

Health and Wellbeing Board

9 September 2019

SEND Local Area Improvement Programme

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report is to inform and set the context for the local area improvement programme established in response to the local area inspection by Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) on how well the local area identifies, meets the needs and improves outcomes for children and young people (0-25).

2. Background

- 2.1 In 2014 new arrangements, to jointly plan and commission services for children and young people who have special educational needs or are disabled were implemented. Part of this was the implementation of a new system for assessing and determining their needs to ensure that health and social care needs are considered, called an Education, Health and Care plan. There was a four year implementation phase, after which (in 2018) all local areas were expected to have new systems and processes in place to manage the reforms set out in the [SEND Code of Practice: 0-25](#). A new inspection framework was also introduced for Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission to inspect local areas on how well they identify, meet the needs and improve outcomes for all children and young people with SEND.
- 2.2 In February 2019, Walsall Council and Walsall and Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) were subject to such an inspection. The outcome of the inspection (which can be read at <https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50075533>) was that the local authority and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) were required to provide a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) setting out how the nine significant concerns would be rectified. The inspection report was published on 8th May 2019 and the local authority and CCG were jointly responsible for submitting the WSOA within 70 working days (13th August 2019). The WSOA must state clearly details for each action (area of concern), who is responsible for taking each action forward and the time period for completion. The nine areas of concern are;
 - The lack of meaningful partnership and co-production with children and young people, parents, carers, schools and services, which has meant that the code of practice has not been effectively implemented overtime.
 - The poor quality Education Health Care Plans, which do not accurately reflect children's and young people's special educational needs, and do not adhere to the statutory timescales for completion.
 - The poor outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
 - The lack of post diagnostic support for children and young people without the autism spectrum disorder.

- The high and disproportionate numbers of fixed term and permanent exclusions of children and young people with SEND.
 - The lack of appropriate provision and support which has led to significant numbers of children and young people missing from education.
 - The failure to ensure an impartial information, advice and support service for parents in the local area.
 - The poor quality of the local offer, which does not meet the requirements of the code of practice.
 - The week arrangements for joint commissioning, do not consider information about the local area well enough.
- 2.3 The WSoA was submitted to Ofsted on 12th August 2019, one day before the deadline and we await the approval of the Secretary of State. Once approved both the local authority and CCG are required to publish it on their website.
- 2.4 Since 2016 around half of all local areas inspected and 5 out of 7 statistical neighbours have been required to submit a Written Statement of Action.
- 2.5 Progress against the WSoA will be monitored every four months by Advisors appointed by DfE/NHS England and it is expected that Ofsted/CQC will re-inspect the local area between 18 months to 2 years after the date of the first inspection. In order to achieve a successful outcome from any future inspection the local area (including the wider partnership) will need to demonstrate improved outcomes for all children and young people with SEND (0-25) described in the SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 as;

“Our vision for children with special educational needs and disabilities is the same as for all children and young people – that they achieve well in their early years, at school and in college, and lead happy and fulfilled lives.”

This cannot be achieved without effective partnership working, not just between health and the local authority but also with housing services, benefit agencies, voluntary sector, Health watch and the Police. The role of the Health and Wellbeing Board is set out in the DfE publication [SEND Supporting Local and National Accountability](#), which states that;

*“The Health and Wellbeing Board **must** ensure a joint strategic needs assessment (JSNA) of the current and future needs of the whole local population is developed. The JSNA will form the basis of NHS and local authorities’ own commissioning plans, across health, social care, public health and children’s services. This is likely to include specific needs of children and young people with SEN or disabilities.”*

Given this, it is appropriate that the Board should have oversight and an understanding of the data in terms of current and future demands for the population, including SEND that will support the improvement programme, provide the challenge and work together to deliver the improvements for all vulnerable children, young people and families.

