

# Solihull SEND Peer Review 2023 Local Area Partnership Response



In January 2023, colleagues from the West Midlands Peer Review Group were invited to Solihull to give their views and feedback on the work happening across the local area, and the impact that was having on children and young people, and their families. The full report is available on the local offer: [Solihull SEND Peer Challenge Report 2023](#).

This document outlines the local areas response to the 15 recommendations within that report; with key actions that will be taken. These actions will be integrated into the Additional Needs Strategy Year 3 action plan, which will be available at the end of December 2023 (replacing the current Year 2 version also available on the local offer [JAN Strategy Action Plan Year 2](#)) so all stakeholders have a full understanding of the development work in place.

	RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSE	LEAD
1	<p>Consider person centred workshop/s for school SENCOs to improve the consistency of practice in hearing voice as the starting point of a strengths-based approach to assessment and planning (in Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle), building upon the successful relaunch of the SENCO networks, alongside considering a possible model of Collaborative Lead SENCOs, possibly accessing some of the DBV resource, to strengthen the community of practice and skills of SENCOs across the Borough. A similar model exists in Nottinghamshire, where they would be happy to share their approach. Pat Bullen, the WM SEND LA Network Coordinator could also offer person-centred training free of charge to Solihull schools or cascade training to LA teams.</p>	<p>Person centred meetings are in place for all new EHCPs so views can be sought at the start of the plan writing process. These are led by the EHCP service.</p> <p>A pilot for person centred working took place prior to Covid using the PATH tool. 25 staff were trained across the LA and in schools but the model was very resource intensive (with each meeting being led by someone in the LA and someone in the school).</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - A roll out Dingley’s Promise Child’s Voice Early Years training module will be launched in September 2023; providing 3 years free access for all Early Years Practitioners.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - A task and finish group will be set up through SSSAB in the autumn of 2023 to review the outcome of that work and identify the most appropriate way forward, including training requirements for SENCOs. This will feed into the wider work around inclusion and will report into the Inclusion Programme Board.</p>	<p>Early Years Service Manager, SMBC</p> <p>Chair of SSSAB and Head of SISS, SMBC</p>
2	<p>Consider developing a template for children, young people and their parents/carers to make on-going contributions to the Annual Review cycle and within the SEN Support planning process- this could build upon the successful developments within the EHC Assessment Service focusing upon pupil voice.</p>	<p>Feedback from the DfE also identified there was more work to do in order to help schools gain the views of children who are non-verbal so any work in this area will also include that cohort.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - The EP Service had developed a person centred form which was shared with SENCo’s so the use of this needs to be reviewed through the SENCo network meetings in 2023/24.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - SPCV are planning a focus group with parents of non-verbal children and those with situational mutism to discuss different methods of gathering views which work for families and could also be adopted by schools. This will begin with a meeting with KIDs national group to discuss how they can support in August 2023 and a plan being developed by the end of September 2023.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - Part of the development of the graduated approach is an intention to create a toolkit which includes examples of good practice and templates to use. This will therefore be taken forward from March 2024 once the graduated approach work moves to the next phase – with a toolkit being developed ahead of publishing by the end of February 2024.</p>	<p>Head of SISS, SMBC</p> <p>Chair of SPCV and EHCP Service Manager, SMBC</p> <p>Head of SISS, SMBC</p>

