



Walsall Council

Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on: **3 October 2023 at 6.00 P.M.**

Meeting to be held via: **Council Chamber, Walsall and Microsoft Teams**

Public access to meeting via: <https://www.walsallcouncilwebcasts.com>

MEMBERSHIP

Chair

Councillor S. Ditta
Councillor P. Gill
Councillor I. Hussain
Councillor S.B. Hussain
Councillor P. Kaur
Councillor N. Latham
Councillor E. Morgan
Councillor L. Rattigan
Councillor C. Towe
Vacancy x2

NON-ELECTED VOTING MEMBERS

Lichfield Diocesan
Representative
Archbishop of
Birmingham's
Representative
Parent Governors

Vacancy
Vacancy
Vacancy
Vacancy
Vacancy

NON-ELECTED NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Primary Teacher
Representative
Secondary Teacher
Representative

Ms Sharon Guy
Ms Wendy Duffus

PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Councillor Mark Statham – Education and Skills

Democratic Services, Council House, Lichfield Street, Walsall, WS1 1TW
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www.walsall.gov.uk

ITEMS FOR BUSINESS

1.	Apologies To receive apologies for absence from Members of the Committee.	
2.	Substitutions To receive notice of any substitutions for a Member of the Committee for the duration of the meeting.	
3.	Declarations of interest and party whip To receive declarations of interest or the party whip from Members in respect of items on the agenda.	
4.	Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended) To agree that the public be excluded from the private session during consideration of the agenda items indicated for the reasons shown on the agenda (if applicable).	
5.	Minutes To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2023.	<u>Enclosed</u> pp.5-11
6.	SEND Developments Including EHC Systems – Report To receive a report on the developments and achievements by the SEND (Special Educational Needs) Service during the 2022/23 academic year.	<u>Enclosed</u> pp.12-37
7.	Inclusion Hub Update – Report To receive a report on the work carried out by the Inclusion Hub during the 2022/23 academic year.	<u>Enclosed</u> pp.38-43
8.	Transitions in Special Educational Needs – Report To receive a report on the work carried out by the SEND Service in relation to key transitions for children and young people with EHCPs (Education and Health Care Plans) during the 2022/23 academic year.	<u>Enclosed</u> pp.44-49
9.	Learning Recovery – Report To receive a report on the key DfE (Department for Education) and LA (Local Authority) programmes designed to aid learning recovery in schools and educational settings.	<u>Enclosed</u> pp.50-58
10.	Recommendation Tracker To review progress with recommendations from previous meetings.	<u>Enclosed</u> pp.59-61
11.	Areas of Focus To review the Committees Work Programme and the Forward Plans for Walsall Council and the Black Country Executive Committee.	<u>Enclosed</u> pp.62-72
12.	Date of next meeting The date of the next meeting will be 21 November 2023.	

The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012

Specified pecuniary interests

The pecuniary interests which are specified for the purposes of Chapter 7 of Part 1 of the Localism Act 2011 are the interests specified in the second column of the following:

Subject	Prescribed description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	<p>Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by a member in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of a member.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Regulations (Consolidation) Act 1992.</p>
Contracts	<p>Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority:</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	<p>Any tenancy where (to a member's knowledge):</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the relevant authority;</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.</p>
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:</p> <p>(a) that body (to a member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and</p> <p>(b) either:</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(ii) if the share capital of that body is more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.</p>

Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended)

Access to information: Exempt information

Part 1

Descriptions of exempt information: England

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes:
 - (a) to give any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.
8. Information being disclosed during a meeting of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee when considering flood risk management functions which:
 - (a) Constitutes a trades secret;
 - (b) Its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the risk management authority);
 - (c) It was obtained by a risk management authority from any other person and its disclosure to the public by the risk management authority would constitute a breach of confidence actionable by that other person.

**Minutes of the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee,
Conference Room 2, Walsall Council House.**

Thursday 5 September 2023 at 6.00 P.M.

Committee Members present:

Councillor S. Ditta (Chair)
Councillor I. Hussain
Councillor P. Kaur
Councillor E. Morgan
Councillor L. Rattigan
Councillor P. Smith
Councillor C. Towe

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Mark Statham – Education and Skills

Officers Present:

Coleen Male – Interim Executive Director of Children’s
Sharon Kelly - Director Access and Inclusion
Rob Thomas - Head of Access
Judith Nash – Head of SEND
Jack Thompson – Democratic Services Officer

Welcome and introductions were made.

Before the first item the Chair invited the new Interim Executive Director of Childrens Services to introduce themselves to the Committee.

Additionally, the Chair invited the Portfolio Holder for Education and Skills to read out a statement on the RAAC (Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete) and how the Borough’s schools were affected. The Portfolio Holder for Education and Skills informed the Committee that there was no RAAC within the Council maintained schools and thus none of these school had been closed.

08 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors P. Gill, S.B. Hussain and N. Latham.

09 Substitutions

Councillor T. Jukes substituted for Councillor S.B. Hussain and Councillor F. Hassan substituted for Councillor N. Latham.

10 Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

There were no declarations of interest or party whip.

11 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

There were no agenda items requiring the exclusion of the public.

12 Minutes

A copy of the Minutes of the meeting held on the 29 June 2023 were submitted [annexed].

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2023 a copy having previously been circulated, be approved and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

13 Children not in School Update Report

The Chair invited the Portfolio Holder for Education and Skills to introduce the report. The Portfolio Holder for Education and Skills informed the Committee that the Council would be focusing on encouraging good attendance at schools within the Borough. Additionally, that the report was made up of four parts: Attendance, Children Missing in Education (CME), Elective Home Education (EHE) and, Exclusions and Suspensions [see annexed].

Attendance

The Head of Access highlighted the salient points within the attendance sections of the report, this included:

- That it was the legal responsibility of every parent to ensure that their children attended school;
- It was the expectation of the Department for Education (DfE) that the guidance issued subsequent to the withdrawal of the Schools Bill would be followed by local authorities (LA);
- The Council understood that attendance needed to be improved and there needed to be focus on unauthorised absences;
- The DfE School Resource Management Advisor was complimentary of the work the Council was doing;

The Chair invited Members to ask questions on the attendance section of the report. From the discussion which took place between Members and officers the following key points were made:

- The Council worked closely with schools within Borough through the Walsall Learning Alliance and termly meetings were arranged to help schools with attendance. This included providing guidance documentation and forms to help determine the support schools received;
- The Council did not approach parents directly regarding their child's attendance;
- The DfE worked with the Council to target schools with attendance problems however none of the schools in the Borough had met the threshold for intervention from the Department;
- There was a national push for schools to use the national attendance portal run by the DfE to report their attendance daily;
- The Council recognised that attendance had not been a priority for the Council in the past however there had been improvements in comparison to the Councils statistical neighbours. Moreover, the data in the report from 2021/22 did not reflect the current work the Council was undertaking with schools, and it would take time to see if these efforts would affect attendance figures;
- There could be many complex reasons why a child's attendance at school would be lower than average and the Council in the first instance would try to support parents and only take legal action as a last resort. Attendance issues were treated on a case-by-case basis and this approach was in line with Walsall Right 4 Children;
- The Covid-19 Pandemic had increased anxiety in children, and this had affected attendance. In response the Council was working with partners around mental health in children and its effect on school attendance;
- There had been concerns from parents in relation to SEN placements and this had an effect on absences but there were more SEN special school places planned;
- There needed to be a culture shift in the perception that children with SEND and/or EHCPs should be placed in a special school instead of a mainstream school as the first option. The Council was working to change this culture as it was the legal right of all children to a mainstream school place first, but the Council would work to the needs of the child by working with parents to ensure that a child was placed in the right provision.

Children Missing in Education (CME)

The Head of Access highlighted the salient points on the Children Missing in Education (CME) sections of the report, this included:

- That the term Children Missing in Education is not the same as the statutory term Children Missing from Education, the former being

children who are on a school role but are not attending or those considered under EHE (Elective Home Education) but not receiving adequate teaching, the latter being those children not on a school role;

- There were 309 children classed as CME;
- 45 of the children classed as CME were those who were EHE but had not demonstrated that they were being taught sufficiently or had provided no evidence of teaching at all;
- The number of CME children fluctuated as children moved into the Borough.

The Chair invited Members to ask questions on the CME section of the report, from the discussion which took place between Members and officers the following key points were made:

- In the past the data the Council held on CME was poor;
- There were only 36 children who had been missing education for more than six months;
- There was currently no national data on CME, the DfE was currently collating this data for the first time, but the data had not been published yet;
- The Council was proactive in tracking children who entered the Borough and placed a child on the CME register as soon as they were made aware;
- It was a criminal offense to not comply with a School Attendance Order;
- Children would be referred to MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) if there were any safeguarding concerns;
- The Council operated a CME board which partners attended and coordinated information on children that needed to be referred to the CME team;
- The Council did identify those children living within the Borough who were not on role at a school through strong partnership work, with Council officers from different services who carry out house visits being trained to recognise children missing education and then refer them to the CME team;
- The Council adopted a 'tell it once approach' to avoid the same message being given to parents multiple times a month. Meaning that another Council officer who has regular contact with the child's family could relay information on behalf of the CME team.

Elective Home Education (EHE)

The Head of Access briefly introduced the EHE (Elective Home Education) section of the report, following which a discussion between Members and Officers took place. The following key points included:

- It was a positive choice for a parent to Electively Home Educate their child;

- There was no statutory register of children who were EHE however under the withdrawn Schools Bill children who were EHE would have been registered on the statutory Children not in School register;
- The DfE and the Education Secretary were in favour of the register being implemented but a parliamentary bill would need to be passed first;
- There had been an increase across all local authorities in the number of EHE children;
- The Council recognised that mental health was a factor in the increase in EHE and the Council had responded by hiring an emotional literacy officer to help children back into school with one-to-one support;
- A referral from a school or parent to move a child into EHE would trigger a meeting between the Council, parents and the schools to make sure that the parents understood the responsibility of EHE and whether mitigations could be made to keep a child in school;
- The EHE team at the Council was working to understand the reasons why parents were moving their children outside of mainstream school and how they could be encouraged to return their child to mainstream education;
- A child in EHE did not receive any funding for standardised exams, such as GCSEs or A-Levels. However, Walsall College offered support for year 10 and 11 examinations on a part-time basis for EHE children;
- The Post 16 team at the Council did also support children who were referred to them in relation to careers including those who were educated at home;
- There were now three members of the EHE team and this was up from just one member;
- The gender breakdown for EHE children was 52% female and 48% male;
- The DfE policy advisor worked closely with local authorities and were aware that there was support for a statutory register to be implemented by the government for EHE;
- There were complex and overlapping reasons why parents may wish to withdraw their child from mainstream education. One of these reasons being philosophical, that some parents did not believe in standardised teaching or education and that there were better alternatives for educating their children. There was some local data on their academic performance for EHE children but no national data on EHE children's academic performance was collected.

Exclusions and Suspensions

The Head of Access highlighted the salient points on the Exclusions and Suspensions section of the report, this included:

- That only a headteacher had the authority to suspend or permanently exclude a child who attended their school;
- There were steps a headteacher must take before permanently excluding a child;

- The Council was working to use data to understand if there was any more that could be done to help children before being excluded and having to appeal the decision.

The Chair invited Members to ask questions on the Exclusions and Suspensions section of the report, from the discussion which took place between Members and officers the following key points were made:

- The Chair expressed their concern that they had been contacted by parents in relation to children with ADHD not being able to use fidget objects to manage their behaviour and they were allowed to be deliberately destructive, increasing the likelihood of suspension or permanent exclusion;
- Parents were not part of the Walsall Learning Alliance, however the Council were contacting parents whose children had been permanently excluded to understand why;
- The Walsall Learning Alliance leaders had agreed to focus on exclusions and understood that the data showed that there was an issue with proportion of exclusions for children with SEN;
- Additionally, the Walsall Learning Alliance had been exploring the idea of the Lincolnshire model which involved schools signing up to a memorandum of understanding for a no exclusions policy;
- The Council was providing support to schools to implement a graduated approach for behaviour for SEN pupils so that they could be provided reasonable adjustments;
- The Council had been successful at challenging permanent exclusions through the appeals process, however the Council did not have the power to put a child back on a school role and instead the schools in question were fined.

A discussion took place between Members and Officer regarding a request from Members to receive a breakdown of pupil attendance figures for each school in the Borough. The Director for Access and Inclusion informed the Committee that whilst schools share this data with each other through the Walsall Learning Alliance, advice would have to be sought before presenting this information to the Committee as the data was held by the schools and permission had not been given for that information to be shared publicly. At the end of the discussion both the Director of Access and Inclusion and the Democratic Services Officer agreed to write to Members once advice on this matter had been clarified.

Resolved:

- **That the Cabinet write to the Secretary of State for Education to implement the Children Not in School Register as soon as possible.**
- **To request that Cabinet asks that the Government pay the fees for children in Elective Home Education to sit standardised examinations.**
- **That the Cabinet note the concerns of the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the disproportionately lower school attendance figures of boys, SEN pupils and those pupils receiving free school meals.**
- **That the Committee receive an updated report on attendance in the future. An interim report being made available to Members of the Committee in January and a full school term update being presented at its meeting in February 2024.**
- **That the Committee receive the following additional information:**
 - **The number of ongoing legal proceeding in relation to school attendance orders;**
 - **To seek advice on whether individual school attendance data can be shared with the Committee and to write to Members once this determination had been made;**
 - **To be given the percentage of change in the Total EHE Registrations table comparing the Council with regional and statistical neighbours;**
 - **To provide data on the number of referrals for exclusions to the Councils Inclusion Hub in the report on the Hub to be presented at the next meeting of the Committee in October.**

14 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting would be 3 October 2023.

There being no further business, the meeting terminated at 20:19.

Signed:

Date:

3rd October, 2023

SEND Developments Including EHC Systems - Report

Ward(s): ALL

Portfolios: Education and Skills - Councillor Mark Statham

1. Aim

This report will provide an overview of the developments and achievements by the SEND Service (Special Educational Needs) during the 2022/23 academic year.

2. Recommendations

For the committee to note the impact of the work carried out by the SEND Service including the developments within EHC (Education Health and Care) Systems.

3. Report detail – know

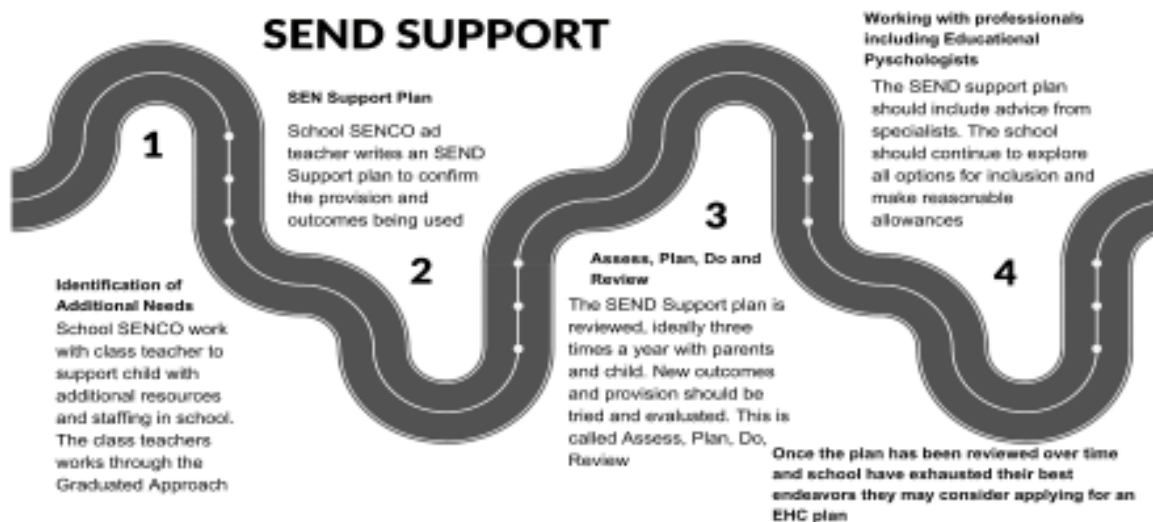
3.1 Information to know and understand regarding SEND and EHC plans.

SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and EHC (Education, Health, and Care) plans are systems in the United Kingdom that provide support and assistance to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The SEND system is designed to identify and support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities from birth to the age of 25. Special educational needs (SEN) refer to learning difficulties or disabilities that may require additional support beyond what is typically provided in mainstream education. The legal framework around SEND is the Code of Practice 2015. This document confirms all statutory and best practice. There are two stages of identification within the SEND System.