3. Governance and Accountability

- 3.1 As part of the WSoA we have set out our governance arrangements for ensuring robust monitoring and accountability (Appendix A).
- 3.2 It has been agreed that the overarching accountable partnership body will be the Health and Wellbeing Board. A Special Educational Needs/ Disability Improvement Board (Local Area SENDIB) has been established to report to the Health and

Wellbeing Board on progress and barriers to achieving the required outcomes. The Local Area SENDIB will meet monthly to review progress and provide robust accountability and challenge. Membership of the Local Area SENDIB will be determined by the respective corporate bodies (Council and CCG) and partners including schools, governors and FACE. An independent Chair will be appointed. The Terms of Reference for the SENDIB are set out in Appendix B. It will be attended by the DfE and NHS England as part of their quality assurance role once every 4 months..

4. Programme themes and workstreams

4.1 The required outcomes to address the nine concerns are summarised below and will be managed by four workstream leads. The WSoA is the action plan to achieve the outcomes and once approved by the Secretary of State and published, will be available to this Board.

CO-PRODUCTION & ENGAGEMENT	IMPROVING OUTCOMES	EHCP ASSESSMENT PROCESSES	JOINT COMMISSIONING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •All stakeholders are engaged in relevant decisions. •Parents/carers and CYP are empowered and feel listened to. •Parents and carers feel well supported and informed.. •Stakeholders influence decision making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CYP with SEND achieve in line with peers and/or make similar progress to that of their peers. •Significantly reduce fixed-term and permanent exclusions for pupils with SEND. •Attendance improves and PA of SEND pupils significantly improves.. •Effective/ functioning FAP processes. •Fewer CYP identified as CME and all CME pupils assigned appropriate placements within 1 month. •All schools/settings and agencies understand and support the graduated approach. • Clear pathways for early identification of needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •LA complies with all relevant timescales. •All EHCPS are high quality –supporting improved outcomes. •All Annual reviews completed within time. •Schools/ professionals know how to provide appropriate professional advice and within timescales. •Professionals know about the local offer and signpost parents/carers. •Fewer Tribunals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Clear, effective and transparent processes for joint commissioning. •High quality, free, independent advice is available to parents and carers. •Clear ASD pathway with a range of appropriate support available. •short break offer supports parents/ carers and CYP. •Robust joint commissioning arrangements for high cost placements.

4.2 A Communications and Engagement Plan has been drawn up (Appendix C), to ensure that co-production is embedded throughout the improvement programme, so that the views of parents/carers / children and young people, providers and commissioners are reflected at every stage of the programme..

5. Recommendations

5.1

1. That the Board agrees to be the overarching accountable partnership body to oversee the progress against the WSoA.

2. That the Board notes the report and agrees to receive three monthly progress reports.

6. Implications for Joint Working arrangements:

- 6.1 This is an opportunity for Board members together with schools, parents/ carers and children and young people to transform the systems, processes, funding and approach to identifying, meeting the needs and improving the outcomes for all children and young people with SEND.

7. Health and Wellbeing Priorities:

- 7.1 The priorities set out in the Walsall Health and Wellbeing Plan refresh, map across to the priorities in the Corporate Plan, which are both relevant to the improvement, programme and, if we get it right will support those priorities:

- Economic Growth – for all people, communities and businesses
- People – Have increased independence, improved health and can positively contribute to their communities
- Children – Have the best possible start and are safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well

- 7.2 The key objectives of the Marmot Review in addressing deprivation and health inequalities within the borough will be positively addressed by sustained progress against the WWSOA required outcome and actions. By

- ✓ Giving every child the best start in life
- ✓ Enabling all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
- ✓ Creating fair employment and good work for all
- ✓ Ensuring a healthy standard of living for all
- ✓ Creating and developing healthy and sustainable communities
- ✓ Strengthening the role and impact of ill-health prevention

- 7.3 Safeguarding: Two areas of concern relate to children and young people (0-25) not being in school/ setting either because they have been excluded or are not attending (Children Missing Education). This increases their vulnerability as well as significantly affecting their life chances.

