into a DSG Safety Valve Agreement with the Department for Education covering the financial years from 2022-23 to 2026-27. The authority undertakes to control and reduce the cumulative deficit on its Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) reaching a positive in-year balance account by the end of 2025-26 and in each subsequent year. Slough Council must also work with schools and other education providers to ensure best value and, where necessary, review and renegotiate funding agreements through improved joint commissioning processes.

#### Department for Education (DFE) February Monitoring Visit and Statutory Direction

- 2.8 DFE officials visited Slough at the end of February 2023 to carry out a full review of the improvements made. It was rightly judged that the area had failed to make the expected progress against any of the areas of significant weaknesses identified during the initial inspection. This was despite the length of time that had passed since the inspection and the high level of support that has been provided to Slough. As a result, Minister Coutinho stated that a Statutory Direction would be issued to Slough in relation to its SEND 0-25 functions under section 497A(4B) of the Education Act 1996 which was subsequently published on 4 August 2023 and is appended at Appendix 3. This requires the Council to work with Paul Moffat, as the DfE's appointed SEND 0-25 Commissioner, who is also the commissioner for social care services in Slough Children First.
- 2.9 The Minister has acknowledged that the new leadership team in Slough has changed significantly since the start of 2023 and, whilst it was too soon to see real impact from the work carried out since the February DfE Monitoring Visit, the "new leaders are determined and motivated to bring positive change".

#### Department for Education (DfE) Monitoring Visit July 2023

- 2.10 The feedback from the DFE officials attending the latest monitoring visit acknowledged the hard work that has been put into improving SEND in Slough since the start of March. Whilst it would not be expected to have made a significant difference to the quality of SEND 0-25 service provided to our children and young people with SEND, together with their families, there were clear signs of improvement.

2.11 The Strategic SEND Inclusion Partnership Board uses the new data dashboard to ensure that they have a good understanding of the improvements in frontline practice. This ensures a solid understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their workforce and the needs and quality of the services being provided.

2.12 Several key actions had been taken that were shared with the DfE officials which are summarised below:

- New Terms of Reference have been agreed for the Strategic SEND Inclusion Partnership Board to ensure partnership working with health and social care including regular risks workshops and a data dashboard aligned with the Frimley ICB dashboard.
- A draft live cases dashboard will help triage the SEND 0-25 process and identify barriers and blockages in the system to inform and then action good decision making.
- The Place Planning Board has been refreshed with a clearer focus on SEND 0-25. The remit of the Board has not been changed but a number of supporting working groups have been agreed to improve information gathering and decision making. These include a group looking at SEND Sufficiency and another looking at Inclusion in Mainstream Settings.
- A Head of SEND, two experienced managers, a Resolutions Officer, a SEND Consultant, a Principal Educational Psychologist, a Lead for Inclusion, a Participation Officer and additional locum psychologists have been appointed. Work is ongoing on the first draft of a SEND 0-25 Handbook following a review of all statutory SEND services.
- A Working Together Charter has been drafted following 8 events held in person or online where over 190 people took part (including 40 young people). Co-production sessions and other events have gathered stakeholder views to ensure that the lived experiences of children and young people with SEND inform the improvement journey and day-to-day practice. The service and the SEND Partnership Board receive regular survey results on the experience of families from the Parent Carer Forum, Special Voices, who are represented on the Board.
- An external company, Open Objects, have been commissioned to develop a new Local Offer website. They have produced three different iterations of the website using feedback from a working party of key partners and focus sessions with groups of parents facilitated by Special Voices. The final iteration of the new Local Offer website has been completed and is now ready for formal approval.
- Initial planning for an Autumn Inclusion Conference has taken place and has informed the questionnaires that will be sent to headteachers before the Autumn Term Capacity and Risk Visits to schools. The visits will identify best practice locally that will then be shared at the conference.

- Commissioning work is ongoing across East Berkshire to agree a new contract for integrated therapies and a Dysphagia Service. Occupational Therapy triage waiting times have reduced to no greater than five weeks for occupational therapy triage and the delay in SALT assessments is reducing. A Special Voices workshop with a focus on CAMHS has been scheduled to better understand parent/carer concerns about support for social and emotional mental health.

### Draft SEND Improvement Action Plan

- 2.13 The updated reporting and monitoring systems implemented by the Strategic SEND 0-25 Partnership Board, including the SEND 0-25 Self -Evaluation Framework and Data Dashboard, have identified inconsistency in the progress made across the 7 WSoA Priority Areas and the 94 individual actions they contain. It is a requirement of the WSoA for the local authority to report against these priority areas but, because they cut across a number of different workstreams, this makes internal monitoring and reporting complicated.
- 2.14 A new SEND 0-25 Improvement Plan was therefore drafted to give impetus to the improvement journey. However, initial feedback on the first draft of the plan was not uniformly positive and there was felt to be a lack of clarity and clear workstreams to give a focus to the work. This was exacerbated by the number of different workstreams and overlap between the different priorities in the WSoA document.
- 2.15 The August SEND Partnership Board was therefore an opportunity to refresh the SEND 0-25 Improvement Plan and a second draft of the improvement plan was shared at the August meeting. The updated plan allocates all the remaining 74 WSoA actions into 5 separate workstreams. Each workstream has its own separate section in the overall which will allow more coherent reporting and monitoring of progress. (see Appendix 1 for more detail). The draft plan also includes a section setting out the principles of effective SEND leadership.
- 2.16 The individual actions and impact measures in the new draft plan have not changed from the original WSoA document and, whilst we will report internally to the new workstreams, the DfE will still receive reports in line with the original seven Priority Areas. The new baseline date for completion of each action will be different from the original WSoA document but this is unavoidable due to the lack of progress previously. The change in completion date has been approved by the Partnership Board which includes DfE representation. It has been made clear that any further delay, slippage in completion of actions will be immediately escalated to the Partnership Board to ensure pace and urgency to our improvement journey.
- 2.17 The draft has been approved by the Partnership Board and is now being brought to Cabinet for agreement. In the meantime, officers are being identified to lead on actions and to oversee each workstream. Links to working parties and other key groups, such as Special Voices, is being added. We have identified 21 actions that will be completed by the end of September to ensure that there are no delays while the plan is being agreed.

