

**Schools Forum****21 September 2021****Subject: SEND Improvement Programme Update****Confidential: No****1. Purpose**

The SEND Local Area Improvement Programme is to address the areas of concern identified by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission in the SEND Local Area inspection February 2019. This is being delivered through a Written Statement of Action (WSOA). The WSoA includes focus areas within the nine areas of concerns, along with agreed actions to improve the quality and timeliness of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

**2. Summary**

Work continues to gather the evidence of actions and impact from the written statement of action ahead of re-inspection. Workshops have now been held for the identified areas of concern. Work is now ongoing to collate and collect the evidence in order to answer the 'so what' question and fully evidence the impact

**3. EHCP Performance**

Please see EHCP timeliness and Performance report

**4. Local Offer**

The main piece of work to update and review the Local Offer is now complete and the new, fully compliant pages have gone live on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September. A soft launch means that the pages will be live, so people will be able to find them if they are looking for the Local Offer; however the pages are not yet publicised. This is to allow time for the search engines to 'crawl' the pages and for searches for Walsall Local Offer to update across Google and Bing. It also provides time for partners and others to update any links they may have to the Local Offer

**5. SEND Improvement Governance**

As the SEND Improvement Programme, that was put in place following the development of the Statement of Action, draws to a close and we await re-inspection, our focus has begun to shift to how we will continue to improve SEND services for children and young people in Walsall and continue the journey we have been on over the past two years, ensuring that ongoing SEND improvement is embedded in our day to day work.

A paper was presented to the Local Area Improvement Board (LAIB) in July which outlined the work which had been completed to review and redesign the Strategic Education Improvement Board, culminating in the creation of the Walsall Learning Alliance. In the new structure of the Walsall Learning Alliance, SEND will sit as a work stream alongside Raising Standards, Vulnerable Groups, Transition and Recruitment and Retention.

Long term, responsibility for the oversight of continuing SEND improvement will sit with the Walsall Learning Alliance and feed into the wider Walsall Strategic Partnership. These arrangements and the connected governance of the wider partnership are currently being developed and this will provide us with a strong governance roadmap for SEND provision moving forwards.

#### **Current practice:**

- The LAIB will continue in its current format until the re-inspection has taken place. This will ensure the robust oversight of the past two years continues and support the Local Area in its preparations for re-inspection.
- The Walsall Learning Alliance will begin to operate under its new terms of reference and start to provide oversight of SEND improvement alongside the LAIB. The Learning Alliance and LAIB will share an independent chair, ensuring consistency of oversight and, when the time comes, a smooth transition into the new permanent governance arrangements. The future of the LAIB will be re-assessed following the re-inspection.
- The Workstream Leads meeting will continue. As well as continuing to work through the remaining, outstanding actions in the WSoA and ensuring completed actions are embedded, this group will be responsible for ongoing SEND improvement, identifying and implementing ongoing SEND improvement actions and ensuring existing services are delivering good quality support for children and young people with SEND, their parents and carers and professionals. This group will feed into both the LAIB and the Learning Alliance. To reflect the extended responsibilities and Walsall's commitment to ongoing SEND improvement beyond the WSoA and the re-inspection, this group will be renamed **SEND Strategic Improvement Group**.

#### **5. Preparation for re-inspection**

The preparation for re-inspection continues to be a key focus. WSOA Work stream leads have contributed to summarising what actions have been completed and what remains to be completed. A key focus of the next upcoming months will be too evidence impact of the developments.

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