Background papers

1. [Ofsted/ CQC report February 2019](#)
2. [SEND Code of Practice: 0-25](#)
3. [SEND Supporting Local and National Accountability](#)

Author

Anne Birch, Strategic Improvement Lead SEND

☎ 65XXXX

✉ anne.birch@walsall.gov.uk

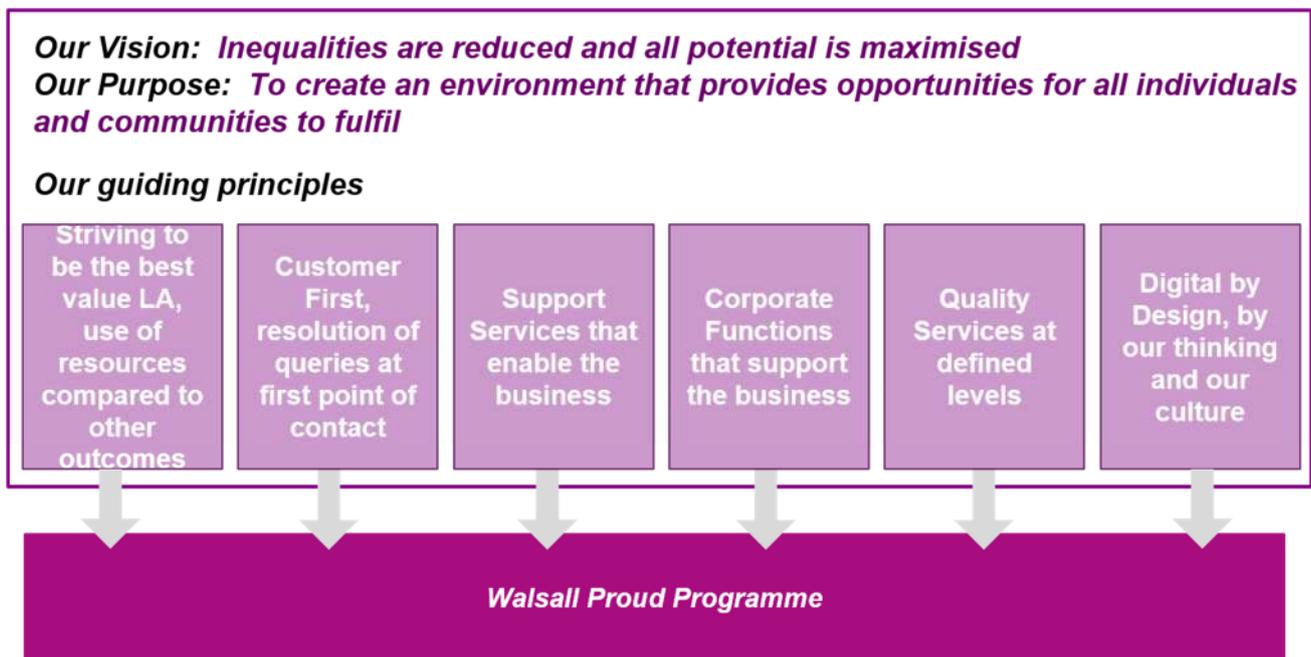
Walsall Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Improvement Programme Communications and Engagement Plan

Introduction

This plan sets out the vision and principles to communicating and engaging with children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) in Walsall.

It includes information on how Walsall Council and NHS Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) will work together to communicate and engage with this audience, as well as their families, carers and stakeholders who provide services to them. It also ensures the information that is provided to this audience is consistent and shared at the right time to meet their needs.

Communications to children and young people with special educational needs, including their families, will align to the guiding principles and corporate priorities detailed in the joint corporate plan below.