3	<p>Consider using the refreshed Local offer, when it is available, to show short film clips of the good practice that we heard about in some schools, and parental views of the most recent and more effective SEN Support and EHC plans.</p>	<p>As part of our work to deliver the Strategy for Inclusive Education, schools will be encouraged to review their SEND Information Reports to ensure they showcase some of the good practice being undertaken in the school and link to the Local Offer. This will take place from September 2023 onwards and be led by individual school leadership teams.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - An audit of these Information Reports, schools' data and school resources will be included as part of the SEND reviews of schools as part of the Delivering Better Value work which will start in September 2023 for two years. The learning and evidence gathered through this work will help to inform the SEND development, identifying the best practice and areas for further development.</p>	<p>Head of Education Outcomes &amp; Intervention, SMBC</p>
4	<p>Consider how best to approach individual schools which may not attend HT collaboratives nor SENCO networks- for example, Derbyshire uses a SEND Data Dashboard to hold a school improvement conversation – this would also address the rising number of school permanent exclusions within the borough this academic year, and could include workforce development and support to the school directly or from within the Collaborative.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> - The collation and analysis of data links directly into our Delivering Better Value work where a temporary data analyst post starting by the end of October 2023 will provide the capacity for this work – reviewing the data analysis and developing new SEND data dashboard for roll out in Autumn 2024.</p> <p>This will look at school specific data around areas such as exclusions, attendance, proportions of SEN Support and EHCPs, use of LA resources and pathways, AP etc. to get an idea of where schools are. There is then also the potential to analyse on a collaborative basis. Agreements will need to be reached with schools as to what data is shared, and how. The data can then form more thematic discussions with school leaders. A pilot for monitoring SEND information will be reviewed in July 2023 and learning implemented for full roll out from Autumn 2023 – with discussions with school leaders throughout the 2023/24 academic year.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - The SSSAB School Improvement Group will be reinstated in September 2023 with half-termly meetings and will look at academic data analysis and consider how broader data could influence their work by July 2024.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - Plans are also underway to introduce a SEND review for schools by the School improvement Advisors this will provide opportunity for challenge and support and enable schools to work together on this agenda. A pilot will take place in the summer term of 2023 and a schedule of visits planned to visit every school between September 2023 and July 2025.</p>	<p>Head of Commissioning for Learning, SMBC</p> <p>Chair of SSSAB</p> <p>Head of Education Outcomes &amp; Intervention, SMBC</p>
5	<p>Work with providers (schools and VCS) to identify the contribution of early help within the graduated approach, alongside SPCV, setting out information within the Local Offer. Offer the Nasen Level 3 training to EY providers in the borough.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> - Best Practice Level 3 for early years has been promoted with settings and some have taken up places. This will continue to be promoted universally but also with individual SENCOs in settings until August 2024.</p> <p>School Nurses support the development of Care Plans in schools for children with medical conditions and support children and young people with issues such as bullying, risky behaviours, emotional wellbeing and mental health. Similarly, the Health Visiting team support families, responding to issues that have been identified early from pregnancy to school-age with onward referral to specialist services where necessary.</p>	<p>Early Years Manager, SMBC</p>

	<p><b>Action:</b> - The Family Hubs offer will be an important enabler for SEND work once it is operational from March 2024 (four hubs, outreach and a digital offer). The Family Hub offer consists of 23 service areas to support families from pre-conception to 25 years with SEND being a key priority focus. There will be four Family Hubs, outreach activities and a borough-wide digital offer. A pilot hub will open in Kingshurst from September 2023 to enable real-time testing and development with the digital offer launch in February 2024 and the Family Hub sites and outreach launching in March 2024.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - Through EdSEND, we will set up a multi-agency workshop for school leaders and staff to work with other professionals to map out and make clear what schools can or are expected to do to support early help within the graduated approach - defining the pathway of support and agency links within the offer; including support available from the voluntary sector. This will take place between March 2024 – September 2024 following the publication of Solihull’s revised graduated approach for review by professionals.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - Childrens social care are investing and developing their early help offer which will include a clear graduated approach with resources from universal to targeted early help to support children and families in the areas impacting most on our children (Poverty, Domestic Abuse, Adult Mental Health, Substance and Alcohol Misuse) through a team around the school approach. This will ensure that children and their families receive the right support at the right time with fewer hand-offs between professionals, so children and families only need to tell their story once; empowering families; and building their resilience to meet their children’s needs. In May 2023 an Early Help team was co-located in the MASH to pick up assessments as they arrive and progress children efficiently and family support workers are being recruited (with 3 starting in August 2023). The Early Help service will also be expanded (in addition to the MASH team) with recruitment to vacant posts (specialist practitioners and a Headteacher coach) and phase 2 (Clinical Psychologist and early help coordinators) beginning in October 2023.</p>	<p>Interim Head of Children’s Public Health, SMBC</p> <p>Chair of EdSEND and Head of SISS, SMBC</p> <p>Head of Service Children’s Social Care, SMBC</p>
<p>6 Develop the locality data dashboard to share with areas, and consider an individual ‘scorecard’ for schools to facilitate a structured conversation regarding inclusion.</p>	<p>This is linked to recommendation 4 and the response.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - The wealth of data held by individual LA teams has also been identified (i.e. schools accessing support pathways, school responses to EHCP consultations, take up of training etc.) which will be interwoven into the data analysis work and shared across teams to inform their work with schools. School Inclusion Scorecards will be in place by Summer 2025 following work with partners to identify data sources already available and those which need to be developed.</p> <p>These scorecards will inform the school improvement conversations through the school SEND reviews.</p>	<p>Head of Commissioning for Learning, SMBC</p>