2.18 Once the plan is agreed an additional section will be added which will set out the migration of WSoA improvement work into business-as-usual SEND 0-25 work. This will mean that, as the WSoA targets are achieved, a longer-term plan for continuous SEND 0-25 improvement will emerge.

#### New Workstreams Within the SEND Partnership Board

2.19 The draft SEND 0-25 Improvement Action Plan includes five new workstreams sub-divided into smaller workstreams as set out below. There are 74 WSoA actions that are still ongoing so the number of remaining WSoA actions included in each area are shown in brackets (more detail is included in Appendix 1):

**1. Governance & Strategy (14)**

- a) Budget Project Management (2)
- b) Capita Review / Use of Data (6)
- c) Improvement Action Plan Monitoring (6)

**2. Working Together (18)**

- a) Children and Young People Lived Experiences (6)
- b) Local Offer Review (4)
- c) Participation (8)

**3. Strong SEND Team and EHCNA Processes (17)**

- a) Preparation for Adulthood (5)
- b) Recruitment & Retention Strategy (3)
- c) SEND Statutory Processes Quality & Timeliness (9)

**4. Inclusion in Mainstream Settings (9)**

- a) Graduated Approach (4)
- b) Promoting the Inclusion Agenda (5)

**5. Sufficiency & Commissioning (16)**

- a) Integrated Therapies Contract (7)
- b) Joint Commissioning Strategy (7)
- c) SEND Sufficiency (2)

#### High Needs Block (Special Educational Needs) and Safety Valve Agreement Budget Monitoring

2.20 The authority is required to report to the DfE tri-annually on its performance in fulfilling the Safety Valve Agreement sharing any unforeseen difficulties or impacts. The SEND team have therefore worked with colleagues in finance to agree a Budget Monitoring Project Plan to ensure greater oversight of the DSG position and to ensure that financial implications are fully embedded in SEND service day-to-day decision-making processes. The key actions sitting within this action plan are:

- Agreeing a rapid program to cleanse the Capita One case management data so that better internal data will allow more accurate predictions of spending.
- Aligning case management, panel processes and budget forecasting to ensure that budget reporting includes all up to date financial decision and future forecasting.
- Agreeing a programme for clearing the backlog of requests for Education Health and Care plans and estimating projected costs whilst also prioritising completing new plans within the twenty-week statutory timescale.
- Reviewing the current data trends from January 2023 to date and project forward the expected number of EHC plans together with estimated financial costs and placement requests for the different types of need.
- Projecting future demand patterns including future phase transfers and projected number of plans to be ceased over the next five years.
- Agreeing the number of special and resource provision places by capacity including current vacancies, potential increases in places and opportunities for capital programmes.
- Agreeing a joint commissioning approach required to address any identified gaps between available places and projected demand. This action is to agree an approach, but a full Joint Commissioning Strategy will follow and will be brought to Cabinet for agreement in the future.
- Analysing current High Needs Block spending including comparison to similar local authority and national benchmarks. This will include identifying areas for potential savings, opportunities for spend to save approaches and financial business as usual comparisons such as funding levels provided to schools.
- Budget management and placement decisions to be in-built into statutory processes including triangulation to predicted figures for new EHC plans and annual reviews.
- Opportunities for best practice learning from other LAs and expected impact of White Paper to inform decision making.

### **3. Implications of the Recommendation**

#### *3.1. Financial implications*

- 3.1.1. The Council has worked hard to reduce the pressure of the DSG deficit position. The movement during the year was as follows:

	£m
Opening deficit as at 1/04/22	25.470
Less DfE write off	-10.800
In year overspend	0.097
Closing deficit as at 31/03/23	14.767

3.1.2. Officers are working closely with colleagues from the DfE on quarterly budget management reports to monitor the progress of the DSG safety valve management plan. Where any cost reduction proposals deviate from the plan mitigation action will be taken.

3.1.3. The SEND Improvement Plan needs to align to the High Needs Block recovery and Safety Valve monitoring programme and work is ongoing to ensure that this happens before the plan is finalised.

### 3.2 *Legal implications*

3.2.1. The Council and partner agencies have a number of key statutory responsibilities to children and young people with SEND. These include duties set out in the Children and Families Act 2014, the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004, the Care Act 2014 and the Childcare Act 2006. Partner agencies include health agencies, Slough Children First and early years providers, schools and colleges.

3.2.2. The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years provides statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities. This is a substantial code setting out guidance on the principles of the legislative framework under the Children and Families Act 2014, the requirements around information, advice and support, the need for joint working to deliver outcomes, the requirements for a Local Offer (being a list of services available to children and young people with SEND and their families). The Code also provides guidance to early years providers, schools, and further education providers, as well as providing guidance on preparing for adulthood. Detailed guidance is given on the processes for assessing, identifying, and meeting needs in education, health and care plans and the needs of children and young people in specific circumstances, including looked after children, care leavers, children educated at home and children in youth custody.

3.2.3. The Children Act 2004 (Joint Area Reviews) Regulations 2015 state that the Chief Inspector of Schools must make a written report where a review has been completed. The Chief Inspection of Schools must determine whether it is appropriate for a written statement of proposed action to be made in light of the report and if so, determine the person or body who must make that statement. In response to a requirement to produce a written statement of action, the Council

prepared a statement and submitted this to the Department for Education and Ofsted in February 2022.