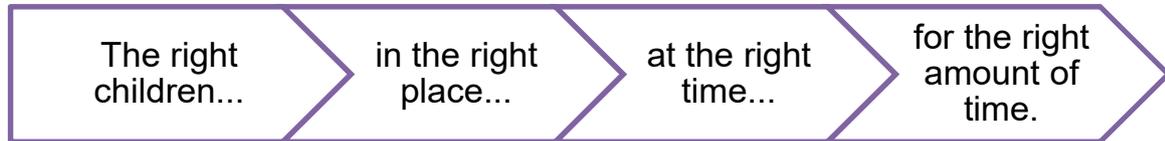


Corporate Priority Campaign Supports (as detailed in the Corporate Plan 2018-2021)

- Economic Growth for all people, communities and businesses.
- People have increased independence, improved health and can positively contribute to their communities.
- Internal Focus - all council services are efficient and effective.
- Children have the best possible start and are safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well.
- Communities are prospering and resilient with all housing needs met in safe and healthy places that build a strong sense of belonging and cohesion.

The Council and CCG are committed to working together to ensure that children have the best start in life and are safe from harm, happy and learning well.

In order to achieve this, the 'Right for Children' vision sets out the need to have:



Together, the Council and CCG will take a person-centred approach, with the views of children, young people, parents and carers taken into account. The approach is based on open communication, so that they know what is going on and why. Their knowledge and experience will also be used to support good decision-making so that organisations can continue to improve communications to children, young people and their families.

In February 2019, health and care services in Walsall were subject to a joint inspection by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission. Their report was published in May and can be found [online](#).

The report focussed on how the Council and CCG identify, meet the needs and improve outcomes for children and young people with identified SEND. Whilst some areas were effective, they identified nine 'significant areas of concern' and now require that the Council and CCG write a Written Statement of Action (WSoA) to identify how they will address the areas of concern.

One key area of concern was around **co-production and engagement** with children and young people, including their families and carers. Through this communications and engagement plan, the Council and the CCG are determined to work together to do things differently.

A key guiding principle to the approach is '**we will do with, and not to**' and this plan sets out how this will be achieved. The local parent carer forum, FACE Walsall, will act as an equal partner to improve communications and engagement and will help facilitate this by organising sessions with families and carers.

Communications and engagement principles:

- strong relationships and shared values in the local area, putting children and families at the heart of all we do to ensure they have a voice and can influence services and provision;
- children, young people and their parents/carers should participate fully in decisions about their lives;
- clear, open and transparent communications;
- equal voices of equal value.

Audiences and communication channels

When planning communications and engagement activities, Council and CCG partners will carefully consider the purpose of the activity and the target audience, to ensure appropriate communication channels are used.

Appendix 1 outlines the audiences and associated communication channels currently identified and Appendix 2 sets out more detail of the engagement activities planned over the next 2 months and will be updated at regular intervals during the improvement programme.

Channels and audiences

Channel	Face to face	Email	Formal reports	Briefings	Letter	Walsall Right 4 Children (WR4C) Newsletter	Everyone email	All staff email	Local Offer	Dedicated web pages	Intranet news	Head Forums	School Link	School Forums	Governors Forum	Social media	Workshops	Focus Groups	Survey	Localities meetings & network
Audience																				
Governance / political																				
Local Authority SEND board	X	X	X																	
Department for Education	X	X	X																	
Council Leader	X	X																		
Portfolio Holder	X	X																		
Cabinet / Corporate Management Team			X	X																
Party Leaders	X	X																		
Overview and Scrutiny Chair	X	X	X	X																
Overview and Scrutiny Committee			X																	
Strategic Education Inclusion Board			X																	
Shadow Cabinet		X		X																
All Councillors				X			X													

Channels and audiences

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Audience																				
Internal and partners																				
SEND team (staff involved in process)	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						X	X		
Education Health and Care Plan Assessment Team and Educational Psychology Service	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						X	X		
Children services staff	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						X	X		
Health and care staff							X	X	X	X	X									
Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group	X	X			X				X	X										
Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust	X	X			X				X	X										
Dudley and Walsall Mental Health NHS Trust	X	X			X				X	X										
Walsall Healthwatch	X	X			X				X	X										
West Midlands Police	X	X			X				X	X										
Voluntary and Community Sector	X	X			X				X	X										