7	<p>Consider work with the regional Young Researchers and University of Derby to develop a more cohesive strategy for young people’s coproduction, which builds upon existing pockets of good practice and weaves this together across the area- we gave the example of the collective Drop Box used by all partners in one local area, from the ICB, LA and VCS, to collect the views and suggestions of young people – in order that we do not keep asking the same questions from different services, but have a sound body of evidence about the views and aspirations of our young people and children.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> - We have started to develop a “You Said, We Did” page linked to the Local Offer to share views received and activity being developed as a response. Our Voices Heard presented a report on children and young people’s views in March 2023 and we will have a written response to that by August 2023.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - Children and young people are telling us they want to be able to directly talk more to professionals from the LA and health so we are working with Our Voices Heard to understand what they want to talk about, and who to, so we can plan this from September 2023 onwards.</p> <p>The partnership agree we have more work to do on young people’s co-production but feel there is more work on the ground to do first before looking at more ambitious approaches as recommended. However, Our Voices Heard lead will talk to other areas to see what we should aspire to.</p>	<p>Head of SEND, SMBC</p> <p>OVH Project Lead and SEND Operations Manager, SMBC</p>
8	<p>Staff turnover- some areas have a clear SEND induction online training for new staff and could share this with North Northants, as parents that we met felt that this would consolidate consistency of practice including knowing the legal duties of SEND.</p>	<p>There is already an offer for new SENCo’s in early years settings and schools and induction training for LA SEND staff.</p> <p>Health providers (UHB and Solar) use the Council for Disabled Children’s e-learning and bespoke packages for individual teams in understanding SEND frameworks and completion of health advice for EHCPs.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - As part of the Equity, Inclusion &amp; Diversity audit tool package, SSSAB’s Inclusion Group will scope training needs for schools and consider what is already available around SEND and Equality issues for staff. This will take place by December 2023 so training can be planned for by July 2024, but the Head’s Conference in October 2023 will be based upon Diversity as an already identified need.</p>	<p>Chair of SSSAB and of EdSEND</p>
9	<p>Consider the implementation of a joint commissioning strategy and joint commissioning operational plan- such as Telford’s SEND JSNA and joint commissioning plan- contact or the Nottinghamshire commissioning action plan, which features coproduction and codesign within the plan.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> - A SEND JSNA has been created and is available on the Local Offer from the beginning of July 2023 (<a href="#">SEND Strategic Activity</a>) reflecting good practice in other local areas.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - Work is underway to develop a Section 75 agreement between the LA and the ICB for formal joint commissioning and to agree a joint commissioning development plan. This will take place during 2023.</p> <p>Following that, development of a formal joint commissioning strategy which is informed by the needs assessment could be produced.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - EdSEND will provide a consultation group to support and underpin the commissioning strategy for services and support required in school - with a focus at the September 2023 SEND Summit looking at a timeline for commissioning and joint working between health and schools.</p>	<p>Head of SEND, SMBC</p> <p>Head of Children’s Commissioning, SMBC</p> <p>Chair of EdSEND</p>
10	<p>Consider using LA brokerage and consider opportunities for building additional capacity, at zero cost, to support schools ‘on the ground’ with the considerable challenges, that Head Teachers informed us they were facing with managing student behaviour, mental health conditions and attendance.</p>	<p>There are already examples of school-based placements for students in Solihull and trainee EPs work within the LA, but this is not widely shared; nor tapped into more strategically.</p>	<p>Chair of SSSAB</p>