3.2.4. On 4 August 2023, the Secretary of State made a direction in accordance with powers under s.497 of the Education Act 1996. This was on the basis the Council had made a lack of progress towards the WSoA since it was approved in March 2022 and the Secretary of State was satisfied that the Council was failing to perform to an adequate standard in some of all of the functions conferred on it under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014. The direction extends the remit of the existing DfE commissioner.

### 3.3. *Risk management implications*

3.3.1. Failure to meet the requirements of the WSoA have already led to the DfE issuing a statutory direction. Failure to meet the requirements of the statutory direction will result in further intervention by the DfE.

3.3.2. This risk is on the Corporate Risk Register and as such is subject to regular review. The mitigating actions are contained in the appended improvement plan.

### 3.4. *Environmental implications*

3.4.1. None noted

### 3.5. *Equality implications*

3.5.1. The SEND Code of Practice makes clear that many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010 and whilst some children and young people with a disability will not have SEN, there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN.

3.5.2. The Equality Act 2010 contains the public sector equality duty at s.149, which requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those with a protected characteristic, such as a disability, and those without. There are also specific statutory duties including not directly or indirectly discriminating against an individual due to their disability, making reasonable adjustments to remove disadvantage arising from a disability and not discriminating in school admissions and exclusion arrangements.

## **4. Background Papers**

4.1. None

# Appendix 1 - Draft SEND 0-25 Improvement Action Plan

## Workstream One – Governance and Strategy

### a) Budget Project Management

WSOA	ACTION	IMPACT MEASURES	New Baseline
3.2.1	Ensure performance data is captured specifically to support equitable and transparent decision-making on funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Availability of plentiful, systematically analysed performance data supports equitable funding decisions</li> <li>In feedback, stakeholders understand and welcome consistency and transparency in data-informed decision-making about funding</li> </ul>	Sep-23
7.8.1	Ensure robust DSG management plan in place to oversee High Needs Block spending and ensure value for money approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More effective use of finance and distribution within the High Needs Block</li> </ul>	Sep-23

### b) Capita Review / Use of Data

WSOA	ACTION	IMPACT MEASURES	New Baseline11
3.3.1	Review and develop systems to allow data about pupils with an EHCP who are persistently absent to be gathered, analysed and insights shared.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better understanding of why some CYP are missing school</li> </ul>	Dec-23
3.3.3	Investigate the increase in CYP and CYP electively home educated (EHE) to understand the SEND needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all CYP who are EHE are monitored effectively</li> </ul>	Dec-23
5.1.5	Implement and embed new operating model for processing and completing EHCNAs, incorporating an electronic SEND Portal platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EHCNAs completed within 20-week timescales in line with targets in 5.1.1</li> <li>CYP, parents/ carers and professionals are able to contribute to and check progress of EHCNA process online</li> <li>Stakeholders report improvements in levels of responsiveness, transparency and co-production</li> </ul>	Apr-24
5.1.6	Develop use of data platforms to ensure EHCNA and Annual Review data is used to fullest capacity to identify trends and manage performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data provides a detailed overview of each step of the 20-week process, and all agencies who contribute to EHCNAs work together to improve performance regarding timely completion of EHCPs</li> </ul>	Apr-24
5.2.3	Implement and embed an operating model for processing/completing annual reviews and updating EHCPs, incorporating an electronic 'portal'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual reviews and updating of EHCPs completed within statutory timescales</li> <li>CYP, parents/ carers/professionals able to contribute to and check progress of annual review online</li> <li>Stakeholders report improvements in levels of responsiveness, transparency and co-production</li> </ul>	Apr-24
5.2.4	Develop use of data platforms to ensure annual review data is used to fullest capacity to identify trends and manage performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data provides a detailed overview of annual review process and is used to improve performance with regard to timely completion and identification of next steps (i.e., amendments, decisions, consultations)</li> </ul>	Apr-24

## c) Improvement Action Plan Monitoring

WSoA	ACTION	IMPACT MEASURES	New Baseline
1.1.2	Review and develop SEND and Inclusion Strategic Board to ensure joint oversight and accountability for the area on a systematic basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular meetings.</li> <li>Notes of meetings demonstrate progress in all areas of WSOA.</li> <li>All partners understand their roles and responsibilities and are demonstrating evidence of oversight and accountability</li> </ul>	Sep-23
3.1.2	Ensure SEF includes wider data and overall performance indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data is used as key driver for all strategies with targets and KPIs created</li> </ul>	Sep-23
3.5.1	Develop and implement a comprehensive performance dashboard to drive improvement, set priorities and inform strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategy informed by data</li> <li>Stakeholders have laser-sharp understanding of the local area in order to be able to prioritise and drive improvement</li> <li>KPIs and actions plans created</li> </ul>	Sep-23
3.5.2	Ensure effective management information system (MIS) is in place to extract specific data in order to inform current and future strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved understanding of the cohort of CYP with an EHCP in order to drive strategy</li> </ul>	Dec-23
1.1.1	Co-produce a new SEND and Inclusion Strategy that clearly lays out roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New co-produced SEND and Inclusion strategy document produced and distributed.</li> <li>The implementation of the strategy is analysed, evaluated and acted upon with regular feedback at each board meeting from parents/carers and CYP.</li> <li>Feedback includes emphasis on the lived experiences of parents/carers and CYP with SEND</li> </ul>	Apr-24
3.1.3	Ensure SEF includes specific data and reference to the lived experiences of CYP and CYP with SEND and their parents/carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better understanding of experience and feedback from parents/carers and CYP</li> </ul>	Apr-24