Stage 1 SEND Support

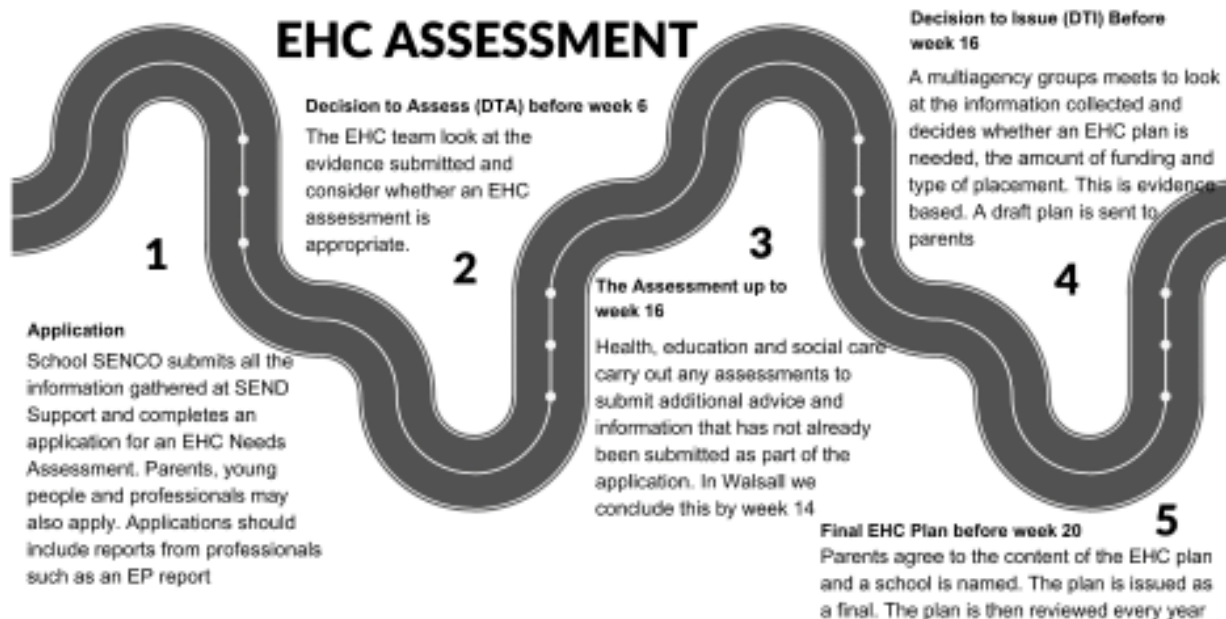
SEND support in schools is a vital system designed to cater for all additional needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities. It begins with the identification and assessment of students requiring additional assistance, followed by the creation of individualised SEND support plans. These plans outline the extra resources, teaching methods and additional support necessary to help children succeed in their education. Inclusive education is a fundamental principle, promoting the inclusion of children with SEND in mainstream classrooms whenever possible, fostering interaction and learning alongside their peers. SENCOs (Special Educational Needs Coordinators) must hold regular reviews, collaborate with parents and specialists, adhere to legal frameworks, and implement transition planning to ensure that each child's unique needs are met. Schools must implement a 'graduated approach' which, depending on needs, ensures support is increased progressively. This can not be bypassed. All children

must go through cycles of the graduated approach before a recognition of higher needs. Diagnosis and labels do not confirm provision required and are not a indicator or prerequisite to moving onto higher levels. There must always be an emphasis on inclusive education, aiming to include children with SEN in their local mainstream schools whenever possible.



Stage 2 EHC (Education, Health, and Care) System

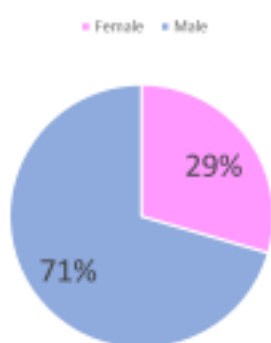
The EHC system is a legal framework that provides more comprehensive support for children and young people with complex or severe special educational needs and disabilities. EHC plans are for individuals who require additional help beyond what is available through the SEND Support system. Children’s needs are met through an EHC plan which is a legally binding document that outlines how the child or young person’s educational, health, and social care needs will be met. There is a twenty-week coordinated assessment process which involves educational, health, and social care professionals, as well as parents or caregivers and the child or young person. During the assessment, there is a legal duty for everyone involved to work together to understand the needs, outcomes, and provision. This is a combined duty and does not rest solely on the EHC team. It is the EHC team’s duty to collate the information provided from the assessments to draft an EHC plan and find a suitable placement. The EHC plan must focus on the child or young person’s goals and aspirations, with an emphasis on achieving positive outcomes and preparing for adulthood. The statutory assessment is an evidence based system and decisions can only be made on information and advice supplied. Every year the EHC plan is reviewed under the Annual review process. This is used to monitor progress and update the EHC plan as needed.



In summary, the SEND system is a broader framework for identifying and supporting children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, while the EHC system is a more specific and intensive support mechanism for those with complex needs. Both systems should work seamlessly to ensure that every child and young person has access to the appropriate level of education and support that they need to reach their full potential.

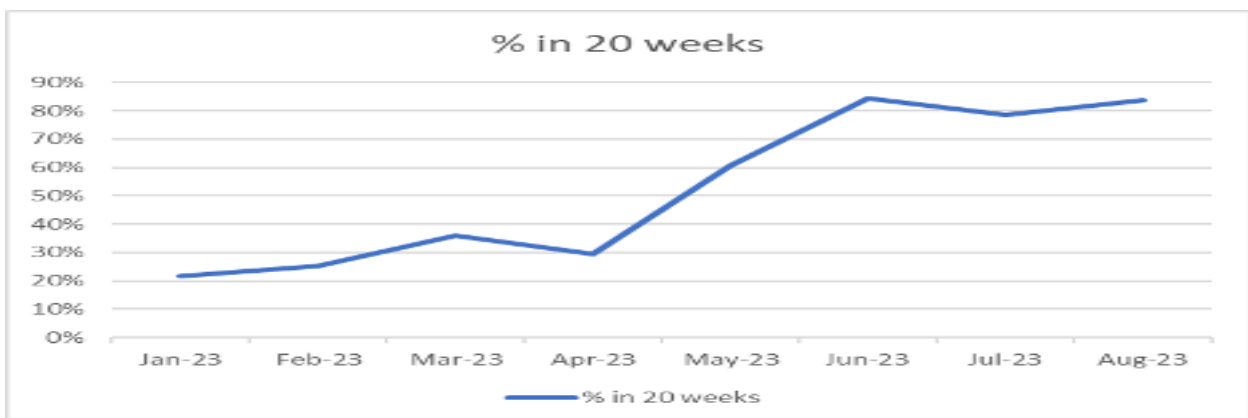
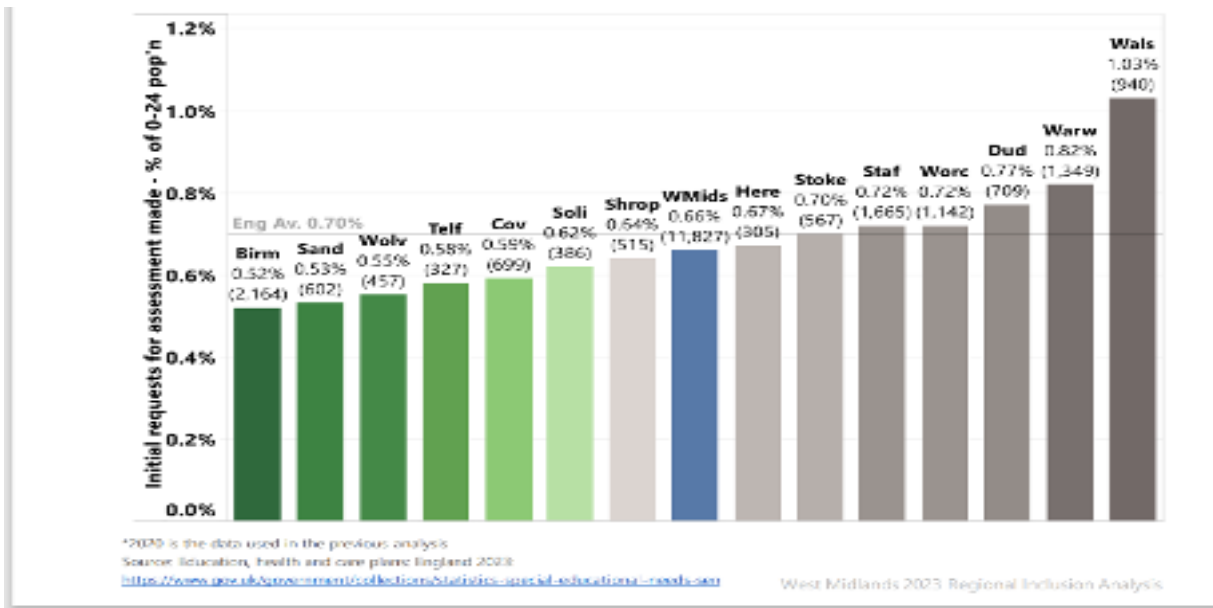
3.2 What do we know about SEND in Walsall Children with an EHC Plan in Walsall

EHC plans in Walsall by Gender



As of August 2023, there are 4086 children and young people with an EHC plan. 71% of EHC plans are allocated to boys and 29% to girls. 11-year-old boys are the highest group with an EHC plan.

Walsall has, by far, the highest regional request rate at around one in every hundred of 0 to 24 year olds. This has doubled from 0.50% in 2020. Requests for statutory assessments have continued to grow year on year. In 2021 there were 647 requests, in 2022, there were 940. To date in 2023, there have already been 855 requests with an average of 106 per month. In 2022, the average requests per month was 78. This year, this has increased to 122 requests per month. Most requests come from schools for children between three and four years, with a further spike in requests for children aged 10 and 11 years. These align with key transition points in primary education. The majority of requests come from schools.



EHC Timeliness

In September 2022, there were 560 open cases, with 282 being out of time and over twenty weeks. In August 2023, there were 444 open statutory assessments in the pathway, with only 31 of these being out of time. This is a significant improvement and reflects the improvement plan which was implemented in 2022. Our timeliness has improved considerably. In January 2023, only 22% of assessments were completed in time. This has steadily risen throughout 2023 as the improvement project has continued to be successful. In August 2023, 84% of plans were completed in time. The national average currently stands at 49.1%. Walsall EHC team have remained consistently above national average since May

2023. Most of the issues with timeliness relate to finding school places and securing EP reports. Both of these are a national issue and impact all local authorities.

3.3 Where we were (2021)

Following the SEND reinspection in July 2022, Walsall successfully removed seven out of the originally identified nine areas of weakness leaving two areas for improvement. These focus on Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) and the Local Offer (a central area that brings together relevant information and advice for parents and young people with SEND) and are managed on a government approved plan known as the Accelerated Progress Plan (APP). Following the reinspection, the SEND service recognised that the EHC team was highly dependent on a high level of interim staff, which resulted in high staff mobility and inconsistencies in skills and knowledge around the SEND legislation. The high staff turnover led to a lack of clarity around statutory duties and expectations in service delivery. Families did not have an allocated case worker which made communicating with the team confusing and responsibilities and tasks were unclear.

At the time, EHC plans were drafted using an online tool called the EHC Hub, but as this was an automated process, the plans often lacked individuality and personalisation. The quality of the EHC plans was inconsistent. It was recognised that there was a lack of clarity about how decisions should be made and often decisions lacked transparency and equitability. Statutory timescales were missed due to a lack of clarity around the timescales and response time to complete and issue a final EHC plan. There were bottle necks in the system which created backlogs in assessment and review of EHC plans. Schools commonly did not send paperwork in time and misunderstood the statutory SEND system.

3.4 Where we are now – Our Key Achievements

Recruitment and retention strategy for the SEND Service including EHC team and EP team

The EHC team is now a fully permanent team with clear roles and responsibilities. Walsall EHCs have been reorganised into four geographical regions with a fifth team dedicated to support our most vulnerable pupils with an EHC plan. Each area consists of a trained Senior Locality Lead, one EHC officer working solely on statutory assessments and a further two EHC officers focused on Annual Reviews. EHC Officers are known as Family Link Officers (FLO) and have a named caseload allocated by family postcode. This means that if a family has more than one child with an EHC plan, they have the same FLO to ensure consistent communication and improved working relationships.

Implementing a strong senior management team who are experienced and able to confidently lead the service.

The SEND Service Management team is also fully permanent with the promotion of four existing staff to Senior Locality Leads and the recruitment of a permanent EHC team manager. All the team took part in a specialist training course regarding SEND law and legislation called IPSEA level 1 (Independent Provider of Special

Education Advice). The senior team are completing the NASEN (National Association of Special Educational Needs) casework officer award which is a nationally recognised qualification. More experienced members of the team are also completing the Level 3 IPSEA law training.

Building a permanent team with clear values and systems who are supported with quality training.

We have introduced a strong and robust induction framework for all staff, including a training schedule and step by step introduction into the roles. All the team have completed the Council for Disabled Children (CDC) E-Learning modules on SEND Awareness level 1 and 2 as part of their induction. We have written a Walsall specific EHC Officers handbook and introduced a Virtual Training Room on Teams where all key documents are stored. We have ensured a strong support network for all staff which has led to a strong, secure and robust team with high moral. The principal Educational Psychologist and EP (educational psychology) team began their recruitment and were able to recruit two senior EP's and further EP assistants. This is against a national backdrop of EP recruitment difficulties.

The Designation Medical Officer (DMO) is a critical stakeholder in the service and leads operational and steering groups. The SEND Service and DMO work in a close network with daily contact. Developments have been made in health to recruit additional staff to support the effectiveness of the Health gateway

Clearing the backlog of EHC assessments and improving statutory timeliness but removing bottlenecks to the pathway.

There has been much improvement with the EHC assessment systems which has led to the backlog being cleared. In November 2022, there were 313 cases outside of 20 weeks in a backlog, however in August 2023 there are 33 cases. All of which are below 24 weeks and are because of difficulty securing placements and delays in professional reports. The service now works to pre-emptive self-imposed deadlines which ensures that most decisions and actions are completed well before the statutory time frame. This has removed all the historic bottlenecks. The team have implemented temporary solutions to succinct decision making.

Partnership working with health colleagues and timely quality health advices into EHC plans.

Although EHC Plans are no longer drafted on the Hub, the programme is still useful in terms of case management and as a central coordination point for education psychology, health and social care advice. Health professionals meet weekly to discuss individual applications and triage most appropriate and relevant advice for EHC. Data is kept on a database and monitored by the DMO to track requests and monitor health advice. The Health gateway panel meets every Friday with representatives from therapies, Community Paediatrics and school health and health visiting. In January, Health advice on average were returned 86% within 6 weeks. This is a significant improvement from January 2022, when health advice was returned at less than 14% in time. The Health Gateway has been hailed as a huge success and Walsall's DMO trains our regional partners on how to implement similar systems.

We have a range of groups which help strategic planning and working and ensure improvements are being driven forward and support with timeliness. Our

Operational Partnership Group is attended by key leads from health, EHC, education, families, social care and early help. These meetings explore and unblock operational barriers. The Coproduction and Strategic Workshops look to future practice and ensure ongoing development and implementation of longer term ideas.

Increased personalisation and quality assurance of EHC plans through the new plan template.

We coproduced a new template of the EHC plan with parents. All EHC new plans are written on this template which has been received positively and this has led to greater personalisation and quality.

All the EHC team have completed Good Quality Plan Training and work to agreed standards and expectations within our Quality Assurance Framework and Exemplar EHC plan. Guidance for quality Social Care and Health Care guides have been published and all health staff completed the CDC EHC plan training. The Health Gateway currently assure all advices and funding before they come to the EHC team.

We have established a Quality Assurance Framework which ensures plans are dip sampled each month and feedback and development given where necessary.

Genuine coproduction and engagement with a wide range of families and young people.

We have worked hard to improve our relationships with families and young people, recognising that this was a key area which would support and strengthen future work. This work has been recognised as outstanding by the Department of Education. We held a large coproduction day which was widely attended and resulted in all stakeholders now having an understanding of the importance of genuine coproduction. We have held regular smaller coproduction meetings and ensured that parents are seen as strategic partners in all groups. Our second Coproduction Conference is booked for the 5th October. All forms, documents and information are fully co-produced from the outset including our new EHC plan and paperwork. Young people groups have been established who also regularly support the service with feedback and design. Some young people recently took part in interviewing for the new EHC team manager. Regular 'you said we did' sessions and breakfast meetings with parents have ensured concerns are recognised and acted on. From being a significant concern, our joint working is now a strength, and we continue to ensure this is at the heart of our vision and aims.

We have improved our communication by ensuring updates and information are disseminated to schools and families through multiple channels, including a termly newsletter, a SENCO mailing list, a SENCO teams area, and a Schools Bulletin and Internal Weekly Directors Briefing.

Vulnerable Children and Young People

Although all children and young people with an EHC plan have a higher level of vulnerability, we recognise there are groups of children, due to family circumstances or context places them at higher risk. These children are managed within a specialised area within the EHC team. There is a dedicated Senior Lead

and three EHC officers. This team is targeted for future staffing growth in 2024. The team focus on outcomes and provision for children and young people who have an EHC plan and who have one of more of the additional identifiers of vulnerability:

- Recognised as Child Protection (CP), Child in Need (CIN) or Looked After to Walsall (LAC)
- Low to no attendance (below 55%) /child missing education (CME)
- Children missing from education. (CMFE)
- Have two or more permanent exclusions.
- Electively Home Educated (EHE)
- Know to the Youth Offending Service (YOT)
- Young People Not in Education or Training (NEET)

Specific EHC officers ensure that these children and young people are supported to achieve the outcomes and that provision and placements are secure. They attend annual reviews and support families to plan ahead for key transitions. This is a new team within the EHC service and is establishing links with the Access Service and Virtual School. It is strengthening knowledge and understanding around these children and is a key focus for 2023 to 2024.

In addition, all children with an EHC plan have a vulnerability score which is produced from a range of council data. This allows us to monitor and review all children to ensure that they are being supported appropriately.