Channels and audiences

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Audience																					
Service users & education provision																					
Family and Carers Empowered (FACE) (official participation)	X	X		X	X				X	X							X	X	X		
Service user groups (support systems)	X	X		X	X				X	X							X	X	X		
Parent / Carers Support Group Coalition	X	X		X	X				X	X							X	X	X		
Service Users (individuals – parents)	X	X		X	X				X	X							X	X	X		
Service Users (individuals – carers)	X	X		X	X				X	X							X	X	X		
Service Users (individuals – under 16)	X	X		X	X				X	X							X	X	X		
Service Users (individuals – over 16)	X	X		X	X				X	X							X	X	X		
Schools and other education settings		X			X				X	X		X	X	X	X						
Post 16 education settings		X			X				X	X			X								
Alternative education providers													X								
Individual Governing Bodies															X						
Multi Academy Trust Boards												X	X								

Channels and audiences

Confederation of schools												X	X							
Media Outlets & General Public								X	X							X				

Engagement Plan

What do we need to do?	Action	Benefit (purpose)	Who with and how	Lead	When	Learning / outcome
Identify and overcome barriers to participation	Training parents and carers to become peer support ambassadors.	Having parents trained and able to support other parents to understand and utilise ways to encourage participation/co-production in the SEND improvement agenda. This will build a wider network of peer support and enable more families to engage and have a voice.	Parents and carers via established and emerging communication links Workshops / training events	MK	January 2020	
	Provide training opportunities for Special Educational Needs Coordinator's/other professionals, to facilitate a range of activities to gain the views of children and young people.	Special Educational Needs Coordinator /other professionals, are able to support children and young people to get their views across. This method is an invaluable resource to capture views and ensure children and young people participate.	Special Educational Needs Coordinator and other professionals Meetings	MK / ET	September 2019	

Engagement Plan

What do we need to do?	Action	Benefit (purpose)	Who with and how	Lead	When	Learning / outcome
	Schools developing own activities to encourage student participation in (Personal, Social and Health Education) PSHE curriculum.	Opportunity for wider student body to engage with special educational needs (SEN) pupils, deepening understanding of SEN issues, building relationships, learning to obtain views, collating and feeding back. Schools can develop their own approach that can benefit the school environment for all students and support delivery of PHSE curriculum. Involvement of schools in this way ensures partner ownership of improvements.	Heads Forum/ Schools Forum Support across school clusters/Multi Agency Trusts and between mainstream and special settings ?	ET	October 2019	

Engagement Plan

What do we need to do?	Action	Benefit (purpose)	Who with and how	Lead	When	Learning / outcome
Identify and develop relationships with employers	Develop links with other council/NHS services to scope opportunities to build relationships with employers for SEND young people	Identify employment opportunities and contacts for SEND young people. Building relationships support businesses to create opportunities for SEND young people. It will also help to identify what support is available for SEN young people, which can be shared with SEND young people and families.	Meet with and agree future working relationship and access to support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walsall Works Black Country Impact Business growth sector team <p>Aim is to develop an 'offer' of information, contacts and pathways for young people.</p>	KW	September 2019	
Develop events schedule / calendar	Develop a section on the Council web page (as an initial step, ultimately leading to improved local offer) that provides details of what is happening, when, and potentially manage bookings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transparency of activity in relation to the WSoA for all stakeholders. Resource for parents and carers to access so they can easily see their opportunities to engage and participate. Oversight of governance and decision-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage web team regarding opportunities to develop. Speak to MT re ongoing management of page. Information to populate web page provided. 	HD HD MK	July/August 2019 July/August 2019 July/August 2019	