## Workstream Two – Working Together

### a) Children and Young People / Family Lived Experiences

WSoA	ACTION	IMPACT MEASURES	New Baseline
2.3.2	Ensure surveys capture the views of parents/carers/CYP and other stakeholders and that it is analysed and acted upon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding of stakeholders' issues</li> <li>Parents/carers report back positive experiences</li> </ul>	Sep-23
3.2.3	Develop and review complaints system in order to capture and act more quickly and increase transparency in the whole process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More transparency and understanding of complaints process</li> <li>Majority of complaints resolved to completion in a timely manner</li> </ul>	Sep-23
2.1.1	Review systems and processes for stakeholder communication with SEND services around communication and timeliness of response.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transparency and accountability in all processes</li> <li>Positive interaction with SENDIASS and positive survey feedback from partners and parents/carers</li> </ul>	Dec-23
2.1.3	Ensure a way to capture case studies is used in order to celebrate the positives as well as act on areas for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The SEND Service has a deeper understanding of lived experiences and acts on specific feedback where required to improve processes and communication (details of any such actions taken are fed back to all stakeholders)</li> </ul>	Dec-23

2.3.1	Review and develop systems to ensure appropriate access to case workers with clear expectations around communication and timeliness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transparency and accountability in the process</li> </ul>	Dec-23
4.4.1	Gather the views of parents/carers to improve services (including SEMH). Ensure the SEF includes lived experiences of CYP and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents/carers report that they are satisfied that their views have been listened to and acted upon</li> <li>Concerns are being addressed via service transformation with parents/carers contributing as equal partners</li> <li>Reduction in complaints (about both services and EHCPs)</li> </ul>	Apr-24

## b) Local Offer Review

WSoA	ACTION	IMPACT MEASURES	New Baseline
2.4.1	Review and redesign the local offer with CYP/parent/carers/partners to ensure it is helpful and accessible so that they understand what is on offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders report back positive experience of use of local offer</li> <li>Stakeholders can access resources and information to help them</li> </ul>	Sep-23
2.4.2	Ensure that the local offer website is well publicised to parents/ carers, CYP, CYP and professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders report back positive experience of use of local offer</li> <li>Baseline established and SEND board agreed ambition for % increased visits to local offer website in 6 months' time and in 12 months' time (recent data: 5,375 unique page visits from 1 Feb 2020 to 31 Jan 2021; 7,156 unique page visits from 1 Feb 2021 to 1 Feb 2022)</li> </ul>	Sep-23
4.1.2	Ensure that every parent/carer of a child with SEND knows about local support services such as SENDIASS and Special Voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Links to Local Offer</li> <li>Baseline established and SEND board agreed ambition for increase in number of parents/ carers supported by SENDIASS and Special Voices in 6 months' time and in 12 months' time</li> </ul>	Sep-23
2.4.3	Review all content and information on the local offer to ensure it is up to date, useful and updated systematically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders report all content is up to date and a positive user experience</li> </ul>	Dec-23

## c) Participation

WSoA	ACTION	IMPACT MEASURES	New Baseline
4.3.1	Implement a commitment to participation, including the participation of CYP and parents/carers individually, operationally and strategically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents/carers and CYP are key partners in service transformation and meaningfully contributing to different types of decisions, e.g., planning, service delivery, evaluation, communications</li> <li>Increased representation at universal forums and/or creation of SEND participation group</li> </ul>	Sep-23
4.2.1	Ensure a wide range of opportunities are on offer for CYP and parents/carers to participate both individually and strategically.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased representation on existing forums that reflect the local population, such as Slough Youth Parliament, Reach Out Group, Young Health Champions</li> <li>Participation groups have improved links to SEND-specific forums and parent/carer forums</li> </ul>	Dec-23
3.2.4	Develop and implement a system to capture and collate a wide representation of parent/carer views available to area leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area leaders possess a clear understanding of parent/carer views and proactive steps are taken to address any concerns</li> </ul>	Dec-23

3.4.1	Develop an action plan to increase participation in education for CYP with SEND and no EHCP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased participation for CYP at least in line with statistical neighbours</li> </ul>	Dec-23
3.4.2	Use data to track, monitor and assess participation in order to measure success, draw out insights about the effectiveness of the action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing cycle of increased participation for CYP</li> </ul>	Apr-24
4.2.2	Ensure CYP and parents/ carers have access to information about engagement opportunities and understand how they can get involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation groups are supported to be more inclusive and are more representative, with increased representation at universal groups such as Youth Parliament and Young Health Champions</li> </ul>	Apr-24
4.2.3	Ensure CYP and CYP with SEND and their parent/carers are effectively supported to participate meaningfully	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants report they receive the required support to access engagement opportunities and understand how their contributions will be used</li> <li>Participants report that they are satisfied that their views have been listened to and acted upon</li> <li>Participants report that they have gained something (skills, confidence, new experiences) from their involvement</li> <li>Participants are rewarded and recognised for their contributions</li> <li>% of staff receiving disability equality training</li> <li>Increased staff across MDTs attending participation training</li> <li>Service transformation in areas such as design, service delivery, evaluation and communications is planned and/or in implementation with the involvement of parents/ carers and CYP as equal partners</li> <li>Engagement takes place at operational and strategic levels (e.g., through representation on implementation groups, task and finish sub groups and/or strategic boards), as well as at an individual level'</li> </ul>	Apr-24
6.1.3	Find mechanisms to actively listen to families and school staff re social care concerns and an ensure an approach to Early Help is followed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CYP's needs are identified earlier and provision in place</li> </ul>	Apr-24

## Statutory SEND Team and EHCNA Quality and Timeliness

### a) Preparation for Adulthood

WSOA	ACTION	IMPACT MEASURES	New Baseline
1.8.2	Work with post 16 providers to ensure breath, quality and sustainability of provision allowing CYP to achieve appropriate outcomes and ambitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CYP and their families report increased levels of satisfaction with the local offer.</li> <li>CYP and their families are confident that the post-16 offer meets the needs of SEND students and that their views are heard and considered</li> </ul>	Dec-23
6.1.4	Develop and review travel training for CYP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CYP able to access transport more independently</li> </ul>	Dec-23