Decision Making

The Decision-Making Group for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) was created to serve a crucial purpose in our commitment to ensure the right support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The first group went ahead on the 6th September. The group is formed with the managers of the service, the Educational Psychology team members and for Children in Care the Head of the virtual School. Cases are presented by Family Liaison Officers and the evidence is considered and discussed to decide whether the application meets the threshold required for a positive outcome.

The Decision-Making Group make decisions on:

1. Decision to issue EHCP's (DTI)
2. Change of educational placement.
3. Requests for additional funding or large personal budget requests.

The group meets on a Wednesday morning and a separate group runs on a Monday to discuss decisions for Children in Care. The group is necessary to ensure that the Local Authority are making robust and consistent decisions that are lawful and in the best interests of the child or young person.

Regular reports will be provided to the SEND leadership team, contain case summaries, details of EHCP-related decisions, and insights into emerging trends and challenges. In our commitment to continuous improvement, the Decision-Making Group will undergo regular review to ensure the continued relevance and effectiveness of our decision-making processes.

Early Years (0 to 5 years) Special Educational Needs (EYSEND)

The Early Years Advisory Team consists of three Early Years teachers and three Early Years Learning Support practitioners. Their role is to ensure the best possible start in education for all children in our community. Over the last academic year there have been some key developments for early years providers.

The Early Years Assessment Toolkit was launched in February this year and has quickly proven instrumental in assisting practitioners and settings with assessing children's needs or potential needs. This toolkit is essential in adopting a graduated approach to support children and is a mandatory assessment when requesting the assistance of our dedicated Early Years SEND teachers or when seeking additional funding.

Our commitment to reviewing Early Years High Needs Funding is ongoing, with the implementation of an interim funding system focused on Early Years Inclusion. Notably, requests for High Needs funding are now exclusive to children being considered for an EHCP assessment. We are actively collaborating with Early Years Headteachers to develop a more effective funding system to ensure timely and appropriate support for children in need.

SEND Support - The Graduated Approach

The Inclusion Development Lead (IDL) was appointed at the end of March 2023 and has created an up-to-date setting-based SENCO / Inclusion Lead database. The IDL continues to establish and develop relationships with our educational partners across all phases. An Inclusion Steering Group was established in February 2023. This group consists of 16 SENCOs from a range of educational settings across the borough. This is an established and effective working group who support Walsall's programme of improvement and assist in the co-production of the Early Inclusion Framework. The Inclusion Steering Group meet every 4 weeks during term time. Further updates and communication take place regularly via a designated TEAMS Page.

The IDL oversees the co-production and implementation of the 'Early Inclusion Framework'. The Early Inclusion Framework outlines Walsall's local area approach to improving setting-based support, pathways and provision for children and young people with SEND. This programme of improvement incorporates a range of resources, tools and training opportunities which support the implementation of a coherent and consistent Graduated Approach.

The Early Inclusion Framework current consists of:

1. The Baseline Provision Audit. This audit provides an opportunity for shared professional learning and development. It supports the SEN/Inclusion Team to understand the challenges facing local schools regarding meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND. This process helps to identify best practice and areas where schools may require additional, SEN based support, tools or training.
2. Ordinarily Available Provision Guidance. This is the provision that the local authority expects to be made available for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities in early years settings, schools and colleges. However, the provision and strategies outlined is undoubtedly of benefit to all learners. The guidance is linked to the 4 areas of SEND and provides a list of possible strategies for Children and Young People with

emerging and increasing needs. Professionals can use this guidance to consider different approaches to create a more personalised plan as part of a Graduated Approach (Assess, Plan, Do, Review) which increases in intensity in line with need. Aspects from this guidance can be used to form key strategies within an SEN Support Plan and supports practitioners with ideas that could be useful for tracking and recording progress and outcomes for specific Children and Young People.

3. SEN Profile of Need Guidance. This guidance has been designed to give a clearer understanding of a child or young person's individual needs and will be used as a profiling tool. The guidance gives a general indication of the level of provision that may be required.
4. Walsall SEN Support Plan. The Walsall SEN Support Plan should identify how the delegated budget and access to services through the Local Offer can be made to support a child/young person, as well as how a range of professionals are offering support. Although the Walsall SEN Support Plan is not a statutory document, it is the document which educational settings (including Pre-5 and Post-16 settings) will be encouraged to use to request a statutory needs assessment.
5. High-Quality Teaching Audit. The aim of the High-Quality Teaching Audit is to provide a framework through which settings can continue to focus on driving improvements in the consistency of teachers' skills and confidence and to incrementally grow an inclusive offer of high-quality teaching for learners with SEND that is ordinarily available in the day-to-day context of the classroom. The High-Quality Teaching Audit aims to support schools and settings to use their best endeavours to evaluate, build and enhance their provision for all learners with SEND and to establish consistency of good practice.
6. Termly SENCO Forums. From July 2023, SENCO Forums will be held on a Termly basis to provide a valuable opportunity for SENCOs and Inclusion Leads to connect and share good practice, seek peer support, undertake training and receive key updates from the SEN/Inclusion Team.
7. SENCO Forum TEAMS Page. The SENCO Forum Teams Page provides a valuable opportunity for SENCOs and Inclusion Leads to connect and share good practice, seek peer support, receive key updates and gain access to Early Inclusion Framework tools, resources and training.
8. SENCO Triad Programme. Using information gained from the Baseline Provision Audit, SENCOs will be assigned to a triad working group. This will enable schools to work more collaboratively (peer to peer) to develop and grow inclusive practice and improve the consistency of provision for all children and young people with SEND.
9. A review of the EHC Plan Annual Review process and associated documentation has recently been completed and the guidance has been updated to include several actionable checklists that help guide and support SENCOs and Inclusion Leads through this process. A pre-recorded training video is also available to support.

Accelerated Progress Plan

Following on from the reinspection in July 2022, Walsall were required to draft an Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) in order to meet the final two areas of concern. The APP is monitored bimonthly on an informal basis and formally every six months. The visits are in person with the Department for Education and are attended by key leads within Walsall as well as by the Parent Carer Forum. We

have received excellent feedback on the developments we have made whilst under the APP. Our recognised strengths and achievements are

- Recruitment and retention strategy for the EHC team, building a permanent team with clear values and systems who are supported with quality training.
- Implementing a strong senior management team who are experienced and able to confidently lead the service.
- Genuine coproduction and engagement with a wide range of families and young people.
- Increased personalisation and quality of EHC plans through the new plan template
- Clearing the backlog of EHC assessments and improving statutory timeliness but removing bottlenecks to the pathway.
- Partnership working with health colleagues and timely quality health advices into EHC plans.

As well as confirming our strengths, the mid-way formal monitoring visit in April 2023 identified important areas that require an increased focus and strategic actions in the next six months. These aligned within our own review of developments. Our focus areas are as identified in the APP:

- Development of the Local Offer including the website and content
- Routine operational implementation of the EHCP QA framework including an approach to Pupil Tracking Meetings.
- EHC Dashboards and reporting methods.
- Working with social care to mirror the health EHCP panel/ gateway and ensure quality and timely advice.
- Introduction of the Inclusion Agenda across all schools to upskill SENCOs and schools
- A recruitment and retention drive combined with new approaches to statutory work for the educational psychologist team which will allow us to move away from the Locum Based Model
- Introducing a pre-emptive and carefully planned approach to transitions
- Remove Annual review backlog and introduce systems which ensure a timely response
- Ensure all children and young people having a quality and personalised plan on the new template.

Improvements against these are currently being monitored and reviewed within our SEND Operational Partnership Groups and fortnightly APP focus sessions.

3.5 What we plan to do – our future actions

SEND Area Inspection Readiness

The SEND Service is moving into a SEND Area Inspection Development phase in anticipation of the inspection, potentially in the spring of 2024, however it can be any time. We have written a SEND Inspection Handbook and are completing an Inspection Action Plan. This will identify key leads and tasks. We are in the process of updating our SEND Strategy and are developing a new SEND Self Evaluation Framework which will be coproduced and designed on the Coproduction

Conference on October 5th 2023. SEND Inspection meetings are planned throughout the autumn term.

Training and Development

The EHC has a fully permanent substantive staffing structure who are in the process of being assigned to families as a direct contact. We are one of very few local authorities that has achieved this as many areas still rely heavily on interim agency workers. Their induction and ongoing training will include focuses on drafting EHC plan, Statutory Assessments, SEND Law and Annual reviews. The team will continue IPSEA training throughout 2024

An EHC handbook and virtual training room were launched in September 2023. This will be monitored and developed to ensure consistency in training and induction processes.

The EHC team are working on their communication including email systems. Emails to the FLOs will move to a locality mailbox from Sept. This is a shared inbox and can be monitored by all working within the locality. This means that the mailbox will be monitored even when staff are absent or on leave. Communications will be with the locality team rather than an individual

SEN Support

The SEN Support Quality Assurance Framework will include an audit system which will evaluate how effectively school and setting based SEN Support processes and procedures are being implemented and evidenced. It will be available to all schools and settings from January 2024. We are beginning to work with Early Help teams to put the Early Help pathway within the graduated approach. This will make the assessments more detailed and link up professionals at an earlier stage.

Annual Reviews

The Annual Review Clearance project started in September 2023. This includes a weekly meeting to identify individual children who require actions and tasks called the 'Weekly Orders'. EHC officer training is planned for October which focuses on annual reviews. This includes clarity about timelines, the legislation, what their role and what decisions can be made.

The inclusion framework in Walsall which was launched in the summer term on 2022-23 includes a focus on annual reviews. The relaunch of the expectations of paperwork and statutory timelines is the early stages of implementation. This will support schools with access to a dedicated teams area and inclusion email address regarding annual reviews. Schools are being alerted to which annual reviews are due and when they will be required to submit their paperwork. The EHC team are completing online learning modules on Annual Reviews. This is the first term when the EHC Annual Review team has been fully staffed with permanent officers. This will support parents and schools with a named officer.

Quality Assurance and EHC Plan

We are working through our quality assurance system which focuses on statutory requirements of an EHC plan. We are introducing quality assurance frameworks for social care and health advice. All children will move to a new plan template at the point of their annual review. All children who have been through statutory assessment since June 2022 have already received a new EHC plan. We have

recently implemented a Multiagency Quality and Compliance Group which looks at the dip sampling from the Quality Assurance agenda and also consider any decisions that require multiagency funding. This group will also complete the Pupil Tracking and look at the quality of advices.

Coproduction and Cross team working

Our new dedicated Vulnerable Link officer will continue to work with families who have been excluded or are without provision. This will include fostering strong links with providers of alternative education and ensure every child has a named officer. This role is a crucial one and we will develop knowledge and information as the role is monitored and reviewed.

Our second coproduction conference is planned for October 2023. This will ensure the SEND strategy and Self Evaluation Framework are fully coproduced.

The Designated Medical Officer (DMO) is committed to working with social care professionals to develop the Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO). This will strengthen social care contributions and working within the EHC pathway.

Our new Local Offer will be ready to go live in November 2023. Work is underway to ensure the content is reviewed, renewed and is relevant. The Local Officer and EHC team manager are continuing to work with harder to reach families to ensure the voices within the system are diverse and are representative of the many cultures within Walsall.

4. *Financial information*

There are no financial factors to consider in regard to this report.

5. *Reducing Inequalities*

Reducing inequalities for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan is an essential commitment in inclusive education. It involves providing tailored support, resources, and opportunities to ensure that every child, regardless of their individual needs, has equitable access to a high-quality education. By prioritising early identification and intervention, fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment, and promoting collaboration between educators, specialists, parents, and carers, we can help level the playing field for children with SEND. Reducing inequalities for these children is not only a legal and moral obligation but also an investment in their future, empowering them to reach their full potential and contribute meaningfully to society.

6. *Decide*

6.1 The committee may decide to request further information on the education outcomes of children with a social worker.

7. *Respond*

7.1 Any recommendations made by the committee will be responded to by the appropriate service area.

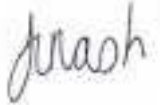
8. Review

8.1 The actions and outcomes within this report are monitored by Access & Inclusion SMT and Children's Services DMT and through a monthly performance board.

Background papers

- APP Update August 2023

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Key		Not Yet started	In Progress	Delayed / at risk	Overdue	Complete	Embedded					
Project Title	Ref	During the next 12 months we will....	Our children, young people and families will.....	Lead	After 3 months we will have....	After 6 months we will have....	After 12 months we will have....	RAG	Progress so far (June Update 2023)	How we will embed (Progress since June 2023)	August 2023 Update	Evidence of Impact
Poor-quality EHC 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.												
Ensure there is sufficient capacity and skill within services to complete statutory tasks	APP 1.1.1	Develop and embed the new structure within the Local Authority EHC Assessment team which operates on a locality basis and provides named Family Link Officers for families and named Senior Link Officers for schools	Have a named link officer who they can contact and who knows their family well and be able to contact the service and receive a same day call-back at a time that is convenient to them.	Head of SEND	Established the locality model and communicated directly to all parents and schools who their link officer is. All vacancies will have been advertised and recruitment processes will be underway.	Recruited permanent staff to vacancies and communicated and embedded the locality model so that it is understood by all.	An established structure of permanent staff and be assured through surveys and feedback loops that parents, schools and other professionals are finding the locality and link officer model helpful and implemented a continual review cycle to maintain effectiveness	June 23 Embedded	Permanent recruitment began in October 2022 for seven Family Link Offices (FLOs). In addition, four existing permanent staff were promoted to Senior Locality Leads. A new permanent EHC team manager starts in April, which will bring security and stability to team. This was communicated to schools and families through various routes including a termly newsletter called SENCOMS, the SENCO mailing list, a SENCO teams area, a Schools Bulletin and Internal Weekly Directors Briefing. The coproduction day was attended by the EHC team which enabled families to meet the FLOs and start to build relationships. The EHC team have a front door system which a main number and email. Parents book in a call back at time which is appropriate for them.	Future recruitment for four new posts will begin in April to expand the team further. The EHC Handbook, induction plan and training plan will support recruitment and retention and ongoing sessions with parents and families will strengthen relationships. There will be an area on the Local Offer website with photos and biographies of the FLOs so that parents and families can see who is who in the team. We are developing a Locality Finder tool where the parents can put in their postcode and it will return who is their FLO and how to contact them and are exploring ways of making the front door more accessible through a booking system available on the local offer.	The EHC Team is now fully recruited to including a team manager. There are four fully staffed locality areas and a fifth area for vulnerable children with an EHC. All families have a named FLO who will support them through the annual review. There is an Assessment team who work with families during the 20 weeks. The original outcome has been completed and embedded	Structure Chart, SENCOMS, FLO advert and blurb for FLO role Staff feedback survey results, front door, compliments,
	APP 1.1.2	Review and implement a staff recruitment and retention strategy for staff within the EHC Team and EP Service.	Receive support from a stable and experienced workforce.	Head of SEND	Review current recruitment and retention strategy to incorporate feedback from staff health check workforce survey.	Drafted and consulted on an updated Recruitment and Retention Strategy.	Have a signed off Recruitment and Retention Strategy which is being used to maintain stability within the EHC Team and EP service through the identification of key actions and the implementation of a robust action plan.	June 23 Embedded	There is a Walsall wide recruitment and retention strategy based on the Staff Health Check Survey results from 2021-2022. There is currently a Health Check Survey for 2023-2024. A Recruitment Action Plan has been written for the EHC team and has been fully implemented with permanent recruitment completed. A Permanent Senior EP started in October 2022 and developed and has begun to implement the EP Recruitment Action Plan. This has involved reassessing job roles to make them regionally and nationally competitive within the current backdrop of lack of EPs nationwide Recruitment is now underway.	The EHC team action plan is now complete. Four new additional posts for the EHC team to provide additional capacity have been established and will be advertised in April 2023. The EP recruitment action plan is now operational and adverts are due to go live in April 2023.	We have recruited a full time senior EP, full time specialist senior EP and 0.2 FTE main grade EP who will have all started by mid Nov. We have recruited 4 Assistant EPs on 12 month fixed term contracts who started 1 Sept.	Recruitment and Retention Strategy, Health Check Survey Results, EHC recruitment action plan EP recruitment action plan
	APP 1.1.3	Offer NASEN and IPSY training to all staff in the EHC team	Receive good quality support from well trained staff who have professional, nationally recognised qualifications.	Head of SEND	Plan training programme that is required.	Begun the programme of training with half of the team beginning with the NASEN Training and other half with the IPSEA training.	Enabled all relevant staff to have accessed both sets of training and achieve the associated qualifications and established a programme for ongoing training. Effectiveness of training will be monitored through the QA framework, parental, child and professional feedback and performance monitoring.	Nov 23 Embedded	IPSEA training was provided to all team in January and some additional colleagues from health and the Virtual School and attendance. The meeting covered Unit One of SEND legislation and was a whole day event. Feedback from the teams confirmed this had been useful. The senior officers are completing the NASEN Case officer qualification	We plan to repeat the IPSEA training day for colleagues in social care and other relevant teams in the council and are exploring an online training module which will build on knowledge. We have made the slides and a guide developed from key information from the day available to all staff on the induction area. New staff will have the IPSEA training course as part of their induction. We have used the standards from the case officer training to create a set of standards for EHC officer as part of their induction and training.	The EHC team have a robust induction framework. This includes an Introduction Booklet, an EHC officers Handbook and standards by which they will be assessed against. (The standards have been worked from the NASEN training) The seniors are completing the NASEN training and IPSEA training is booked for the Autumn Term. There is a robust Virtual Training Room where all documents and guides are stored. There is an annual training agenda for all casework officers following induction. All the team are completing the CDC E learning modules on SEND including holistic outcomes, annual reviews and level 1 and 2 basic SEND awareness	IPSEA attendance register, IPSEA Overview, Annual training schedule, induction plan, Induction and Training Area on teams
	APP 1.1.4	Ensure that there is sufficient capacity within Health and Mental Health services (including the Community Paediatrics and Therapies teams) to meet the demand in the assessment and delivery of EHC plans.	Receive good quality assessments within statutory timescales and support in a timely manner without having to wait excessive amounts of time due to long waiting lists.	ICB Commissioning Lead	Completed work to understand the gaps and begun to address capacity issues by developing the relevant business cases and identifying new and innovative ways of working to address the gaps.	Completed business cases, begun recruitment based on the levels of approved funding and started to implement other identified changes to ways of working.	Completed recruitment and implementation of additional capacity as per the funding and models agreed within the business cases and implemented new ways of working to maintain sustainability. Sufficient capacity will be monitored through the QA framework, parental, child and professional feedback and performance monitoring.	Sept 23 In Progress	There is a business case in place to address the staffing gap which will provide long term plan for being able to maintain compliance with EHCP timescales. An apprentice administrator with EHCP responsibilities is in post for Community Paediatric Therapies. Job planning has been completed in Therapies to ensure that priority tasks have been completed (EHCP priority). The DCO has met with CAMHS to discuss the pathway. A Community Paediatric Consultant post has been approved and will be recruited to imminently. Extra EHCP clinics have been funded in Community Paediatrics while waiting for the new Consultant to start.	Service Specification and job planning will build on EHCP assessments as part of clinicians sessions. Funding will be secured on an ad-hoc basis for mop up EHCP clinics.	Business case has been returned for more information to be added to include wider staff groups such as therapies	emails re recruitment and business cases