	<p>One example of such capacity building would be to offer school-based placements for clinical students in training. There are several examples of local areas successfully brokering placements for OT, SaLT, Music, Art, Drama therapy, CYP and Mental health nursing students and student social worker placements.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> - An appropriate way to approach this will be explored by the SSSAB Inclusion Group and shared with SSSAB for direction by April 2024 – considering how such placements could be utilised by schools and the wider partnership and how facilitation of this could best support schools.</p>	
11	<p>Develop the Local offer to enable young people and parents/carers to find information regarding transition, including hearing from Our Voices Heard about what young people want and need from the site.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> - Amendments to the Local Offer are being co-produced with SPCV and Our Voices Heard, this includes production of a video that responds to FAQ's that will sit alongside the written information – by the end of 2023.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - A suite of documents including a revised transitions pathway, information leaflet and letter have been drafted and are being reviewed in partnership with SPCV and Our Voices Heard. Once finalised, these documents will provide a clearer narrative of the process and expectations of social care transitions, including a focus on employment and education opportunities. The full suite of information will be launched by the end of 2023.</p> <p>Information and communication will be one of the themes for further discussions with children and young people to understand what changes are needed through 2023.</p>	<p>Head of Service Care &amp; Support, SMBC</p> <p>Head of Service Care &amp; Support, SMBC</p>
12	<p>Consider a Family Leadership approach, such as developed in Leicester City to prepare parents/carers of young people, specifically attending special provisions, to prepare for the PFA and transition pathways- modules available from the regional SEND team, working with SPCV to develop.</p>	<p>The partnership agree we have more work to do on pathways into adulthood but feel there is more work on the ground to do first before looking at more ambitious approaches as recommended.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - It will start by looking at the information young people need to understand their EHCP so they have the knowledge to make their own decisions, where they are able to, once they turn 16 years old. During 2024 work will take place with young people through Our Voices Heard and the EHCP Service to find out what is needed to support this – with a plan in place by December 2024.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - Solihull Careers Hub works with all SEND schools and Alternative Provision as well as SENCO's in mainstream schools, to support them in delivering good careers advice and providing quality and meaningful guidance on transition and pathway options. Each school's annual plan will be based on their priorities identified within their own careers' strategy so actions required will be reviewed during the 2023/24 academic year.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - The Supported Internship programme has developed over the last two years to provide alternative career pathways for young people with employer led work placements alongside training, leading to options for paid employment. Careers Hub/SENCo work is being carried out to promote Supported Internships starting in Autumn 2024 to ensure schools/parents/young people have the best possible advice, alongside effective employer engagement to explain the opportunities to parents and students. This will be a rolling programme of support delivered to year</p>	<p>OVH Project Lead and EHCP Service Manager, SMBC</p> <p>Employment &amp; Skills Programme Manager. SMBC</p> <p>Employment &amp; Skills Programme Manager, SMBC</p>

		10/11 pupils to meet the timetable for each year's new intake of interns in autumn.	
13	Compare CC/CHC with regional neighbour numbers in Midlands NHSE ICSs in order to include Joint/tripartite funding arrangements and to consider gaps in length of time to assess and decide.	<p><b>Action:</b> - Continuing Care numbers will be included in the regular JAND dashboard framework from March 2023. Work is underway with the Continuing Care team to improve joint working and information sharing and regular meetings across health, care and education are now in place.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - Conversations about future arrangements for management of NHS continuing care and joint funding pathways have begun but there is more to do to progress this and this will be taken forward from July 2023.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> - There are also plans to establish a Complex Needs Panel with representation from statutory agencies to agree support plans and funding arrangements. Monthly panels will begin from July 2023.</p>	<p>Associate Director of Nursing Mental Health, Learning Disability and Autism, BSol ICB</p> <p>Associate Director of Nursing Mental Health, Learning Disability and Autism, BSol ICB</p> <p>Interim Assistant Director for Improvement Children's Services, SMBC</p>
14	Consider how person-centred annual reviews and practices can inculcate PfA independence and planning for friendships/community inclusion across the whole system, for example accessing <a href="http://www.skillsbuilder.com">www.skillsbuilder.com</a> in settings, schools and colleges.	We will work with young people to understand what has worked well for them and to identify any challenges (as per response to recommendation 12).	As per recommendation 12.
15	Develop information systems to promote the encrypted sharing of data regarding children and young people between LA and health advice givers.	<b>Action:</b> - Work between the LA and the ICB to develop an information sharing agreement was finalised by the end of July 2023; with the signing of the agreement. Changes in processes are to follow.	Assistant Director Education & Inclusion, SMBC