6.2.1	Review current transitions process for all CYP and CYP open to SCF to ensure effective preparation for life as an adult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CYP have opportunity to prepare for adulthood and to live independently if appropriate</li> </ul>	Dec-23
1.8.1	Review and strengthen access to work experience, supported internship and employment opportunities from Yr10 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reduction in NEET figures.</li> <li>▪ Targets for increasing number of adults with SEND and disabilities in paid employment are met</li> </ul>	Apr-24
1.8.3	Establish a multi- agency Transition Pathways Group to enable effective joint commissioning and strategic implementation of the PfA Toolkit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CYP and families report increased confidence and satisfaction in the transition process</li> <li>▪ There is an increase in the number of supported internships and apprenticeships that lead to employment for CYP with SEND, linked to the strategic targets to be identified through Action 1.8.1</li> </ul>	Apr-24

## b) Recruitment and Retention

WSOA	ACTION	IMPACT MEASURES	New Baseline
1.2.2	Review and develop SEND team structure to ensure it is fit for purpose and has capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Capacity of staff increased</li> <li>▪ More efficiency and better completion of EHCPs within statutory timelines</li> <li>▪ Working practices required to meet statutory obligations are widely understood and consistently and coherently implemented and adhered to</li> <li>▪ Show upward trend towards national average of 68% of EHCNAs completed within the statutory timeframe and exceeding this figure</li> </ul>	Sep-23
5.1.3	Address current vacancies in Educational Psychology service to increase capacity for statutory EHCNA work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Psychological advice for EHCNA completed within statutory 6-week timescale, reducing pressure on SEND team around 20-week process</li> </ul>	Dec-23
5.1.4	Develop a local recruitment and retention strategy for SEND and Educational Psychology to attract and retain high quality staff within Slough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Level of ongoing vacancies is minimised, and staff report benefits of improved stability and morale</li> </ul>	Dec-23

## c) Statutory EHCNA Process

WSOA	ACTION	IMPACT MEASURES	New Baseline
2.1.2 / 2.2.1	Review the governance and develop documentation that clearly lays out to professionals the scope of all panels and review of panels themselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Parents/carers report back they receive good communication and feel effectively supported by the SEND Service</li> </ul>	Sep-23
5.1.1	Complete review of current operating model and capacity within statutory SEND team, with focus on caseload and statutory EHCNA responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sufficient officers in post to ensure caseloads are set at a level that consistently produces EHCPs within statutory timescales, in line with following targets:</li> <li>▪ After 3 months, at least 30% within 20 weeks, After 6 months, at least 45%, After 9 months, at least 60%</li> </ul>	Sep-23

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sufficient SEND manager capacity in place to ensure compliance and monitor delivery of new model</li> </ul>	
5.2.1	Review current operating model and capacity within SEND team, with focus on caseload and compliance with annual review and phase transfers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sufficient SEND officers in post to ensure caseloads are set at a level that consistently processes annual reviews to update EHCPs within statutory timescales</li> <li>▪ Sufficient SEND manager capacity in place to ensure compliance and monitor delivery of new model</li> </ul>	Sep-23
5.3.4	Review and strengthen supervision of casework for SEND officers and establish KPIs against which to identify and address performance issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Systems are embedded to monitor individual/team performance and the quality of EHCP delivery</li> <li>▪ Practitioners feel supported and quality of practice improves</li> <li>▪ Stakeholder satisfaction has increased, and complaints have reduced</li> </ul>	Sep-23
3.3.2	Based on the analysis and understanding of reasons for the absence, draw up and implement and action plan to reduce absences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase in school attendance</li> </ul>	Dec-23
5.3.1	Establish a multi-agency Quality Assurance Framework for EHCPs to evaluate quality as well as compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Multi-agency QA framework and all activities linked to it are embedded</li> <li>▪ Stakeholders report improvements in levels of satisfaction, quality, consistency and co-production</li> </ul>	Dec-23
5.3.2	Develop more effective joint working between social care practitioners and SEND officers, to ensure consistency of contribution to EHCNA process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consistency of social care contribution to EHCPs improves</li> <li>▪ CYP and families report improvements in the experience of how assessments are co-ordinated to produce a holistic EHCP</li> </ul>	Dec-23
5.3.3	Develop more effective joint working between health practitioners and SEND officers, to ensure consistency of contribution to EHCNA process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consistency of health contribution to EHCPs improves</li> <li>▪ CYP and families report improvements in the experience of how assessments are co-ordinated to produce a holistic EHCP</li> </ul>	Dec-23
5.3.5	Review and strengthen transition review processes to ensure consistency of contribution, co-production and quality of amended plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stakeholders report improvements in levels of satisfaction, quality, consistency and co-production</li> <li>▪ CYP and families report improvements in the experience of how transition reviews are co-ordinated to produce a holistic amended EHCP</li> </ul>	Dec-23

## Workstream Four – Inclusion in Mainstream Schools

### a) Graduated Approach

WSOA	ACTION	IMPACT MEASURES	New Baseline
2.2.2	Review and ensure a system for coordinating and sharing information about the 'graduated response' is in place and understood by all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stakeholders understand the 'graduated response' (GA) and are clear as to its purpose</li> <li>▪ Parents/carers have a clear understanding of their roles with regards to the GA</li> <li>▪ More effective use of the GA in practice</li> </ul>	Dec-23