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Project Title	Ref	During the next 12 months we will....	Our children, young people and families will.....	Lead	After 3 months we will have....	After 6 months we will have....	After 12 months we will have....	RAG	Progress so far (June Update 2023)	How we will embed (Progress since June 2023)	August 2023 Update	Evidence of Impact	
APP 1.1.5		Hold a cross remit development day with key EHC Assessment Team staff, EPs, and Health operational staff to embed good practice.	Benefit from a local area SEND workforce that understand each other's role in delivering SEND services and is committed to working together to deliver high quality services that improve outcomes.	Head of SEND	Held the first cross remit development day	Used feedback from staff about the usefulness and format of the first cross remit development day to establish a programme of cross remit development days to be held throughout the year.	Have an established, ongoing programme of cross remit development days in place and that induction of new staff across the Local Authority and health services covers expectations in relation to EHC assessments and contributions.	Dec 22 Embedded	<p>A Strategic Development and Coproduction Day was held on 3rd March following delays due to an ILACS inspection and poor weather. There was representation was from health, education and social care, parents and families.</p> <p>Four sessions across the day explored SEND and inclusion, the parent journey, the local offer and the health gateway (as an example of successful joint working). The final activity looked at the new inspection core statements and all participants scored themselves to create a baseline.</p> <p>Regular smaller coproduction workshops are held every other Thursday which focus on different elements taken from the main event which have so far covered the Local Offer, Inclusion, Health and Social Care contributions and pathways and decision making</p>	<p>A Strategic Development and Coproduction Day will be held two to three times per year with the intention of making young people are part of the day for future events.</p> <p>We will increase attendance from across the partnership and invite external speakers.</p> <p>We are working towards making the Thursday workshops more focused with a themed agenda which is coproduced with families and young people.</p>	<p>Second Coproduction Day is booked for 5th October. This day will be used to coproduce and develop the SEF. Training on SEND has been given to the Council SLT group. This senior group has colleagues in from various sectors in the council. The CDC E learning modules in Level 1 basic SEND awareness has been recommended across the council.</p>	<p>Flyer for Coproduction. Coproduction Sessions weekly focus and summaries, joined up meetings over view videos photos</p>	
APP 1.1.6		Implement the national framework pilot which sets out minimum training standards for health professionals working with children with SEND within Walsall Health Trust (WHT)	Receive good quality support from well trained staff who are delivering care and support to recognised national standards.	Designated Clinical Officer	Begun the implementation of the pilot or explored alternative forms of training if there is any delay in the national roll-out.	decided whether to continue with the implementation of the national framework based on the outcome of the pilot and identified an alternative training programme if required.	Fully implemented a training programme using the national framework or the identified alternative. Effectiveness of training will be monitored through the QA framework, parental, child and professional feedback and performance monitoring.	March 23 Some delay but in progress	<p>The national training framework pilot that Walsall has expressed interested in joining with NHSE has been delayed. In lieu of the national training framework implementation WHT and BCHFT have rolled out the Oliver McGowan training as minimum expected standards for staff working with children and young people with learning disability and autism.</p> <p>There are two phases to the training. The first phase is online and staff began to complete this from 01st March 2023. The second phase is face to face and requires a trainer to deliver.</p> <p>The funding and delivery of this has been raised with the LCB regarding procurement and delivery but does mean that there is some delay to the original timescales for this action.</p> <p>Staff also complete CDC online training for EHCP awareness and the DCO is discussing with Royal Wolverhampton Trust (RWT) about SEND training that should be mandatory for all staff to bring WHT in line with RWT</p>	<p>Minimum training standards for SEND and/or CDC EHC training will be mandatory for trust. The LCB need to procure the trainer for second phase. Training data will be requested from providers.</p>	<p>email confirming Oliver McGowan training on WHT ESR, email from CAMHS, word doc explaining OM training, training, CDC training, email from BI not capturing compliance data yet as newly rolled out</p>		
APP 1.1.7		Take advantage of Sector Led Improvement Partners Support.	Benefit from improved services supported by recognised best practice	Head of SEND	Identified and had an introductory meeting with a potential SLIP partner	Agreed the areas of focus for SLIP Support	Have taken advantage of SLIP Support and begun to implement improvements based on learning from SLIP partners	August 23 In Progress	<p>In discussion with our identified SLIP (Bi-borough of Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster) we have identified three areas of which support will be provided. These are: Developing a robust EP service, A Roadmap to creating a local offer Placement sufficiency and planning for children and YP with SEND.</p> <p>Key leads have been identified in each of these areas and meetings are planned for April to begin the work.</p>	<p>We will work with the SLIP partners to explore key areas for development and any ideas which can further support the key focus areas.</p> <p>The EP support will help address the quality and timeliness of EHCs as this has been an area for development. We also experience barriers when trying to place children and so support in placements and sufficiency will also help to improve timeliness.</p>	<p>There have been several SLIP meetings Looking at strategic leadership of SEND within the Local Authority working with external partners. The SLIP team have been given an overview of how we work together</p>		
APP 1.2.1		Clear outstanding EHC assessments that are over 20 weeks by triaging those that require new Ed Psych assessments and those that do not.	Receive the outcome of their EHC assessments and plans. They will be able to follow the progress of their assessments and contribute directly to their assessments and plans via the EHC Hub.	Head of SEND	Triaged all assessments that do not require an Ed Psych assessment and be making progress in completing the backlog of those that do.	Cleared the outstanding EHC assessments and be actively managing EHC assessment processes so that future backlogs do not occur	Be actively managing EHC assessment processes so that future backlogs do not occur	March 23 Complete	<p>Assessment backlogs have significantly decreased. A weekly meeting is held to look at all open assessments to prioritise and help keep the team focussed on maintaining timeliness.</p> <p>The average time in the backlog has been reduced to 31 weeks. At the start of the APP, there was 313 cases outside of 20 weeks in a backlog. As of today there are 50 cases left and the majority of these are at placement stage following the drafted plan. We anticipate the backlog being removed in full by the end of April 2023.</p> <p>Consultations for placements has caused a lot of delays, however the EHC team (following the IPSEA training) feel more able and confident to challenge placement refusals and are now directing schools.</p> <p>Internal deadlines are aimed for including making decisions to assess by week two and decisions to issue by week 14. This has contributed to a huge increase in the amount of assessments which are meeting statutory deadlines.</p> <p>EP advices are mostly being delivered through a locum model due to the national demand of EPs. Succinct decision making has led to more organised consultation requests. A new streamlined system of requests was set up on the hub which meant that there was a central coordination point for education psychology, health and social care advices. The team have also looked at evidence submitted as part of the application and requested a triage rather than a full advice for children where appropriate.</p>	<p>A new decision mapping flow will be embedded and published on the local offer for transparency.</p> <p>We will work with SENCOS to explore challenge and support pre request.</p> <p>The new team manager will be able to maintain daily oversight of the assessments and focus the scrutiny meetings.</p> <p>We are drafting a Placement Strategy that will support with Placements and Sufficiency.</p>	<p>Assessment timeliness has ben maintained above 80% since June 2023. This is due to the weekly orders which ensures that individual cases are progressed within time whenever possible. The backlog is fully cleared. Decisions to assess made within 6 weeks has increased and maintains above 90%. All assessment applications are reviewed and triaged. SENCOS have new thresholds/criteria for applying for an EHC assessment. This includes recommendations that EP assessments are evident in APDR as part of the graduated approach. Guidelines are completed around statutory systems so processes are clear and consistent for all.</p>	<p>Decision Making TOR. Assessment KPIs, weekly orders sheer, management teams site, Assessment work flow,</p>	

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improve the timeliness of EHC Plans and Reviews	APP 1.2.2	Refine and improve processes for request for advices from health, including the implementation of a 'triage' process to ensure that requests are going to the right person first time and the development of a standard operating protocol (SOP)	have their assessments completed within statutory timescales, with input from relevant professionals. They will be able to follow the progress of their assessments and contribute directly to their assessments and plans via the EHC Hub.	Designated Clinical Officer	Implemented the revised processes and established monitoring to track improvements.	Reviewed, through audits and dip samples, whether the new processes have been effective in improving the timeliness and quality of advices and have refined the process if required.	Fully embedded and established the process to ensure the timeliness of advices monitored through a continual cycle of QA and performance monitoring. Implemented a continual process review cycle to maintain effectiveness	Dec 22 Embedded	Agreed decisions for assessments are sent to health within two weeks for approx. 50% of cases. A gateway panel meets weekly with representatives from therapies, CAMHS, Community Paediatrics, school health and health visiting to discuss individual applications. Children and young people are triaged to most appropriate health teams for relevant advice for EHC. The team have also discussed wider participation from parties who feel they may benefit from the panel such as epilepsy nurse specialist. The DCO has oversight of all applications and data is kept on a database, monitored by the DCO to track requests and monitor the completion of health advices. Health advices on average are returned 86% within 6 weeks since January 2023. Regional neighbours have enquired about this pathway and have requested more information.	Working with the newly appointed DSCO will ensure that Social care and Early Help are fully involved in the pathway with consideration being given to extending the gateway to be inclusive of all services. Work is taking place with caseworkers to audit whether the APPC and CAMHS template capture the correct information and amendments to final version will be signed off via trust governance processes.	The health pathway for requesting advice is embedded and working well. This outcome is completed. See evidence.	data dashboard (Helena) TOR for gateway group. Draft APPC and Draft CAMHS template
	APP 1.2.3	Refine and improve processes request for advices from social care to ensure that requests are going to the right person first time and the development of a standard operating protocol (SOP)	have their assessments completed within statutory timescales, with input from relevant professionals. They will be able to follow the progress of their assessments and contribute directly to their assessments and plans via the EHC Hub.	Head of Help, Protection and Support	Agreed the new processes and begun to implement them	Implemented the revised processes and established monitoring to track improvements and begun to review and refine, as necessary.	Fully embedded and established the process to ensure the timeliness of advices monitored through a continual cycle of QA and performance monitoring. Implemented a continual process review cycle to maintain effectiveness	March 23 In Progress	The health gateway has been a huge success in improving timeliness of advices. Following the coproduction workshops, we are looking at ways in which the health gateway can be expanded to include partners from early help, social care and education. We have recently confirmed the implementation of a DCSO role to support development and coordination as part of our focus on social care and early help advices and ways of joint working. Key leads from social care and early help are part of the Operational Partnership Group and also strategic development sessions. These sessions have supported exploring and unblocking operational barriers. Social care and health contributions guidance was completed in September 2022. Both areas have used this to improve response to requests. We are planning EHC/SEND training in with all colleagues in social care and early help. Our 'big themes' will support focused training and shared knowledge.	Training and information sessions will be held for social care and early help staff on duties and responsibilities within the EHC system. Social care and early help staff will also be fully involved in future co-production events.	DCO supporting social care team to embed the process as business as usual to mirror health gateway. Process mapped but not yet embedded.	Social and health care guides
	APP 1.2.4	Review data and existing processes within the EHC team to identify bottlenecks.	have their assessments completed within statutory timescales, with input from relevant professionals. They will be able to follow the progress of their assessments and contribute directly to their assessments and plans via the EHC Hub.	Performance Team and Head of SEND	Have comprehensively identified where all bottle necks exist and have begun to identify solutions to streamline processes.	Have streamlined and implemented changes to processes and updated all guidance to reflect the changes. Staff will have received training through team meetings and supervision and there will be monitoring in place to track improvements	Embedded all process changes and be able to demonstrate that the EHC assessment process is meeting statutory timescales monitored through a continual cycle of QA and performance monitoring. Implemented a continual process review cycle to maintain effectiveness	Jan 23 Embedded	Data analysis identified three key bottlenecks within the assessment process which were contributing to delays. Time was being lost in the first six weeks with delays in initial decisions making it difficult to meet timescales later in the process. Advices were not monitored and not returned within six weeks and some advices were not returned at all delaying assessments, decisions to issue and the drafting of plans. Finally a poor understanding of inclusion in schools created challenges in identifying placements resulting in delays while alternative provision was sought rather than directing placements to appropriate local mainstream school. The twenty week assessment process has been broken down and now includes earlier internal deadlines to improve timeliness including aiming to make decisions to assess within two weeks and decisions to issue by week 14. This has increased the teams capacity and enabled a smoother process. We have worked closely with EPs, health and social care to improve timeliness of advices and have streamlined the system on the Hub to request advices. Finding placements remains a challenge, however the IPSEA training has helped the team feel more confident to challenge and the planned inclusion agenda with all schools will help to support children being educated in their local mainstream school with their peers.	The new team manager will be able to have greater daily oversight of the assessment process and ensure responses are timely to avoid further backlogs developing. The assessment flow will be embedded within the Multiagency Quality and Compliance Group	Review has started. Rachael Beards is leading on this. The EHC team is now fully staffed and there are 8 officers focusing on annual reviews. In addition, there is another officer concentrating on vulnerable groups for annual review. This includes. NEET. EHE, CME, Low to no attendance, YOT and children with more than one exclusion. The annual review clearance programme will take one year and every child's plan is being written on to the new template which will ensure quality throughout. The plans are being written against the QA training and framework.	KPIs, EP Quality Assurance Framework, 20 week assessment flow, guide to making assessment decision hub, assessment decisions statements,