Engagement Plan

What do we need to do?	Action	Benefit (purpose)	Who with and how	Lead	When	Learning / outcome
Capture learning and feedback from engagement and participation events.	Develop techniques to capture feedback at end of engagement sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participant feedback is routinely captured in a consistent way and used to inform future sessions. Methods are fun and easily accessible to all abilities. Opportunity to track levels of satisfaction with improvements from parents, carers, children and young people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice from Council Consultation lead. Input from council P&D team regarding producing 'equipment' to facilitate (e.g. emoji cards, voting tubes) Makaton translations (Castle school) 	HD HD MK	July/August 2019	
		<p>Three workshops with health, social care, education and third sector professionals. The aim was to define the component parts of a new model of care to support children & young people who have ASD/LD/MH to stay at home, rather than being admitted to hospital</p> <p>Two engagement events with families and young people. We wanted to learn from their experiences and suggestions on how we should shape services for the future; what things should be part of the</p>	Aim is to develop an model with co-production with the information, to improve experience and pathway for young people with ASD/ LD/MH in Walsall and the Black country	SS/AT	June/ July and August 2019	<p>The principles that emerged from the workshops have under pinned the development of a framework of care</p> <p>The draft model was fed back to all stakeholders</p>

Engagement Plan

What do we need to do?	Action	Benefit (purpose)	Who with and how	Lead	When	Learning / outcome
		service commission for children and young people.				and stakeholders were asked to prioritise the 42 components care using MoSCoW (Must Have, Should Have, Could Have, Won't
Ensure good parent participation in governance arrangements	Agree parent representation at Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration and ownership of improvement journey. • Parent/carer voice included. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-design remit of participation/ Terms of Reference with Parent representative – link to Charter 	AB / MK	July 2019	
	Develop communication channels for wider cascade of information (e.g. Informal 'drop in' sessions for parents to meet Board members and have a conversation, ask questions, get updates etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency of activity to wider parent/carer body. • Offer wider participation opportunities and access to board members. • Opportunities to build relationships with parents/carers and demonstrate partnership working. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree communication channels that will be used with Board. • Included Board communications in the communication planner based on agreed communication channels. 	AB HD	September 2019 October 2019	

Engagement Plan

What do we need to do?	Action	Benefit (purpose)	Who with and how	Lead	When	Learning / outcome
Communicating improvements to parents / carers.	Identify preferred ways improvements are communicated to parents / carers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure accessibility of information (e.g. use of easy read, translations etc.) – seek advice from council equality team. • Continual ‘drip’ of information to parents to evidence the activity being delivered and provide transparency (e.g. post board updates). • Develop sense of ‘done with’ and not ‘done to’. • Continual promotion of opportunities to get involved. • Utilise web page to build evidence (e.g. Vlogs, newsletters). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with equalities team for advice re easy read and translation service. • Ask parents preferred method of communication. • Develop communication channels as required. • Include all opportunities in overarching communication planner. 	<p>MK</p> <p>MK</p> <p>MK / HD</p> <p>HD</p>	<p>October 2019</p> <p>September 2019</p> <p>October onwards</p> <p>August 2019</p>	
Ensure we know and have included all parents / carers / support groups	Identify all parents / carers / support groups known across the partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all partners are aware of all groups and can access them. • Ensure transparency of engagement and communications (equal offer to all). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check with partners their contacts in terms of parents / carers / support groups and forums 	MK	September 2019	



Walsall SEND Local Area Improvement Board

Terms of Reference

This board upholds the principles set out in the DfE publication 'Special educational needs and disability: supporting local and national accountability' of a person-centred, joined up approach informed by the engagement and participation of children, young people and their families.

Purpose

On behalf of all children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) the Walsall SEND Local Area Improvement Board will ensure that opportunities for children and young people with SEND are maximised, enabling them to benefit from high quality services, designed and co-produced with parents, carers and children and young people.