7.6.3	Deliver universal/targeted training to schools in the current contract to support implementation of the Graduated Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fewer CYP will be referred for an EHCA as their needs will have been met at a universal and targeted level</li> </ul>	Dec-23
1.3.3	Review and facilitate school-to-school support on effective practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective practice seen and evidenced in schools</li> </ul>	Apr-24
1.7.1	Work with schools to ensure the 'graduated response' is understood and implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More effective partnership work to identify, assess and meet needs with particular focus on access to therapies</li> </ul>	Apr-24

## b) Promoting Inclusion

WSOA	ACTION	IMPACT MEASURES	New Baseline
1.3.2	Hold seminars and workshops on SEND for schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective practice seen and evidenced in schools through feedback, sharing of effective practice and surveys (facilitated by the LA)</li> </ul>	Dec-23
1.4.1	Review induction paperwork with partners across all areas to ensure consistency of approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent approach achieved to improve information gathering and sharing which allows for more strategic analysis and action</li> </ul>	Dec-23
1.3.4	Work with schools to ensure they fully understand the SEND code of practice and statutory responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better understanding of the legal framework and processes of the SEND code of practice for schools, including the EHCNA process</li> <li>CYP's needs are met by schools and SEND team without additional support being required from external resources</li> </ul>	Apr-24
1.3.5	Work with schools to understand how they prioritise and raise the profile of SEND and inclusion in their schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collection informs strategic approach which is then published and clear</li> </ul>	Apr-24
1.6.1	Work in partnership with schools through the Slough School Effectiveness Strategy to promote the inclusion agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More positive parental engagement with schools, as evidenced by surveys</li> <li>More effective practice in schools</li> <li>Staff value CPD and become more skilled at understanding and supporting CYP with SEND</li> </ul>	Apr-24

## Workstream Five – SEND Sufficiency and Joint Commissioning

### a) Integrated Therapies Contract

WSOA	ACTION	IMPACT MEASURES	New Baseline
7.2.2	BHFT, Frimley ICB and the East Berkshire LAs to work in partnership to review and agree the joint commissioning of integrated therapies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successful development and implementation of the Village Model approach</li> </ul>	Sep-23

7.3.2	Ensure all CYP in Slough with eating and drinking needs are able to access timely specialist support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in number of CYP presenting at A&amp;E because they are experiencing a severe difficulty in swallowing</li> </ul>	Sep-23
7.5.1	Implement OT action plan in place aimed at reducing waiting times for assessment for routine referrals to a maximum wait of 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data available on number of CYP waiting for assessment, average wait, longest wait, % tracking of CYP waiting longer than 53 weeks and % tracking of CYP waiting 52 weeks or less</li> <li>Fewer CYP are waiting more than 12 months for assessment for a routine referral</li> </ul>	Dec-23
7.5.2	Improve compliance with EHCA 6-week target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current backlog of EHCA requests that have breached the 6-week target is cleared</li> <li>95% of all EHCA requests are completed within the 6-week target</li> </ul>	Dec-23
7.6.1	Ensure all CYP with EHCPs in the 17 schools covered by the contract with BHFT are seen for a review/up-to-date assessment of their needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in number of CYP with identified speech and language therapy needs on EHCPs not yet seen by the CYPIT service</li> <li>CYP in Slough attending one of the 17 schools will have the speech and language therapy needs identified on their EHCPs met</li> </ul>	Dec-23
7.6.2	Ensure all CYP who attend Arbour Vale School with identified SALT needs are seen and have their needs reviewed/reassessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in number of CYP at the school with identified speech and language therapy on EHCPs not yet seen by the CYPIT service</li> <li>CYP in Slough attending one of 17 schools will have the speech and language therapy needs identified on their EHCPs met</li> </ul>	Dec-23
7.7.5	Implement quality improvement projects to ensure service operating at optimal efficiency with the aim of reaching a maximum wait of 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service operating at optimal efficiency</li> <li>Waiting times for ASD or attention deficit disorder assessments are reduced</li> </ul>	Dec-23

## b) Joint Commissioning Strategy

WSOA	ACTION	IMPACT MEASURES	New Baseline
6.4.1	Review the current provision of quality, cost-effective short breaks that promote CYP's outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Options for delivery will be shared formally within a business case by March 2022 Regular contract monitoring of commissioned services improves data and analysis</li> <li>Programme of consultation to include CYP and their families by June 2022 to inform new commissioned arrangements by April 23 (see action 4.3.2 for more details)</li> </ul>	Sep-23
6.4.5	Review direct payments arrangements including options for pre-payment cards and more flexible parameters (with adult services and CCG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents and carers have flexibility in support and opportunities and increased personalisation of arrangements</li> <li>Compliant use of DP</li> <li>Reduced challenge/complaints and increased parent/carer satisfaction</li> <li>Take-up of personal budgets increased by 20%, reducing more expensive options</li> </ul>	Sep-23
4.3.2	Ensure the current programme to redesign commissioned short breaks and arrangements for direct payments is coproduced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved satisfaction in the way DP can be used</li> <li>Increased transparency in access</li> <li>Offer is influenced by stakeholder opinion and choices</li> </ul>	Dec-23

6.4.4	Develop local sufficiency: residential respite.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision in local school and at home so that contact with family/community is maintained and promoted</li> </ul>	Dec-23
7.1 1	We will have a joint commissioning strategy which all partners will be aware of and can adhere to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There will be clear evidence of effective joint commissioning which will be supported by clear feedback</li> </ul>	Dec-23
1.4.2	Share 9–12-month and 2-year review data where early identification suggests support is required to meet developmental milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early intervention through delivery of services to support child development, reducing the number of CYP requiring SEND support in settings/school</li> <li>Settings are aware of the needs of CYP from the outset, enabling the required support to be put in place in a timely way that supports CYP's progress</li> </ul>	Apr-24
6.5.1	Develop sufficient accommodation and support arrangements for CYP with SEND aged 16–25 in Slough.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CYP requiring additional support to build independence skills can transition between</li> <li>Plans for a 'curriculum based' training package from age 16 are being developed across the whole offer to enable skill enhancement, resilience building and tenancy sustainability, reducing eviction/arrears</li> <li>Levels of NEET reduced to statistical neighbours and best-practice levels (baseline and target to be set by implementation working group)</li> </ul>	Apr-24