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Int	APP 1.2.5	Re-establish the Partnership Operational Group to oversee operational processes, unblock issues that impact on timeliness and monitor quality of plans.	Have their assessments completed and EHC plans finalised within statutory timescales to ensure that children and young people can receive timely provision based on their needs.	Designated Clinical Officer	Have re-established the partnership group and agreed membership, terms of reference and priorities for the first 12 months.	Met regularly and established an action plan based to further improve processes and implemented robust oversight of performance and quality through the group.	The ability to evidence through meeting minutes, action plans, audit reports and performance dashboards that the group is achieving its aims and ensured that priorities continue to be updated and reviewed.	March 23 Embedded	<p>Three key strategic groups have been established which support development and joined up working. All groups are attended by representatives from education, health and social care alongside families and parents.</p> <p>The Strategic Operational Group supports with daily procedures and quickly can address any issues within the system using data and feedback.</p> <p>The Coproduction and Strategic Workshops look to future practice and ensure ongoing development and implementation of longer term ideas.</p> <p>The Multiagency Quality and Compliance Group is still being established. This group will look at audits and dip samples of plans and advices to ensure quality is improved and maintained and will also consider any decisions that require multiagency funding.</p>	<p>Attendance will be monitored and widened out as appropriate to ensure that all key partners are included and attendees understand the importance of the groups.</p> <p>Regularity and consistency of meetings will ensure that momentum is maintained.</p>	<p>Operational Partnership Group is established. There are TOR and a good attendance from across health, social and education. The group is able to explore issues and problems and find solutions. Parents are a key member at the group. The agenda is developed following the APP update which ensures key risks are recognised and solutionized. The Quality assurance group is an off shoot of the OPG and is established. There is a strong process to QA within the team and within health.</p>	<p>Summary of Development Meetings, terms of ref for operational group, focus for strategic groups, Big Themes</p>	
	APP 1.2.6	Develop and implement clear guidance which outlines thresholds and expectations for SENCOs who are requesting assessments.	receive all appropriate support from their SENCO with appropriately managed expectations and be assured that any request for an EHC assessment is appropriate and contains the relevant information for the assessment to progress.	Head of SEND	Written and shared the guidance with SENCOs and supported its implementation through training and communication.	Adapted end of assessment EHCP survey to capture parental views about quality of SENCO support, captured relevant data and begun to use findings to refine training plans.	Fully embedded the processes and expectations and be assured that requests for assessment are appropriate and of sufficient quality and that parents feel supported. Implemented a continual process review cycle to maintain effectiveness	Dec 22 Embedded	<p>The SENCO pathway booklet and guidance documents were refreshed and issued to schools in Autumn 2022. This was followed up with briefing sessions and some one to one meetings.</p> <p>The updates to the assessment and review pathways were communicated through schools bulletin, SENCO teams area and virtual head teachers session. Additional guidance was also sent out to support using the Hub for assessments and reviews.</p> <p>More detailed training and updates and planned through SENCO networks starting after Easter.</p> <p>There is an Early Years Assessment Toolkit which all EY SENCOs use when assessing children with rising needs. PVI's and EY SENCO forum have had focused sessions on making applications for EHCs. SENCO questionnaires have been given to the SENCO working party and the impact of the session has been recorded. There is an ongoing training agenda for SENCOs which follows the 'SEND and Inclusion Big Themes'</p> <p>The SENCO working party are working with the Inclusion Development Partner to explore ways in which school can be supported, given capacity and challenged through a robust inclusion agenda</p>	<p>We are currently writing a SEND and Inclusion Outcomes Framework for all schools. Data from this will collate to form an index and confirm schools strengths and areas for development. This will be completed by May 2023.</p> <p>The results will enable the LA to create inclusion partnerships that offer relevant and credible peer to peer support and challenge in a triad.</p> <p>The Inclusion Development partner is drafting the Ordinarily Available Provision Guide with the SENCO working group which will include a skills audit, standardised SEN support and a provision mapping tool. This will support better quality applications and support for children with rising needs.</p> <p>SENCO network meetings will have a focus on the monthly Big Themes and will sit alongside SENCO Inclusion Partnership and Critical Friends programme, which will discuss audits, future applications for EHC assessments, sharing best practice, training and the school audit.</p>	<p>The ordinarily available provision and been launched to schools</p>	<p>Early Years Assessment Toolkit, SENCO Pathway Documents, Using the Hub Guides, SENCO Training Agenda, SEND and Inclusion Big Themes, Evidence guide for EHC applications, PVI training agenda including EHCP pathway training</p>	
	APP 1.2.7	Develop and strengthen planning and review arrangements for children and young people who are moving towards transition points (including transitions into area)	Receive appropriate support and planning for when they are moving towards key transition points.	Head of SEND	Have fully reviewed and identified gaps in current transition processes and begun to develop redefined pathways.	Continued to implement redefined pathways and processes making any changes as a result of feedback and reviews of the effectiveness of the changes.	Have fully established processes for all children that are moving towards transition that are well understood by parents, carers, and professionals. Implemented a continual process review cycle to maintain effectiveness	August 23 In Progress	<p>The phase transfer letters were sent out to parents in October 2023.</p> <p>A new Special School Head teachers panels was held which allowed most placements to be agreed at the meeting without need for later discussions. This was a significant step forward and will be repeated again next year.</p> <p>We have improved working with the Admissions team. 81% of all year 6 plans were named by the 15th February. 21 pupils still have placement issues but these are in the process of being resolved.</p>	<p>We intend to embed this by using electronic forms which are ready to send to parents after Easter. This will give more time to complete planned placements.</p> <p>In addition, schools will be asked to invite the receiving SENCO to the annual review where any questions about needs or funding can be pre-empted and addressed.</p> <p>The EHC officers will start to attend parents evenings next academic year to be available to help and support families around transitions.</p> <p>SENCO have had robust annual review guidance with clear advice around statutory timeframes and support of children transitioning into the next phase of education.</p> <p>Annual review officers are given additional training and decision making guidance is being reviewed and updates</p>	<p>The Key Transition form is now in use and parents are able to submit their preferences 2 years before a key transition. There is a process around phase transfers with a timeframe to ensure that plans will be completed within national deadlines</p>	<p>Phase transfer evidence summary and letters</p>	
	APP 1.2.8	Develop, strengthen, and embed new annual review processes to ensure that all children receive their reviews in a timely manner and that all EHCs are on the new plan template.	Have up to date EHCs which are reviewed in statutory timescales and meet changing needs as children and young people grow.	Head of SEND	Published guidance on the revised review processes, delivered training and awareness to SENCOs and implemented monitoring at school level.	Continue to monitor the effectiveness of the revised review processes and used performance monitoring to manage conversations with individual schools where reviews are not being managed appropriately.	Have ensured all children and young people who are due a review have had one and have current and up to date EHCs and embedded the processes and expectations so that reviews remain up to date going forward.	August 23 In Progress	<p>The new annual review process was launched to schools last autumn and followed up with a guide on how to complete an annual review on the Hub, however, some schools are still resorting to the using the old processes.</p> <p>All EHC plans are transferred to the new template by the team following receipt of the paperwork from schools and so are becoming more relevant and up to date. The team have received positive feedback on the quality of the new EHC plans.</p>	<p>The new annual review system needs to continue to be embedded with schools so that reviews can be processed in time. The Inclusion Development Partnerships will begin to ensure that all schools are trained and able to use the new system of completing an annual review.</p> <p>The annual review tracker will have a similar focus as the assessments currently have. There are four new Family Liaison Officers joining the EHC team from April which will support with additional capacity.</p> <p>New annual review strategy developed and is being rolled out in September 2023</p>	<p>There is a plan in place to clear the AR backlog (see 1.2.4)</p>	<p>Annual review tracker, Guide to completing AR on the Hub and SENCO pathway booklet</p>	

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Plans, plans and annual reviews	APP 1.3.1	Develop plan templates that reflect personalisation and capture the voice of children, young people, and parents. Parents have been involved in designing new templates.	Have high quality plans that accurately reflect the needs of individual children and young people, capturing their voice and clearly set out what support the children and young people will receive.	Head of SEND	Designed and implemented new plan templates in co-production with parents and carers.	Be consistently using the revised template for new and updated plans and monitor feedback mechanisms from parents, carers, children, and young people to determine whether the templates are reflecting need, personalisation and that voices are heard.	Have fully embedded use of the revised plan template with the majority of children having plans in the agreed format and be assured through feedback and quality assurance that they are capturing personalisation and the voices of children and parents and ensure that there is a continual cycle of review in place.	Dec 22 Embedded	<p>The standard Hub plan template reduced personalisation and was not a solid foundation for quality so we launched a new template in October 2022 which was codesigned with parents and families.</p> <p>Following the launch, we ran a competition with FACE PCF to design a front cover for the 0 to 14 years plan and for the 14 to 25 years plan. Two children won a prize which was presented to them by the Mayor, the chair of Face and a Senior manager from the EHC team.</p> <p>There has been a lot of positive feedback about the new template with parents finding it more accessible and of better quality.</p> <p>There is a stronger focus on parents, child and young person voice throughout the plan and aspirations and outcomes are more embedded and a clearer section F, G and H makes provision easier to access.</p> <p>Plans are now drafted outside the Hub and the team have a set of quality assurance standards that they refer to when drafting. All staff must have 10 plans quality assured before being able to issue. Following that the plans are assured by seniors on a dip sample basis each month.</p>	Continue to use the EHC template for all children and greater personalisation off the Hub.	This outcome is complete and embedded. See evidence	competition in news article, twitter, templates, new template,	
	APP 1.3.2	Implement regular and ongoing training for staff and robust guides and manuals to ensure that staff understand what a good quality EHC plan looks like and how they should involve children, young people, and parents in the development of their plans.	Tell us that they have been listened to, included in the assessment process, and receive consistently high-quality plans which meet set standards and the needs of children and young people.	Head of SEND	Written guidance and disseminated it to all staff. Established a regular schedule of training through team meetings and dedicated training sessions.	Continue to deliver training and awareness to staff including feedback from audits and continue to refine processes based on learning.	Be assured through quality assurance processes, auditing and parent and child feedback that plans are of high quality and are meeting need.	April 23 Complete	<p>All the team received Good Quality Plan Training in January 2023 and have been given a Good Plan Guide and a Exemplar EHC plan in order to support writing consistent and quality plans.</p> <p>Plans are now drafted outside the Hub and the team have a set of quality assurance standards that they refer to when drafting. All staff must have 10 plans quality assured before being able to issue. Following that the plans are assured by seniors on a dip sample basis each month.</p>	The SEND and Inclusion Big Themes will focus attention to a particular element of the EHC plans and align with the Quality Assurance Framework. All staff will have Plan writing as part of compulsory induction	This outcome is complete and being embedded see 1.1.3. The team are following the good plan writing guides and completed the CDC e learning modules. The virtual training room has core documents in. The Induction Framework includes a process to practise drafting plans before being approved to complete	good plan guide and template QA framework, Big themes, First analysis of QA	
	APP 1.3.3	Implement regular and ongoing training for staff and robust guides and manuals to ensure that staff understand what good quality advices look like.	Tell us that they have been listened to, included in the assessment process, and receive consistently high-quality plans which meet set standards and the needs of children and young people.	Head of SEND Designated Clinical Officer Head of Help, Protection and Support With EPs and Therapy Leads	Written guidance and disseminated it to all staff. Established a regular schedule of training and awareness sessions.	Continue to deliver training and awareness to staff including feedback from audits and continue to refine processes based on learning.	Be assured through quality assurance processes, auditing and parent and child feedback that advices are of high quality and are meeting need.	April 23 Complete	<p>Social Care and Health Care guides were published in Autumn 2022 and distributed to all relevant staff.</p> <p>All health staff complete the CDC EHC plan training and the DCO is looking to make this compulsory. Further training is planned for Summer 2023 and will link in with the SEND and Inclusion Big Themes.</p> <p>The Health Gateway currently QA all advices and funding before they come to the EHC team.</p>	<p>Health and social care are working together to implement a APP C and APP D which will summarise advices on one form from a central point. This will be coordinated by the DCO and DSCO.</p> <p>Training for health and social care colleagues on providing good quality advices for EHC plans will continue to be provided.</p> <p>There will be a focus on implementing a similar gateway model to the one implemented by health into social care and early help or potentially or combining the gateways into a single model.</p> <p>We are exploring where Early Help can work more seamlessly within the SEND and EHC pathway supporting contribution and information.</p>	Social care and health to complete the CDC E learning training. Training has been given to the Council leaders and drop in sessions planned for October 2023.	Health gateway TOR, CDC Health training, Health and Social Care guide	

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Improve the quality of EHC assessments	APP 1.3.4	Implement a robust quality assurance framework including regular multi-agency dip sampling and single agency audits for plans, advice quality and reviews.	Be assured through published learning and the receipt of high-quality plans and reviews that we are continually improving the quality of assessments and plans that meet the needs of children and young people.	Head of SEND Designated Clinical Officer Head of Help, Protection and Support With input from SENCOs, EPs and Therapy Leads	Have an agreed quality assurance framework with partners and begun to implement regular dip samples and audits.	Continue to roll-out the quality assurance framework and have a robust, ongoing audit plan in place. Have developed a robust action plan based on learning from audits.	Have a fully embedded quality assurance framework in place which underpins an established audit and quality assurance plan. Be assured through ongoing quality assurance, parental feedback and learning from mediations and tribunals, that learning from audits is being implemented and that plan and advice quality is improving as a result.	April 23 Embedded	<p>We have implemented a Quality Assurance Framework that explores accessibility of plans, whether they meet the statutory minimum requirements, how they represent the principles of the SEND Code of practice and how the service worked with the children young people and their families during the assessment process.</p> <p>The framework works on combining four tiers of quality. The first tier is the EHC coordinators drafting and referring to the guides and toolkits. The second tier is seniors in the team dip sampling the plans at random and providing feedback. The third tier is a multiagency quality and compliance group looking dip sampling against monthly key themes and the final tier is a parental group giving feedback against the same themes.</p> <p>The Strategic Coproduction group agreed the key themes and have implemented and that plan and advice quality is improving as a result.</p>	<p>The Multiagency Quality and Compliance Group is being developed. This group will look at the dip sampling from the Quality Assurance agenda and also consider any decisions that require multiagency funding.</p> <p>The group will also complete the multiagency audits and look at the quality of advices.</p> <p>The Strategic Coproduction group have agreed the key themes and have decided that these Key Themes will be known as the SEND and Inclusion Big Themes.</p> <p>Every month there will be a Big Theme which will be the focus of the QA, EHC team training, SENCO Networks, Local Offer focus, Young Persons in our hands events, Coproduction Themes with FACE PCF and coproduction workshops.</p>	<p>This is embedding. The plans are being regularly Qad by the team manager and seniors. The MQC group is dip sampling and working with parents to begin Qaing plans.</p>	SEND and Inclusion Big Themes, QA Framework, Initial QA Sampling results, SEND and Inclusion Big Themes
	APP 1.3.5	Establish a panel which includes SENCOs to review requests for assessments that are refused, to inform further training around requesting EHC assessments.	be better supported by SENCOs to understand the EHC assessment process and whether any request for an EHC assessment is appropriate.	Head of SEND	Identified SENCOs to be part of the panel, developed a terms of reference and booked in a regular programme of panel meetings and begun to meet.	Developed feedback loops to disseminate learning from the panel and begun established through performance monitoring and quality assurance whether learning is having an impact.	Have a fully established panel with robust feedback loops and be assured through learning from quality assurance, performance monitoring and parent and SENCOs feedback that assessment requests are appropriate, and parents are supported.	Dec 22 Complete	<p>The SENCOs met to begin looking at the assessment applications but through feedback and joint working, it was felt that the SENCO moderation group was not the right way forward and alternatives were discussed.</p> <p>Discussions around EHC applications in general were very powerful and led to clear ideas and directions for how to support schools.</p> <p>An interim Inclusion Development Partner has been recruited and is looking at creating an Inclusion Audit and Ordinarily Available Provision Guide.</p> <p>These tools will support with better applications and fewer applications being made or needing to be rejected.</p> <p>Seniors within the EHC team are able to make robust statutory assessment decisions following the IPSEA training and as a result more applications are being refused with recommendations being made to schools regarding early inclusion.</p>	<p>A strong inclusion agenda now takes precedent and will lead to better quality applications.</p> <p>Triad training for all SENCOs on good quality applications, triage slots to discuss applications will also support improvements.</p>	IDP Job description and advert, Refusal rate KPI , SENCO working group agendas,	
	APP 1.3.6	Establish a multi-agency panel to meet prior to plan issue to agree funding and support levels and how this should be reflected in the EHC plan.	Receive EHC plans which clearly outline support which will meet their needs and have agreed funding in place.	Head of SEND Designated Clinical Officer Head of Help, Protection and Support	Identified professionals to be part of the panel, have an agreed terms of reference and booked in a regular programme of panel meetings.	Continued to meet and begun to implement review mechanisms to determine the robustness of decision making and its impact.	Have an established panel in place that can demonstrate effective decision making, evidenced through quality assurance processes and ensured that the terms of reference continues to be updated and reviewed.	March 23 Complete	<p>The Multiagency Quality and Compliance Group is being developed. This group will look at the dip sampling from the Quality Assurance agenda and also consider any decisions that require multiagency funding.</p> <p>The group will also complete the multiagency audits and look at the quality of advices.</p> <p>The framework and draft TOR are in place and the group will formally begin to meet in April 2023.</p> <p>The Health Gateway is operational and is successful in improving the timeliness and quality of advices. We intend to look at this as a blue print and consider how Early Help, Social Care and Education may mirror or join this to create a seamless coordinated approach to decisions and funding.</p>	<p>A regular multiagency group where decisions are made regarding funding and placement and EHC plans are quality assured will provide assurance.</p> <p>The TOR will be published on the Local offer to be accessible and transparent.</p>	<p>Decision making groups established for Decision to issue and decisions following reviews. Senior group being established for 3 way decisions. TOR complete</p>	Draft TOR for multiagency decision group. multiagency group overview