We will work together to assess, understand and address the significant concerns set out in the Local Area Inspection, February 2019.

Objectives

- To champion the importance of co-production and engagement with parents, carers, children and young people.
- To ensure that the nine significant areas of concern are understood by partner agencies and to be clear about what they need to do to address these concerns.
- To ensure that the Local Area is prepared for scrutiny from external agencies, such as DfE, Ofsted and NHS England and can demonstrate improvement and impact.
- To identify, facilitate and deliver additional support and resource as and when required to ensure delivery of the required outcomes set out in the Written Statement of Action.
- To remove any barriers to improvement as identified within the Written Statement of Action and problem solve any issues or barriers identified by the Strategic Improvement Lead.
- To receive reports from the Strategic Improvement lead on progress to meet the required outcomes.
- To maintain regular oversight of the programme risk log.

Administration and Accountability

The Board is accountable to the Health and Wellbeing Board and is responsible for overseeing the effectiveness of the operational delivery to ensure progress on the actions required within the Written Statement of Action.

Walsall Council will provide secretariat for the Board.

Meetings will be held monthly.



Membership and responsibilities

The Board members are of a seniority within the organisation they represent to effect change and identify additional resources as and when necessary.

Members will take responsibility for nominating a substitute if they are unable to attend. Members and their nominees will be well prepared for meetings by reading the papers relevant to the meeting and recorded minutes.

Cabinet Member for Children's Services/ Education and Skills

Executive Director of Children's Services

Executive Director Adult Services

Director of Public Health

Assistant Director for Access and Achievement

Assistant Director for Children's Social Care

Chair of Strategic Education Inclusion Board

Chief Nursing Officer Clinical Commissioning Group

Designated Medical Officer

Regional Director CAMHS

FACE Parent/Carer Forum representative

Adult Service user representative

The Board can invite any other person to attend or present to the Board as it sees fit for the purposes of conducting its business.

Chairing

An independent Chair will be nominated by the local authority and CCG. The Board will nominate and vote on the appointment of a Vice Chair. The Chair will be responsible for:

- Ensuring agendas and focussed and short to facilitate effective engagement and debate.
- Facilitating discussion so that meetings run to time and clear actions arise from debate.
- Co-ordinating the views of Board members to inform, the work programme and agendas of the Board
- Gauging the views and issues of Board members between meetings to facilitate effective decision-making and address blockages.

Substitution/ Virtual Participation

A named member of the Board can send a substitute to a meeting where apologies have been given. Where such notification is to occur the clerk to the meeting must



be notified with details of the person including their role at least 24 hours prior to the meeting so that the Chair can be informed. Substitution will only be permitted on rare occasions where a clash with Board meetings is unavoidable. Frequent substitution will be challenged as this will mean regular non-attendance by key members of the Board.

Non-attendance at 3 consecutive Board meetings will result in the commitment of the member of the Board being challenged with the option for the Board to remove that person due to non-attendance.

Where facilities permit, Board members unable to attend the meeting in person can contribute to the debate and vote via telephone/ video conferencing. Such persons will be required to be present for the whole debate to be able to vote on the matter in question.

Communication

The minutes of Board meetings will be circulated to members of the Board. In exceptional circumstances, some matters may be considered confidential. These will be flagged in advance of meetings, be watermarked and minuted as a separate discussion.

The Board will, when appropriate, publicise the work it is doing and its impact through other means including agreed press releases and communication with partners.

It will be for each member of the Board to develop internal mechanisms to communicate the work and key decisions of the Board within their respective organisations. A communication plan will accompany any key decision made by the Board to ensure effective and prioritised communication of significant issues.

Prepared by: Anne Birch, Strategic Improvement Lead SEND

Approved by: Sally Rowe, Executive Director Children's Services, Walsall Council

Sarah Shingler, Chief Nursing Officer, Clinical Commissioning Group

Date: 25th July 2019