### c) SEND Sufficiency

WSOA	ACTION	IMPACT MEASURES	New Baseline
1.5.2	Update place planning strategy and include SEND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic approach to SEND place planning and ensuring CYP have access to the provision best suited to their needs</li> </ul>	Sep-23
1.5.1	Conduct review of all places and identify gaps in provision to ensure a strategic approach to placing CYP in the most appropriate setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document informs strategic approach, both short and long term</li> <li>Develop resources to place CYP in the most appropriate specialist provision</li> </ul>	Apr-24

# Appendix 2 - Special Educational Needs Position Statement

July 2023

## Leadership

***We need to ensure that progress against the weaknesses identified in the local area inspection is increased rapidly and there are strong arrangements for joint leadership and accountability, self-evaluation and improvement planning at a strategic level.***

- A Strategic Inclusion Partnership Board is in place ensuring partnership working with health and social care. The Board has reviewed the Written Statement of Action and new project reporting to ensure that progress is accurately reflected, and key priorities are clear. Regular Risks workshops now take place before every Partnership Board meeting to inform management action.
- The SEND and Inclusion Strategy 21-24 is in place and co-produced work has begun to develop it further. The School Effectiveness Strategy has been signed off and Autumn term support and challenge visits focus on identifying and sharing best inclusive practice with Schools. Evidence of this work in Slough is to be shared by a Best Practice Conference held in Slough.
- The first draft of an Improvement Action Plan and a Self-Evaluation Framework, using feedback from the DfE Advisor, with evidence from the SEND 0-25 Head of Service and Group Manager for Data & Insight who will inform business as usual, in addition to our data dashboard and Operational KPI Tracker. This aligns to the new SEND Inspection Framework and learning from other local areas.
- Slough Schools Placing Strategy and the Place Planning Board has been refreshed with a clearer focus on SEND 0-25 including Alternative Provision and Post 16 sufficiency.
- Work is underway on a joint commissioning strategy with a Commissioning and Transformation consultant appointed to lead on this work. Initial scoping meetings have taken place to identify opportunities for wider delivery with Arbour Vale School. Capacity analysis of current SRP provision has been conducted and detailed SLAs agreed for each setting will be issued.
- A new Workforce Development Plan is being shared with partners and stakeholders.

## The SEND Service

***Not enough EHC plans have been completed and rapid action is needed to improve SEND processes to improve timeliness and quality assurance.***

- A Head of SEND 0-25, two experienced managers, a Resolutions Officer and a Commissioning Transformation consultant have been recruited. A new Principal Educational Psychologist and Team Manager for Inclusion have also been appointed.
- Additional locum EPs have been sourced and a contract has been approved with an external company to complete all the remaining referrals for EP assessments. A new

recruitment and retention strategy is being devised to establish a permanent team to meet ongoing demand.

- It has been decided, in consultation with the SEND teams, to retain the separate Pre-14 and Post-14 teams until further training has taken place. Training on the Code of Practice and CAMHs has taken place with additional sessions every two weeks. Following the general staff training, all case officers will undertake a skills audit to identify individual CPD needs.
- The new Send 0-25 Leadership Team have already updated SEND processes and completed a review of all current cases to identify possible quick resolutions.
- All education settings /provisions have a dedicated SEND Link Officer to improve communication and working together.
- A Capita Working Party will explore key features and future options such as the Portal. All case officers are being trained and refreshed in using the Capita system.

### **Data, Information Gathering and SEND 0-25 and AP Place Planning**

***A new data dashboard will ensure that meaningful performance information is consistently used to inform area strategy and planning and to evaluate its effectiveness.***

- The new Data Dashboard will embed change and enhance sub-sets of management information to measure the impact of changes. Key SEND 0-25 returns have been reconciled to improve the robustness of the insight received at operational and strategic level into the EHC plan cohort.
- The Dashboard has been mapped against Green Paper requirements, so it is likely to remain relevant giving insights in line with Government priorities and the Ofsted Framework. The Dashboard will be aligned with the Frimley ICS Data Dashboard to support/inform partnership working. The NHS Dashboard will include Slough only data. All internal data is being reviewed to ensure accuracy. The Dashboard will include real time data from an operational KPI tracker, to ensure officers are responding to children's and family's needs and tracking their performance at the right time with the right support to inform the right educational placement. A draft Live Cases Dashboard will, in a timely way, inform the SEND process and identify barriers and blockages in the system to swiftly inform and then action good decision making.

### **Co-Production and Family Engagement**

***The established system of gathering the views of pupils with SEND and their families has not been used to plan and review SEND processes and local area services.***

- Co-production sessions / Special Voices events (including online and paper surveys) have gathered stakeholder views on inclusive practice and preparation for adulthood [PfA] to inform best practice.

- A Working Together Charter will inform and underpin all the WSoA work as well as the business-as-usual service delivery from the SEND0-25 team. Recently, with more planned there were eight events held in person / online where over 190 people took part (including 40 young people) alongside parents, carers and professionals generating over 400 ideas. This included online / hard copy surveys, facilitated discussions, focus groups & activity sheets.
- Communication Service standards have been drafted and will be shared in September 2023 which include good practice for dealing with concerns and an Escalation Policy.
- Work is being carried out to complete and share the first draft of the SEND 025 Handbook once it has been evaluated by the SEND service to ensure functionality / alignment with our SEND systems. Initial focus has been on a set of agreed letters using accessible language and next steps planning.
- A SEND Participation Officer has been recruited and will be visiting schools to consult with CYP with SEND on what a SEND Youth Voice Group should look like so that a new group can be launched in January 2024 and a joint, all reaching participation strategy agreed.
- The second iteration of the new Local Offer website has been designed using feedback from young people with SEND and their families as well as with partners. Improvements in the 'look' of the Website, functionality, accessibility, and useability will be improved and it will include a "Get Involved" section. Students with SEND have been involved presenting the Local Offer.