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Improve communication with parents, young people, and professionals	APP 1.4.1	Develop, implement, and establish a robust communication and engagement plan including updates on the Local Offer and half termly newsletters for parents, SENCOs, and other professionals.	Report that they feel informed about the SEND offer in Walsall and are aware of changes, developments, and available services.	Head of Performance Improvement and Quality With comms leads from each organisation.	A communication and engagement plan that has been drafted with parents, carers and partners and have begun to develop an action plan to implement it.	Have fully established communication routes outlined in the plan and set up feedback mechanisms to assess whether it is having an impact.	Have a fully embedded communication and engagement strategy and be assured through feedback mechanisms that parents, carers, children, young people, and professionals feel informed. Maintain the strategy through the continual identification of key actions and the maintenance of a robust action plan.	April 23 Complete	Following the Coproduction event, coproduction is now starting to be recognised as a way of working rather than a tick box exercise. This is improving relationships with families as services start to work together in genuine collaboration. Services recognise the importance of the experiences of children and families. A draft strategy is in progress and will be further developed with the In Our Hands parent and carer and children and young people groups. Coproduction workshops held by Changing Our Lives on the 14th Feb and 14th March have further enhanced this with Health Colleagues. Parents attend all Operational and Strategic Groups and have an important input into strategic decisions. You said We Did is a planned monthly session, with feedback being distributed to teams. Families receive a termly newsletter updating any changes within the SEND systems and introductions to new staff.	The SEND comms and engagement plan will have buy in from all partners across the local area and be part of a wider co-production and engagement strategy across the partnership. Communication and engagement will continue through the In our Hands sessions and larger strategic co-production events. Newsletters and You Said We Did will be published on the Local offer.	Communication and Engagement strategy is complete. This outcome is complete. Parents are a key stakeholder within all areas of strategy and development.	Draft strategy attendance list, proposal for training, in our hands working together events, flyers attendance feedback photos of coproduction day, Draft Engagement Strategy, Changing our lives, Young Peoples group TOR Feedback from YP	
	APP 1.4.2	Work with the local Parent Carer Forum and other parent groups to enable parents to feedback and be involved in the co-production of plan template and guides.	Report they have had their voices heard and been given the opportunity to be involved in co-producing service improvements.	Head of SEND Designated Clinical Officer Head of Help, Protection and Support	Have involved parents and carers in the development of new templates and guides and established mechanisms and processes for this to happen routinely.	Implemented feedback loops to provide assurance that parents are feeling heard and have opportunities to be involved in service development work.	Be assured that parental involvement is embedded in service improvement work through feedback.	Dec 22 Embedded	The EHC plan and all guides have been coproduced with families and with FACE PCF and there have been discussions around how these can be improved for the future. Through the Coproduction Workshops, Operational Groups and Multiagency Compliance Group, we now have the correct platforms and opportunities for coproduction to become central to our way of working.	Coproduction will become a central to our way of working across all services. Any guides and communication will be fully codesigned.	Guides being completed about ways of working called Walsall's Approaches. The SEND strategy is being coproduced. The second Coproduction day will focus on developing the SEF and strategy	EHC plan Template, You said we did formal meetings	
	APP 1.4.3	Develop links with children and young people's groups to enable them to feedback and be involved in the co-production of guides and templates.	Report they have had their voices heard and been given the opportunity to be involved in co-producing service improvements.	Local Offer Co-ordinator	Have involved children and young people in the development of new templates and guides and established mechanisms and processes for this to happen routinely.	Implemented feedback loops and co-production opportunities to provide assurance that children and young people are feeling heard and have opportunities to be involved in service development work.	Be assured that child and young person involvement is embedded in service improvement work through feedback.	April 23 Complete	The young persons group meets monthly and play games shares food and gives feedback. So far the meetings have been about developing the group but from Easter they will start to focus on the Local Offer, how it feels it be a young person in Walsall and having a voice and input into the Big Themes	The young person feedback will be used as a summary focusing on monthly You Said, We Did and supporting any training and improvements.	This outcome is complete. All emails from the EHC team include a link and QR code for feedback and what would be better if....	TOR agenda monthly, flyers photos notes from session, you said we did	

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The poor quality of the local offer, which does not meet the requirements of the code of practice													
parents, carers, children, and young people in relation to the Local Offer	APP 2.1.1	Establish a Local Offer steering group with representation from the five key partners across the Local Area (PCF, SENDIASS, Schools, Health, Local Authority), to drive the development of the Local Offer.	Report that they feel that the local offer is easy to use and contains relevant and up to date information and is meeting their needs.	Local Offer Co-ordinator	Have identified people to members of the steering group, met at least once and have an agreed terms of reference.	Have established a clear action plan that is owned by the steering group and that has started to be implemented. Established feedback mechanisms and data analysis to understand how the local offer is being used.	A steering group which is established, stable and working well together to develop the local offer which will continue. Be able to demonstrate clear changes, as led by the group, and be assured that these have led to improvements through feedback and increased usage of the Local Offer.	Dec 22 Embedded	<p>The Local Offer Steering Group started in December 2022, however, we have now recognised that this needs to be refreshed in line with our improved strategic approach to developing the Local Offer.</p> <p>This group will be led by the HoS for SEND and membership will be reviewed to invite more parents and a wider range of partners with identified service leads to take responsibility for their elements of the offer.</p> <p>We also have also developed a Local Offer Strategic Plan which includes identified roles and responsibilities of those outlined within the Steering Group.</p> <p>We have identified the steering group as mechanism for keeping the Local Offer up to date and are working with another Local Authority with an outstanding website to create a road map to move to completion with coproduction at the centre of the plan.</p>	Ensure that the Strategic plan is shared with all new members of the refreshed Local Offer Steering Group which will have clearly outlined roles and responsibilities.	This outcome is complete. The local offer steering group is established and working with a wide range of stakeholders	Local Offer strategic plan Local Offer Terms of Reference Local Offer Steering Group Action Log	
	APP 2.1.2	Increase the opportunities for parents and carers to co-produce improvements and developments to SEND processes and services through engagement at parent carer group meetings and co-production events.	Report that they feel that their voices have been heard and that they have had the opportunity to influence and be involved in service development.	Local Offer Co-ordinator	Begun to regularly attend parents' groups and other events which provide an opportunity to engage. Planned and delivered a series of engagement events.	Be regularly and consistently engaging with parents and have developed a regular programme of engagement events. Established feedback mechanisms from parents to establish whether they feel their voices are being heard.	Have a fully established, regularly reviewed, programme of engagement and meaningful co-production which is enabling parental voices to be heard and be assured of this through parental feedback.	April 23 Embedded	<p>The parent carer working group began in July 2022 and is now well established, meeting every four weeks and allowing for positive working relationships to be formed.</p> <p>There have been various coproduction events across the Borough, along with the Strategic Co-production and Development day where parents shared their family journey with professionals from health, education and social care.</p> <p>Local Authority and health staff have regularly attended the FACE breakfast clubs and coffee mornings at various schools across the Borough, organised with SENCO's as well as attending SEND Fayres to raise awareness of the Local Offer and allow for parents to have to opportunity to join the parent working group.</p> <p>SEND parents have to opportunity to attend SEND HAF coffee mornings to allow for the coproduction of the SEND offer for HAF. There is also a FACE representative at the HAF steering group.</p>	Further induction of parents for the working group due to the varying capacity of the current parents will provide resilience. There will be consistent involvement of parents within strategic meetings across the Local Authority in relation to SEND. Coproduction events will continue at a minimum of twice a year following the Local Offer Website Relaunch.	This outcome is completed and being embedded. Parents are active members in all areas of strategy and development	Parent working Group Terms of Reference, Parent working group Action Log, Feedback to parents from coproduction events, photos of coproduction events, Photos of SEND Fayres attended, Quotes from parents, promotional material from the coproduction events, promotional materials from the Local Offer, HAF documents	
	APP 2.1.3	Establish a children and young people's group to extend their opportunities to share their views and engage in co-production.	Report that they feel that their voices have been heard and that they have had the opportunity to influence and be involved in service development.	Local Offer Co-ordinator	Established a group (or groups) for children and young people to provide feedback and enable opportunities to be involved in co-production.	Be regularly and consistently engaging and co-producing with children and young people and have developed a regular programme of engagement and co-production opportunities. Established feedback mechanisms from children and young people to establish whether they feel their voices are being heard	Have a fully established, regularly reviewed, programme of engagement and meaningful co-production which is enabling children and young people's voices to be heard and be assured of this through their feedback.	April 23 Complete	<p>The Young Person's Group has been running since January 2023. There are currently six young people on the register.</p> <p>The first session was 'getting to know you' icebreaker games and relationship building. The following session was used to introduce the Local Offer website to the young people and they shared their views about what they thought about it.</p> <p>A 'Top tips for working with us' was created.</p> <p>You said we did has been completed for Jan - March and will be shared with the young people during the April session.</p> <p>Points discussed within the group will also be shared with Local Offer steering group to ensure professionals and parents are able to hear the authentic voice of the children and young people.</p> <p>Links with Walsall College have been made to promote the group and potentially look at attending college to speak with young people there about the work being completed for the Local Offer and to raise the profile of the Local Offer website.</p>	Further identification of young people to join the group, taking into consideration the capacity of the young people. Attending Walsall collage and other further education provisions to enable more young people to have the opportunity to have a voice.	This outcome is complete. The YP group is established and looking for new YP to join. The group were actively involved in the interview process for the new team manager and have given what would be better if feedback. PFA is a key strand on the SEND strategy and is being led by the EHC team manager	Young Person's Group Terms of Reference, Young person's group Flyers, Young person's group twelve month plan, you said we did.	

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Increase Co-production with	APP 2.1.4	Develop and implement a robust communication and engagement strategy to ensure that parents, carers, children, young people, and professionals are aware of the local offer and can access feedback about improvements including 'You Said, We Did' and other survey results.	Report that they know where to go for information about SEND services in Walsall and that they are informed about changes and developments.	Head of Performance Improvement and Quality With comms leads from each organisation.	A communication and engagement strategy that has been drafted with parents, carers and partners and have begun to implement it.	Have fully established communication routes outlined in the strategy and set up feedback mechanisms to assess whether it is having an impact.	Have a fully embedded communication and engagement strategy and be assured through feedback mechanisms that parents, carers, children, young people, and professionals feel informed. Maintain the strategy through the continual identification of key actions and the maintenance of a robust action plan.	April 23 Complete	A twelve month agenda has been created starting from April which will align with the Big priorities. The Communication, Coproduction, Engagement and Participation Strategy has begun to be coproduced with parents and young people. All partners recognise that this should have been completed at the beginning of our journey, however there needed to be an element of relationship building completed prior to this to ensure that the strategy would be effective. We will continue to produce the Strategy over the coming weeks with full parent coproduction and consultation with young people during our young persons group.	The communication, coproduction, engagement and participation strategies to be completed with full coproduction with parents and consultation with young people. This will then be shared across all partners working in the Local Offer steering group. Coproduction champions from across the Borough in all areas. In Our Hands Local Offer Live sessions.		Twelve month plan for young people, communication, coproduction, and participation strategy, Young person Group Terms of Reference, Parent working Group Terms of Reference, Local Offer Strategy	
	APP 2.1.5	Ensure the Local Offer is accessible to people from diverse, multi-cultural backgrounds and hard to reach groups, including those that do not have access to digital means.	Report that they know where to go for information about SEND services and can access the information that is published on the local offer.	Local Offer Co-ordinator	Have begun to identify how the local offer can be made accessible for people from multi-cultural backgrounds and hard to reach groups, including those that do not have access to digital means, through conversations with parents from different communities and research of other local offers.	Have established protocols for ensuring that the local offer and new content is accessible to multi-cultural communities and hard to reach groups, including those that do not have access to digital means, and begun to implement changes for existing content.	Have a local offer which is accessible to parents, carers, children, and young people from multi-cultural backgrounds and hard to reach groups, including those that do not have access to digital means.	Sept 23 In Progress	We are aware through consultation that parents carers and young people appreciate diversity in the local offer website, particularly around pictures and illustrations and this will form part of our conversation during our website improvement day. We now have a translate button at the top of the Local Offer webpages which allows users to change to many different languages. We also have an accessibility element within Local Offer Strategy having consulted with the council accessibility specialist and are exploring Web accessibility standards to ensure that we are meeting the requirements of our community. We are also exploring creating a paper version of the Local Offer, and this will be discussed during our Local Offer Improvement day on 19th. We have visited schools within our hard to reach and multicultural and diverse communities, building relationships with a new member of the parent working group from our Muslim community. She has invited us to attend Mosque to introduce them to the Local Offer. We have also made links with and have been promoting the Digital Inequalities Programme who are offering parents and carers with a child with a disability that do not have access to digital equipment to obtain a Geobook Laptop and internet. The communication, coproduction, engagement and participation strategy will include details around ensuring accessibility.	Website Improvement Day on 19th April will help to support the voice of the parents and carers in our multicultural and heard to reach areas, and continue the work on the Local Offer in these areas. Local Offer flyers in different languages to be printed and distributed to all schools, community centres, health centres GP s. We will continue to work with the Accessibility Specialist within the Local Authority to ensure we are meeting the requirements on the new Local Offer. Hard copy of the Local Offer to be agreed, designed, printed and distributed. One Local Offer website is up to date and functioning, launching via family hubs to target wider scope of reach	The new local offer website his being developed with parents. We have a draft version which is now ready for content to be migrated over and new content to be added. A project lead is managing this process. The new local offer website will be live by November 2023.	Local Offer is up to date Improved hit rates Feedback from parents and carers	
Local Offer website	APP 2.2.1	Redevelop the webpages for the Local Offer, in co-production with parents and carers, to ensure that they are user friendly and easy to navigate and that all links work correctly.	Report that they can find and access the information they need in relation to SEND support and services in an easy to navigate and understand format.	Head of Performance Improvement and Quality With corporate web team	Identified resources for developing the webpages and begun to implement a robust and accelerated project plan.	Developed the new look and feel and tested it with parents and carers for appeal and usability.	Established the updated website and have in place mechanisms to respond to feedback about its usability. Understand who is using the website and which pages are working well and which may need further development through user feedback and website analytics.	August 23 In Progress	The Parent Working Group, Young Person's Group and the coproduction sessions have started to give us feedback to begin to build our structure for our Local Offer redesign. We are in the process of developing templates to gather information from partners and stakeholders, ensuring information meets the SEN code of practice, and meets the needs of the children young people and their families. We have a Local Offer Website improvement day on the 19th April currently with 17 parents attending where we will continue to consult with parents about what they would like on the Local Offer, from non-negotiables to aspirational.. An audit of the Local Offer information has been completed against the SEND regulations highlighting what meets the requirements and what needs to be added onto the template for the rewrite.	Local Offer website improvement day follow up will include further sessions (virtual and face to face) where we will update parents and carers on the progress of the Local Offer website. Members of the parent working group will continue to represent those parents as we coproduce the website with the digital team. FACE members have agreed to feedback to parents with updates. Parents will continue to be members of the Local Offer steering Group and working group.	New website draft template design brief has been produced for the overall look and feel for comments, this has been co-produced. Comments have been favourable and parents are happy with the proposed design. The site will be managed as a standalone microsite. The build for the new site is on track, this is expected to be available for user acceptance and testing week commencing the 18th September. Testing and fixes then will be worked on until the end of September. The content can then be migrated onto the live system by Mid October. A go live date can then be agreed for launch to the public.	Audit of the Local Offer webpages against the SEND regulations, Website Improvement day Eventbrite	

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Improve the look, content, and navigation of the Local Offer	APP 2.2.2	Update current information on the Local Offer to ensure that information is correct and that it meets the requirements set out in the code of practice including information about key therapeutic services such as OT and SALT	Report that they can find and access current and correct information about SEND Services in Walsall	Local Offer Co-ordinator with identified leads from partner organisations	Removed any out-of-date information and checked and updated existing information to ensure that it is accurate. Updated our gap analysis of required local offer information as per the code of practice.	Begun to address the gaps in the Local Offer by uploading the minimum required information as per the code of practice.	Fully developed the local offer content, to meet all of the standards outlined in the code of practice as well as other key information identified locally by parents, carers, children, and young people as things they would like to see.	Dec 22 Complete	<p>All information on the Local Offer is up to date, and broken and unnecessary links have been removed.</p> <p>We have completed an audit of the Local Offer webpages against the SEND Regulations to enable us to ensure that the information added when the rewrite is completed and the information transferred over, meets the requirements.</p> <p>We are currently creating a template for obtaining information from services including therapeutic services. Partners from these services are members of the Local Offer Steering Group, including the lead for speech and language and occupational health.</p>	<p>The local Offer steering group will be ongoing and we will continually review the information on the Local Offer following the rewrite. This will include parents and carers and young people will be given the opportunity to attend once they feel confident to do so.</p> <p>In order for the Local Offer partnership to continue, communication with stakeholder is essential.</p>	<p>The steering group is managing new content development. New information is being developed which will be included in the new local offer</p>	<p>Audit of the Local Offer webpages against the SEND regulations, Local Offer Steering Group TOR, Local Offer Strategy</p>	
	APP 2.2.3	Establish mechanisms for maintaining the Local Offer and keeping relevant information up to date and rationalise information sources, with clear expectations in place for local partners about their role in maintaining information.	Report that they can find and access current and correct information about SEND Services in Walsall	Local Offer Co-ordinator with identified leads from partner organisations	Established a list of contacts who are responsible for updating information on the Local Offer and begun to develop processes to ensure information is maintained.	Fully implemented process to maintain information on the Local Offer and established a quality checking process to ensure that standards are maintained.	Begun to identify how information sources across the Local Area for parents (e.g., SEND Local Offer, Early Help Local Offer, FIS) can be aligned and rationalised.	April 23 In Progress	<p>The Local Offer will be continuously reviewed via the Local Offer Steering Group, where attendees will be given the opportunity to discuss or share and updates or changes to information which will then be actioned by the Local Offer coordinator.</p> <p>Any new information will need to be discussed and agreed by the attendees prior to being actioned.</p> <p>The Local Offer website will be fully reviewed annually and these results will be displayed on the Local Offer website and shared through the In Our Hands working coproduction events.</p> <p>There will be an expectation that the service leads will review their specific area prior to the annual review to confirm that the information is correct and up to date. If this information should no longer apply then it is the expectation that the service lead will note the correct information and share this with the Local Offer coordinator.</p>	<p>The Local Offer steering group will continue to review the website pages as well as the services offered.</p> <p>The Local Offer coordinator should attend all appropriate strategic meetings to ensure that partners are invested in the Local Offer and following their responsibilities.</p> <p>The 'In Our Hands' Coproduction events will need to become bigger with the idea to have 'In Our Hands, Local Offer Live' sessions, where parents can come and share their views but also meet the services that are within the Local Offer.</p>	<p>The steering group is operational and able to review the Local offer on an ongoing basis to ensure all is up to date</p>	<p>Local Offer Strategy, Local Offer steering Group TOR, In Our hands promotional material</p>	