## **Engagement with Schools**

***It is important that transformation work is informed by the day-to-day experiences of pupils with SEND and that school staff are strong partners in the process.***

- SEND 0-25 Information Sharing sessions ensure that our education partners are provided regular updates on our transformation actions, while newly established working parties will ensure and assure that they participate in key pieces of work such as inclusion in mainstream schools, SEND 0-25 sufficiency, Early Years, post 16 and capital programmes.
- A key focus of support and challenge visits in the Autumn will be inclusive support including the graduated offer, ordinarily available provision, and interventions. Best practice identified across Slough, together with wider areas, will be shared at an Inclusion Conference and documented.
- Participation training with the local workforce in February considered best inclusive practices and a Neurodiversity Network has been launched.
- The Place Planning Board has been refreshed and will now be supported by working parties that will include headteachers, senior leaders, SENDCos and young people.

## **Partnership Work with Social Care**

***Current processes do not ensure that social care needs are included in EHC plans.***

- Work is ongoing to align EHC plan audit and quality assurance processes into wider Childrens' Services processes and a working group is developing a Joint Participation Strategy.
- A strategic group meets quarterly to support and oversee transition to adulthood, co-chaired by the Directors for Adult Social Care and Childrens Social Care Group.
- Work is ongoing to ensure that SEND 0-25 services work collaboratively with our social care partners to ensure a coordinated single plan approach to SEND pupils known to social care.
- A working party is developing new multi-agency processes involving social work, early help, the Virtual School, NHS, and other partners including identification of educational provision.
- Staff from the Children with Disabilities team and an appropriately trained Virtual School representative now attend the SEND0-25 triage and panel meetings to ensure good joint decision making and that all information is considered.
- A significant operational development is that members of the SEND 0-25 team now have read only access to Liquid Logica (social care ICS), to access information to inform the assessment process. This has been a new jointly agreed ask and actioned between services swiftly.

## **Health Support**

***More equitable access to health services and a new dysphagia service is required.***

- The Frimley ICS SEND board has been launched which will oversee the progress on the Integrated Therapies Project and the Written Statement of Action.
- Commissioning work is ongoing across East Berkshire to agree a new contract for integrated therapies, a Mental Health Steering Group has been formed and a school survey has been conducted regarding a dysphagia service. Another workstream is considering the impact of therapies provided in a special school via termly check in sessions and drop-in clinics.
- OT triage waiting times have reduced to no greater than five weeks for occupational therapy triage. Although the delay in SALT assessments is still far too high, it is reducing, and the Communications Passport is having a positive impact.
- A Special Voices workshop with a focus on CAMHS has been scheduled to better understand parent/carer concerns about support for social and emotional mental health.

## **Key Updates Since June Position Statement**

### **Leadership**

- Regular Risks workshops now take place before every Partnership Board meeting.
- Initial planning for the Autumn Inclusion Conference have taken place based on identifying best practice and peer-to-peer activities.
- New Place Planning Board arrangements have been agreed and shared with education settings.
- Initial scoping meetings have taken place to identify opportunities for wider delivery with Arbour Vale School.
- Capacity analysis of current SRP provision has been conducted and detailed SLAs produced for each setting.

### **The SEND 0-25 Service**

- A new Principal Educational Psychologist and Team Manager for Inclusion have also been appointed.
- A contract has been approved with an external company to complete all the remaining referrals for EP assessments.
- It has been decided, in consultation with the SEND teams, to retain the separate Pre-14 and Post-14 teams until further training has taken place.
- All education settings /provisions now have a dedicated link officer to improve communication.

### **Data, Information Gathering and SEND Place Planning**

- Key SEND returns have been reconciled to improve the robustness of the insight received at operational and strategic level into the EHC plan cohort.

### **Co-Production and Family Engagement**

- A Working Together Charter will inform and underpin all the WSoA work as well as the business-as-usual service delivery from the SEND team. There were eight events held in person / online where over 190 people took part (including forty young people) alongside parents, carers and professionals generating over 400 ideas. This included online / hard copy surveys, facilitated discussions, focus groups & activity sheets.
- Communication Service standards have been drafted and will be shared in September which include good practice for dealing with concerns and an escalation policy.
- Work being carried out on a set of agreed letters using accessible language and next steps planning.
- The second iteration of the new Local Offer website has been designed using feedback from young people with SEND 0-25 and their families as well as with

partners. The real involvement of young people can be seen in the new draft of the Local Offer e.g., introducing sections and giving explanations. This helps to improve the look of the website with real people and its functionality, accessibility and useability will be continually improved. It will include a “Get Involved” section.

### **Engagement with Schools**

- The Place Planning Board has been refreshed and will now be supported by working parties that will include headteachers, senior leaders, SENCOs and young people. Volunteers have been provided for each of the working parties.

### **Partnership Work with Social Care**

- Staff from the Children with Disabilities team and an appropriately trained Virtual School representative now attend the SEND triage and panel meetings to ensure good joint decision making and that all information is considered.
- Members of the SEND team have been given read only access to Liquid Logica (social care ICS), to enable officers to access information to inform the SEND assessment process.

### **Health Support**

- Commissioning work has continued across East Berkshire to agree a new contract for integrated therapies, a mental health steering group has been formed and a school survey has been conducted regarding a dysphagia service.