Risks that are aligned to the Accelerated Action Plan						
Date	Imp Plan Ref	Risk	Severity / Impact	Mitigation	RAG	Update
Oct-22	APP 1.1.1 – 1.1.6	That permanent staff are not able to recruited or existing staff leave resulting in insufficient staffing levels to meet demand of the service across the Local Area. (Local Authority and Health Agencies)	<p>Reduced and insufficient capacity to deliver high quality services which are effective and delivered at the right time and in the right place, resulting in statutory EHC assessments not being completed within timescales, compromising the 20-week statutory target for assessments.</p> <p>Fewer people choosing careers in relevant professions (e.g., Ed Psych, OT) and more people leaving the relevant professions mean that there is a smaller pool of candidates available nationally.</p> <p>Higher paid opportunities through a robust private market puts added pressure on Local Area budgets.</p>	<p>Use of agency staff to address capacity issues.</p> <p>Recruitment and retention strategy to be developed as part of the Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Advertising and recruitment of substantive posts ongoing across the Local Area (EHC Team, EP's, CAMHs and SLT).</p> <p>Establishment of new SEND lead post in healthy Child Programme 0-19 Service Health Visiting and School Nursing.</p> <p>Recruitment and retention activities in place across children's related pathways.</p> <p>Improving processes and systems mitigates some of the risk of insufficient capacity.</p>		
Oct-22	APP 1.1.1 – 1.1.6	<p>Funding is not agreed to increase capacity or if funding is agreed, sufficient staff cannot be recruited</p> <p>Associated risks are held within the Health Care Trusts and will be disaggregated and discussed in more detail as risk register is developed.</p> <p>(Local Authority and all Health Agencies)</p>	Statutory EHC advices cannot be completed within timescales compromising the 20-week statutory target for assessments and families wait too long for assessments and targeted interventions	<p>STP business case in place for increased capacity within the EHC assessment team.</p> <p>Business case in early stage of development to secure funding for additional Walsall Health Care Trust staff specialising in SEND and capacity reviews are underway in other areas.</p> <p>As part of the improvement plan, alternative and innovative ways of working will be explored to minimise additional funding requirements and mitigate any lack of funding available to increase staff capacity.</p>		
Oct-22	APP 1.2.1	Capacity within teams across the local area is compromised through addressing the backlog of advices and assessments. (Local Authority and all Health Agencies)	Advices and assessments continue to be out of timescales and plans cannot be updated in a timely manner following review.	<p>Additional staff are currently in place within the Local Authority with robust plans in place to clear the back log of assessments over the next three months.</p> <p>Teams across health have plans in place to clear outstanding advices and assessment waiting lists.</p>		
Oct-22	APP 1.3.6	That there is not enough funding available through the high needs block to meet increasing demand and increasing complexity of need. (Local Authority and Health Agencies)	Sufficient support is not available to meet demand and to implement support outlined in EHC Plans	<p>Robustly implement the graduated approach to SEND services in Walsall as outlined in our Getting it Right for SEND strategy so that children are supported at the right level.</p> <p>Ensure services that are available are of good quality and provide value for money through robust commissioning.</p> <p>Funding decisions are made jointly with the Local Area funding support needs fairly across agencies as identified in plans.</p>		
Oct-22	APP 2.2.1	There is a lack of technical skill and capacity available to update the local offer webpages	Local Offer remains difficult to navigate and update and parents and carers continue to feel that it is not a useful tool.	Work with LA corporate web team to ensure resources and support is in place.		

3rd October, 2023

Inclusion Hub Update - Report

Ward(s): ALL

Portfolios: Education and Skills - Councillor Mark Statham

1.0 Aim

- 1.1 This report will provide an overview of the work carried out by the Inclusion Hub during the 2022/23 academic year.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 For the committee to note the impact of the work carried out by the Inclusion Hub

3.0 Report detail – know

- 3.1 Walsall's Virtual School is responsible for liaising and working in partnership with agencies to support the education of looked after / vulnerable children. Following a national review which identified that 3 children in every classroom needed a social worker, Walsall Council developed its offer launching a Vulnerable Learners Hub (recently renamed Inclusion Hub) to improve educational outcomes of children with a social worker.
- 3.2 To support the new duties we developed a Vulnerable Learners Hub (now renamed the Inclusion Hub) and seconded three members of staff to work with social workers, schools and LA officers to help make visible the disadvantages children with a social worker can experience and promote practice that supports their engagement in education.
- 3.3 Funding for this team came from a £100K DfE grant which was initially for 1 year but was extended for a further year and more recently extended for an additional two years. The team is made up of 3 staff seconded from the School Attendance Service. The secondments have been extended in line with the funding extensions.
- 3.4 During the 2022/23 academic year the team have dealt with 429 referrals from social workers, schools and other professionals. This is an increase of 77 referrals from the previous academic year. The complexity of the referrals has also increased. This can be seen in the increase in the number of referrals for children who are not attending school, which has increased from 97 in 2022 to 179 in 2023 and the increase in referrals for children at risk of suspension or exclusion.
- 3.5 So far, this academic year the team have had 31 referrals and have already worked with schools to avoid the permanent exclusion of 5 young people

3.6 The chart below shows the overall referrals and SEN status of the young people the team received in 2022/23

2022/23	Total	%
Number of YP referred to the Inclusion Hub (overall)	429	100%
Number of YP referred to the Inclusion Hub with no recorded SEN	204	48%
Number of YP referred to the Inclusion Hub with SEN support	124	29%
Number of YP referred to the Inclusion Hub with an EHCP in progress	5	1%
Number of YP referred to the inclusion Hub with an EHCP	96	23%

Of the 429 referrals

172 issues related to school attendance

40 issues related to children missing education

95 issues related to suspensions and exclusions

23 issues related to school admissions/awaiting a school placement

40 issues related to special educational needs

23 issues related to children under Youth Justice

Other issues were around reduced timetables, managed moves and support for NEET

3.7 In addition to the work carried out to improve educational outcomes for children with a social worker, the staff in the Inclusion Hub are also challenging schools where children with an EHCP are at risk of permanent exclusion.

The table below shows the number of referrals into the hub for young people at risk of permanent exclusion.

Perm Ex referrals	Total
Number of YP referred at risk of Permanent Exclusion	31
Number of YP without an identified SEN who were at risk of PEx	15
Number of YP without an identified SEN who went on to be PEx	0
Number of YP on SEN support were at risk of PEx	8
Number of YP on SEN Support who went on to be PEx	0
Number of YP with an EHCP were at risk of /PEx	8
Number of YP that went on to be PEx	2
Total number of YP at risk of perm ex	31
Total number of exclusions avoided by the Inclusion Hub	29

3.8 Through hard work, determination, support and challenge, staff in the inclusion Hub were able to avoid the exclusion of 29 young people with a social worker or with an EHCP.

3.9 In addition to the work the team are doing to promote the education of children with a social worker and reducing exclusions of children with an EHCP they are now fully supporting children under the youth Justice Team and in the spring and summer term of 2023 they supported 20 young people open to JYS. The support they provided included:

- working with services to reduce the time young people were missing education,
- visiting young offenders' institutes to ensure young people are receiving appropriate education provision.
- liaising with schools to prevent suspensions/exclusions.
- challenging poor school attendance

3.10 The work of the Inclusion Hub around supporting children and young people under the Youth Justice Service was recognised as good practice in the recent HMIP Joint Thematic Inspection of children on remand. This also led to lead inspector requesting a further one to one discussion with staff in the Inclusion Hub, to gather further information on the work they are doing with children on remand, to include in the effective practise guide

3.11 The team also continue to lead a regional working group with staff from other authorities, sharing our good practice and learning from others.

3.12 Feedback

Alex James-Walker – Inclusion Officer

*Hello Alex. I just wanted to thank you for being there again today and how you spoke up for R again. I always go to these countless meetings with a heavy heart and little hope of a good outcome, but when I see you there my heart lifts as I know 100% you will fight his corner and I can't thank you enough for that as he's not a bad kid, he's just lost his way a little. Have a lovely summer break. You've earned it.
Grandmother of a child at risk of permanent exclusion*

Jennie Dalton -Education Liaison Officer in the Vulnerable Learners Hub

Thank you for your support with co-ordination and ensuring the right support is offered for the child attending Busill Jones Primary. As you are aware, I have shared many times we cannot achieve positive outcomes on our own. You have been accessible throughout, ensuring we are not missing any areas of support provided, this has been helpful. Thank you for being on the other end of the line."

Suki Baran, Director of family support services- Busill Jones (Shine Academies)

3.13 Case study

The child's core experiences.

- Child V is 9 years of age and is currently in year 5.
- V lives in the family home alongside Mum, 2 younger brothers and younger sister. Dad doesn't live in the family home but is involved on a day-to-day basis with the family.
- V has been supported by a Social Worker on a child protection plan for 5 years.

- V has an acquired brain injury due to a fall when they were 5 years of age. Health professionals have recorded that V may require support with this into adulthood.
- There were concerns around V's lack of sleep and sleep medication was being explored.
- V had recently been hospitalised due to hearing voices in their head
- V had been self-harming

School Content:

- Attendance at Primary school has been around 70-80% for the past three years with a number of late marks recorded. Siblings attends another primary school; this is closer to the family home, but parents decided that V would remain on the roll of their current school due to the high level of support they receive. Due to parents having to transport their children to two different primary schools each morning V would often arrive late. Support was offered by siblings' primary school who arranged for siblings to be collected by minibus some mornings.
- In February 2022 V was recorded as K for SEN support in school.
- Between January and March 2023 V received two suspensions from school due to use/threat of an offensive weapon.
- V had recently been hospitalised due to hearing voices in their head.
- V had started to self-harm.
- During this period V was also reported as missing and received support from the exploitation team.

School was becoming increasingly concerned around V's escalating behaviour and their capacity to be able to meet V's needs.

At this point school decided to progress with an EHCP assessment and sought the support and views of all professionals working with V. This included social worker, SEN professionals, support via BRICS, NHS staff members, The Inclusion Hub, and staff from the acquired brain injury team.

On 12/05/2023 the Local Authority was alerted by school that V had received a permanent exclusion due to an assault against another pupil.

Intervention and Outcome

The Inclusion Hub became involved in January 2023 and were attending all professionals' meetings regarding V and were liaising with SEN regarding the EHCP assessment.

The Inclusion Hub were alerted to V's permanent exclusion on 12/05/2023. The Inclusion Hub acted quickly to bring professionals together 3 days later to discuss the perm ex further and put additional support in place.

During the meeting with school, the following was discussed:

- School was awaiting educational psychologists final report.
- School said the incident leading to the permanent exclusion came unexpectedly, they had not seen that level of aggression in V previously.

The Inclusion Hub were able to liaise with the SEN team to explore NT&AS for V with this taking place in a local centre and away from the home.

SEN team moved quickly to ensure V was allocated this tuition whilst consultations were ongoing with specialist provision and their draft EHCP was in progress. With professionals acting quickly to come together to support V they were able to ensure V's EHCP was finalised, a more appropriate education setting was identified to better meet their needs and were able to get V's permanent exclusion rescinded. V is now attending a school who can meet his needs. It is early days but V is enjoying his new school, is settled and starting to make friends

Education was one of the main concerns as part of V's Child Protection plan. Following a Child Protection conference in July 2023 it was agreed by all professionals that V no longer met the threshold to remain on a Child Protection plan and was no longer at risk of significant harm.

The Child Protection chair praised the work of everyone involved in ensuring V was allocated an educational placement that would better meet their needs.

3.14 Further development of the Inclusion Hub

A recent delve into the 2023/23 primary school suspensions highlighted that children on SEN Support are more likely to receive a suspension than those with an EHCP or no special educational needs. Out of the 121 children in primary who received a suspension 59-49% were on SEN Support.

3.15 To enable us to address the high number of suspensions for children on SEN support, a report is being presented to Children's DMT to request a further two Inclusion Officers to sit within the Hub. This would mean we would be able to allocate an officer to each social work locality and extend our support to children on SEN Support.

3.16 To further support the work the team are doing to reduce exclusions and prevent children and young people disengaging with education, we will be virtually tracking 30 children who received at least 1 suspension in year 6 and who are now in year secondary school. We will monitor their progress, work with services to identify any unmet need and challenge schools to use suspension as a very last resort.

4.0 Financial information

4.1 The posts within the team are funded through the DfE VSH additional duties grants. Local authorities were given additional funds based on the number of schools. Walsall received £100k. This funding has been extended until the end of the academic year 2025

4.2 Funding for the additional two posts would come from existing budgets within Access & Inclusion

4.2 If the DfE funding is no longer available, to ensure we continue to deliver this successful service to our most vulnerable young people we will request investment as part of the STP and budget setting work

5.0 Reducing Inequalities

5.1 While there is no single cause for the poor educational outcomes for children with a social worker, experiences of adversity can create barriers to good outcomes. The work carried out by the VLH ensures that with the right support, the aspirations of these children can be raised to enable them to achieve their best and ensure there is equal access to education opportunities.

6.0 Decide

6.1 The committee may decide to request further information on the education outcomes of children with a social worker.

7.0 Respond

7.1 Any recommendations made by the committee will be responded to by the appropriate service area

8.0 Review

8.1 The actions and outcomes within this report are monitored by Access & Inclusion SMT and Children's Services DMT and through a monthly performance board

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3rd October 2023

Transitions in Special Educational Needs – Report

Ward(s): ALL

Portfolios: Education and Skills Councillor Statham

1. Aim

This report will provide an overview of the work carried out by the SEND Service (Special Educational Needs Service) in relation to key transitions for children and young people with an EHC plan during the 2022/23 academic year

2. Recommendations

For the committee to note the impact of the development, progress and achievements made out by the SEND Service in relation to transitions.

3. Report detail – know

3.1 The SEND Code of Practice

The SEND Code of Practice explains the explains the duties of local authorities, health bodies, early years providers, schools and colleges to provide for children and young people (from 0 to 25 years) with special educational needs and disabilities.

It contains details of legal requirements that must be followed without exception, and statutory guidance that must be followed by law unless there's a good reason not to, as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014, the Equality Act 2010, and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.

All schools must have regard to the Code when taking decisions relating to pupils with SEN or disabilities. This is explained on page 13 of the Code and Section 77 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

3.2 Transitions for Children and Young People with SEND

The term 'transition' can be used to describe the changes for a child or young person with SEND when they are moving into, within, between or out of educational settings. Key transitions can be particularly challenging for children with Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plans and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and it is crucial that all transitions are well planned and coordinated.

The key education transitions are:

- Beginning the Early Years Foundation Stage (0 to 2 years)
- Moving from Early Years to Primary
- Moving Key Stages within Primary (Early Years Foundation to Key Stage 1, Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2)
- Moving from Primary to Secondary (even if the child is Electively Home Educated)
- Moving from Secondary to Further/ Higher Education, or employment, and Preparing for Adulthood.

Effective transition planning for children with EHC (Education, Health and Care) plans and SEND involves careful coordination between schools, parents or carers, and relevant support services. The transition should aim to ensure that the child's specific needs, accommodations, and aspirations are well-considered throughout the process. This includes identifying suitable educational settings, providing adequate support structures, and facilitating continuity of care and services to help the child to prepare for a successful transition into adulthood.

Phase transfer reviews, also known as transition reviews, are a crucial part of the process to ensure that children and young people with EHC plans experience smooth transitions between different phases of their education. Phase transfer reviews happen in the school year before the transition and ensures the EHC plan is amended to reflect any needs, outcomes or provision that must be in place before, during and after the transition. There are statutory deadlines by which Walsall must have amended and issued the EHC plan.

3.3 **Walsall Phase Transfer Operational Process for Children and Young People with an EHC Plan for 2022 to 2023**

In the previous 2022/2023 academic year, we had the following numbers of children and young people in phase transfer cohorts:

- Early Years: 136
- Year 6: 232
- Year 11: 191
- Year 13/14: 321

Transition from Nursey to Primary Education (Nursery 2 EHC Review)

The deadline date for securing a reception place was the 15th February 2023. This can be difficult for nursery aged children as any start the EHC assessment at some point during the year group and many assessments are finalised after the deadline day due to the twenty-week assessment. In addition, some children are under compulsory school age and may stay in a nursery setting until the term before their fifth birthday. For this reason, Walsall achieved placements for 79% of nursery aged children entering primary education.

Transition from Primary to Secondary School (Year 6 EHC Review)

The statutory deadline for the final EHC plan to be issued or amended for the child's move to secondary school is by 15th February in Year 6. Last year Walsall completed 91% of year 6 transfers on time. The remaining phase transfers included difficulties securing placements and children who started statutory assessment too late to meet the deadline. By July 100% of children had appropriate placements named for year 7.

Transition from Secondary School to Post-16 Education, Training, or Employment: (Year 11)

The statutory deadline for finalising EHC plans for post-16 destinations is the 31st March. In Walsall we were able to secure 74% of year 11's by the deadline and 96% of all placements by the end of June. By the end of July 2023, all year 11 children had appropriate placements and provision within their EHC plans.

Within Primary Phase transfers (Year 2 EHC Reviews)

Year 2 is considered a phase transfer year group when the child is leaving infant school to start a separate junior school. The statutory deadline date is the 15th February of year 2. Walsall were able to secure 97% of children entering year 3 by the date. The remainder were agreed by the end of July 2023.

Improvements in Phase Transfer and Transition Planning for 2023 to 2024

In 2023, the EHC team used a temporary process to improve on the phase transfers from 2022 and to ensure all children had appropriate provision for September 2023. We have been able to reflect on the successes of this and implement a revised Annual Review Project to ensure progress is sustainable and effective. The below areas summarise the action plan and activities.

Early Years (EY) 0 to 5 Years

From September 2023, we have started to plan EY transitions a year in advance of the child's move to primary school. The Early Years SENCOS have received transition planning training. We recognise that the EHC pathway is 0 to 25 and as a result, we are establishing a robust 0 to 2 EHC pathway including health visitors and paediatrics who are identifying children with complex needs from birth and bringing them to the attention of the EHC system through the health gateway. The aim is that all children who need an EHC plan have one in place before they start education. In addition, our inclusion agenda includes ways in which the SENCOS in primary schools can support with visits, meetings, and sharing of information between the settings to ensure a seamless transition between nursery and primary schools.

Our Portage home teaching service has been a lifeline for children aged 2-4 with cognition and learning needs who have not yet entered formal education settings. This service has not only been incredibly valuable to both our Local Authority and families but has also facilitated accelerated progress for children. It ensures that children have an EHC plan in place before transitioning to an educational setting and empowers parents to confidently support their child's learning and development. Building on the success of our Portage home teaching service, we have extended the opportunity to early years settings to receive training for their staff. This training equips them with the knowledge and skills needed to support the smooth transition of children from home to school settings. We are delighted to report that this training has been met with overwhelming enthusiasm, with 12 settings already signed up. Training sessions, organised in collaboration with the Portage Association, are scheduled for later this term. This initiative ensures that our commitment to supporting children's development extends beyond the home and into their early education environments

Primary Transfers

We have made some progress within transition planning to ensure EHC plans are ready at the point of transition without delay. The new annual review process was launched to schools last autumn and followed up with a Guide on how to complete an annual review on the Hub, although some schools still use the old processes. The new Inclusion Framework supports SENCOS (Special Educational Needs Coordinators) to move the transition planning for this phase to in Year 5, ensuring that we can confirm the contents by Year 6. Effective transition planning includes early communication between the primary and secondary schools, along with collaboration with specialists and parents. Our EHC Plan Drafting allows for transition planning and can include provision around new environments, larger class sizes, and different teaching styles.

Preparation for Adulthood reviews (Year 9 onwards)

For young people with SEND, the transition from compulsory education to post-16 education, training, or employment is important. Our transition planning is focused on preparing them for adulthood and the Annual review paperwork now included areas on training and independent living skills. We are aiming to begin our transition planning process for this phase in Year 9. The team are using the Preparation for Adulthood Website guide on writing outcomes to ensure these are robust in EHC plans. For older children and young people, from year 9, SENCOS must now consider their preparation for adulthood (PFA) in the annual review. This includes areas on post-16 education, training, employment opportunities, and independent living skills. These areas are reflected in a specific PFA EHC plan for children 14 years and older.

Improved Paperwork

Our annual review paperwork has been adapted to include Person-Centred Planning to ensure this is a key approach in all transitions for children with SEND. The EHC team have completed the CDC (Council For Disabled Children) online learning modules which include training on child's strengths, preferences, and aspirations, ensuring that their individual needs are at the centre of the transition process.

Effective Communication

In 2022, we started our phase transfer process for children and young people with an EHC plan a year before the transition. A letter was sent to families, with a parental preference form for them to complete and inform the EHC Team of which school they would like their child to attend in September 2023. The form was not routinely returned which delayed naming schools. This year we have moved to an online form which is easier to fill in and return. All SENCOS have a link to the form and are completing this with parents at the annual reviews (which are happening in the Autumn Term). The form is stored electronically, and the team are able to see immediately which places are required for September 2024.

Effective communication between all stakeholders is a focus of development within the EHC team. The EHC Team have established and maintained communication with Walsall's Admissions Team to keep them informed of places. This system worked well and will be strengthened in 2023/2024.

The EHC team handbook includes details of how to host meetings, ensuring that everyone involved is aware of the child's progress and any adjustments needed

during transitions. The EHC team is fully staffed with permanent Family Liaison Officers (FLOS). This ensure that every family has a named officer who is dedicated to annual reviews and will support the family through the process. Every child will have their EHC plan transferred to the new template at the point of review and updated where needed. Parents are central to decision making and the new annual review process allows parents to be part of decision making at the meeting. We have introduced a scheme of delegation which allows SENCOS and officers to make some decisions at meetings without the need to bring information into the decision making groups. This avoids delays and allows the EHC plan to be updated in the meeting. In addition, parents and SENCOS are given a word document of the plan which they can amend and write directly onto with any suggested amendments.

Annual Review Backlog

Despite being successful at transfer reviews, we are aware we have much work this year on ensuring all children have a timely review and a plan which is updated and reflects needs and provision. The Annual Review Clearance project started in September 2023. This includes a weekly meeting to identify children who require actions and tasks undertaken. EHC officer training is planned for October which focuses on annual reviews. This includes clarity about timelines, the legislation, what their role and what decisions can be made. The inclusion framework in Walsall which was launched in the summer term on 2022-23 includes a focus on annual reviews. The relaunch of the expectations of paperwork and statutory timelines is the early stages of implementation. This will support schools with access to a dedicated team's area and inclusion email address regarding annual reviews. Schools are being alerted to which annual reviews are due and when they will be required to submit their paperwork. The EHC team are completing online learning modules on Annual Reviews. This is the first term when the EHC Annual Review team has been fully staffed with permanent officers. This will support parents and schools with a named officer.

4. *Financial information*

There are no key financial factors within this report.

5. *Reducing Inequalities*

Reducing inequalities for children and young people with an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan during key transitions is paramount to ensuring their successful journey through the education system and into adulthood. These critical transitions, such as moving from primary to secondary school or preparing for post-16 education and employment, can be particularly challenging for those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). By providing targeted support, personalised transition planning, and effective communication between schools, parents, and relevant support services, we can help minimize disparities and ensure that each child with an EHC plan has an equal opportunity to thrive during these pivotal moments. This proactive approach not only supports their academic progress but also fosters their overall development and prospects for a fulfilling future.

6. Decide

The committee may decide to request further information on the education outcomes of children with a social worker.

7. Respond

Any recommendations made by the committee will be responded to by the appropriate service area

8. Review

The actions and outcomes within this report are monitored by Access & Inclusion SMT and Children's Services DMT and through a monthly performance board.



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Learning Recovery – Report

Ward(s): ALL

Portfolios: Education and Skills – Councillor Mark Statham

1.0 Aim

1.1 The Department for Education (DfE) and Walsall Local Authority (LA) implemented a range of programs and initiatives to support learning recovery in schools and educational settings. These initiatives have been developed in response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and aim to address the learning loss and well-being concerns that students have faced. This report provides an overview of the key DfE and LA programs designed to aid learning recovery in schools and educational settings.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 For the committee to note the range of support available to schools from Walsall LA and the Department for Education..

3.0 Report detail – Know

3.1 The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted education worldwide, leading to extended periods of school closures and remote learning. As a result, students faced learning gaps and emotional challenges that needed to be addressed. In response to these issues, the DfE and Local Authority launched several programs to support learning recovery. These programs encompass a wide range of initiatives and strategies aimed at helping students catch up academically and promoting their well-being.

The pandemic affected pupils' learning as the country came out of lockdown in many different ways. Some pupils were not as ready for the next stage as they would usually be. Children in Reception joined with a wider range of starting points. Despite much work from schools, some had not caught up to where they need to be as they move into key stage 1. Similarly, some Year 6 pupils were not ready for secondary school. Many Year 11 and Year 13 pupils have also missed out on work experience opportunities.

3.2 For some pupils with SEND, the pandemic has had a disproportionate effect. Schools with strong systems in place before COVID-19 were continuing to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Effective support happened when schools had a clear understanding of pupils' individual needs and what extra help was required to meet the curriculum expectations. The pandemic delayed some pupils receiving support from external or specialist services.

3.3 The pandemic has exacerbated other existing challenges for schools. These include persistent pupil absence and access to specialist services. Many leaders and staff have worked tirelessly and creatively since the end of lockdown to settle pupils back into school routines and help them catch up academically. For some pupils, this has

been successful. However, some pupils are still behind both academically and in terms of wider development, which will affect them in future. This will be a challenge for these pupils as they take their next step.

4 What is available to support schools and settings

4.1 Catch-up Funding

The DfE provided financial assistance to local authorities for their maintained schools and for pupils that local authorities place in independent special settings, in the form of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) catch-up premium for the financial year beginning 1 April 2020. This funding was withdrawn at the end of 2021. Following this Universal catch-up premium funding has been made available and direct for all state-funded mainstream and special schools, and alternative provision. It covers:

- primary, middle, secondary and all-through local authority-maintained schools, academies and free schools
- local authority maintained special schools
- special academies and free schools
- non-maintained special schools
- pupil referral units
- alternative provision (AP) academies and free schools
- local authority-maintained and academy hospital schools
- local authorities for special educational needs and disability (SEND) pupils they place in independent special settings.

Schools in Walsall use this funding for specific activities to support their pupils' education recovery in line with the curriculum expectations.

School allocations are calculated on a per pupil basis.

While schools use their funding in a way that suits their cohort and circumstances, they are expected to use this funding for specific activities which will help pupils catch up on missed learning. Schools should particularly focus on disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils as we know they have been most affected. The majority of schools in Walsall spend their allocation of funding via the National Tutoring Programme.

4.2 The National Tutoring Programme (NTP) provides schools access to high quality subsidies tutoring through three separate routes - tuition partners, academic mentors, and school-led tutoring. These tutors – who have all been subject to robust high-quality training and safeguarding checks – can provide additional capacity to schools to support disadvantaged pupils who have been impacted by disruption to their education.

The NTP is open to all children and young people who need the most support catching up, including pupils with SEND. It was developed to provide additional, targeted support to children and young people having lost time in education during the pandemic, with schools provided the flexibility to identify the pupils who will benefit the most.

The tuition sessions are designed to be flexible and can happen in-school, either online or face-to-face, or during the school holidays. These arrangements depend on individual circumstances such as suitability for schools and parents, and tutor availability.

NTP and recovery funding was also allocated to the Virtual School to help children and young people in care catch up on any missed learning. In 2022/21 academic year 121 children and young people received additional tuition funded through NTP and in 2022/23 academic year the funding provided extra tuition/mentoring to 139 children and young people. Interim academic outcomes shows an improvement in the number of children at the end of KS2 achieving the expected outcomes in reading, writing and maths from 28% in 2019 to 40% in 2023.

The Virtual School also received recovery funding to also support children in care whose education has been impacted by Covid-19. In 2021/22 the funding was used to

- Provide additional learning resources and equipment
- Access projects and activities to raise self-esteem and confidence
- Access educational psychologists, therapists and mentors
- Provide short term alternative provision placements

In 2022/23 the recovery funding is being used to employ an attendance mentor to work with children and young people who have poor school attendance

4.3 Kooth – Mental Health Support

Walsall Council also worked in partnership with [Kooth](#) an organisation that supports children and families with mental health. We recognised that children’s recovery from the pandemic wasn’t going to be limited to a child’s academic journey, but also their mental health as they returned to school or in some cases started school for the first time after being in lock down.

Kooth is a free, safe, anonymous online emotional wellbeing community that is accessible 24/7, 365 days of the year and provides access to chat sessions with BACP-accredited counsellors and qualified emotional wellbeing practitioners.

The Kooth platform is accessible from any device that connects to wifi, allowing young people to seek support at a time and location that is suitable for them. The local authority promoted Kooth to our schools and invited colleagues from Kooth to come along and present at our virtual heads meeting that were held weekly during lockdown and termly moving forward. Kooth is still being used and promoted today in schools across Walsall where mental health support is needed.

4.4 LA School Improvement Support

The local authority commissions its school improvement support and monitoring from an external agency. This activity is funded from the DfE’s local authority monitoring and brokering grant (LAMB) and is ‘normally’ deployed on those LA maintained schools where the LA has a concern around standards and outcomes.

However, when lockdown was lifted, the local authority ensured that all LA maintained schools received at least one school improvement ‘Challenge and Support’ visit to check in on our schools and to support our school leaders who were

now picking up the Covid recovery baton in their schools. This support was well received and very much appreciated by our school colleagues.

4.5 Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs)

Recognizing the importance of students' mental health, the DfE has invested in the creation of Mental Health Support Teams. These teams work in schools to provide early intervention for mild to moderate mental health issues, reducing the impact of these challenges on learning. The goal is to ensure that students have access to mental health support within their educational settings.

Good mental health and wellbeing supports improved learning, behaviour, and attendance. This academic year schools and settings are benefitting from DfE-funded [senior mental health lead training](#).

The training develops the schools mental health lead's [knowledge and practical skills](#) on their journey to introduce an effective whole school/college approach to mental health/wellbeing.

Training will help them:

- identify need, and monitor impact, of mental health/wellbeing support
- develop approaches aligned with SENCO's work
- develop universal and targeted support offer
- engage students/pupils and develop positive relationships with parents/carers

4.6 Summer School Program

The DfE introduced a Summer School Program to help students catch up on missed learning during the summer break. Schools are encouraged to offer a mix of academic and enrichment activities to make the summer school experience engaging and beneficial. This initiative aims to mitigate the effects of interrupted learning and offer a positive learning environment during the vacation period

4.7 Oak National Academy

The Oak National Academy is an online platform that provides free resources and lessons aligned with the national curriculum. It offers a wide range of materials for students of all ages and abilities, including video lessons, quizzes, and worksheets. The platform serves as a valuable resource for both in-class and remote learning, aiding schools in delivering effective catch-up lessons.

4.8 Attendance Support

Improving attendance remains a key priority for this year.

Working with a research agency, the Department for Education has published a [toolkit to support effective communication with families about school attendance](#).

The toolkit includes:

- top tips for communicating with parents and carers about attendance.
- research that supports the suggested messages parents and carers engage with most and adaptable templates for communicating with parents and carers.

4.9 BUILDING RESILIENT AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS (BRICS)

BRICS aims to provide a service that supports schools in understanding, using and developing practical and creative strategies to enable pupils with a range of barriers to learning to become more successful in school, thereby reducing suspensions and exclusions in Walsall and improving outcomes for our most vulnerable children and young people.

BRICS is a service which proposes joint working between schools and the local authority to support the education of vulnerable children with a wide range of barriers to learning: to improve engagement, wellbeing and learning behaviours in order that they can be resilient and successful learners.

BRICS aims to work in partnership with children, school staff, parents/carers and other professionals to encourage positive learning communities which meet each child's needs. This will be achieved through a flexible, collaborative, empathetic and child-centred approach rooted in responsive, innovative and inclusive solutions.

BRICS is a de-delegated service available to all maintained schools, and accessible as a traded service for academies, special schools, maintained nursery schools and PRUs.

The service provides targeted support, intervention and training through a tiered approach, in order to facilitate purposeful change and sustainability throughout school.

BRICS will encourage schools to use the service to develop in-house expertise and embed a consistent whole school ethos that enables effective support at all levels. Full details of services proposed can be found in this document.

BRICS will provide a ladder of intervention and support starting with the firm foundations which are offered through the Training and Development Offer.

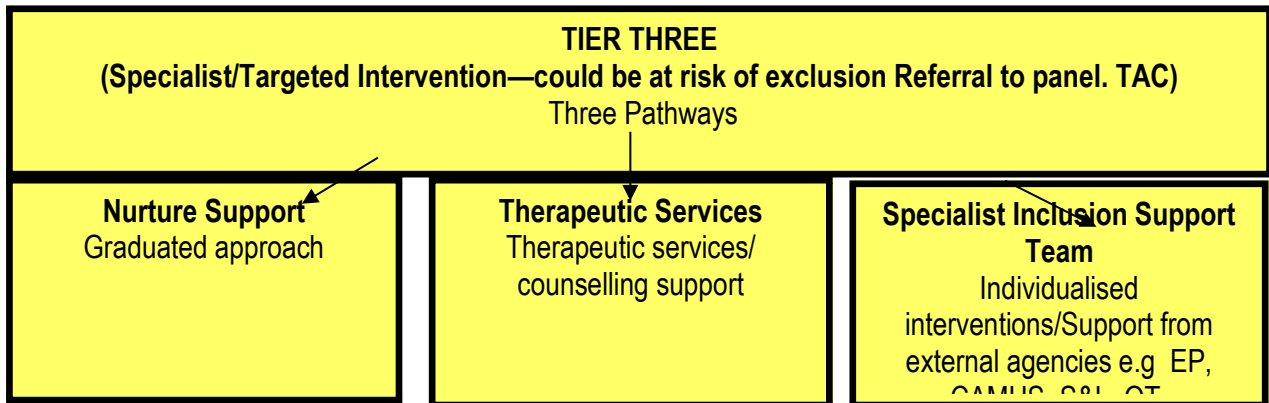
All schools, and academies who engage with BRICS, will have access to the training and development offer as tier one support to develop their practice of inclusive whole school approaches including;

- Principles of Nurture
- Using the PACE approach -
- Low Arousal Approach
- Restorative Practice Training
- Walsall Council Restorative Practice, Relationships and Behaviour Guidance Document – Education Psychologist workshops designed to support schools to develop their school policies
- AET training
- Support working towards AET Inclusion Award
- Demand Avoidance Training
- Using the Boxall profile
- Whole setting access to Creative Education

Inclusion and Wellbeing Pyramid

BRICS

INCLUSION & WELLBEING PYRAMID



TIER TWO (Universal Identification & Evaluation of additional needs &/or barriers) Inclusion Support Officers

At point of escalation or First suspension

- High quality assessment for learning—focused observations/ assessments
- Screening of barriers to learning— SEMH barriers/Risks & Protective factors
- Pupil Progress Meetings—Resiliency Planning
- Person Centred planning—Pupil /Parent Voice
- Early intervention (issue/initiative/impact)

TIER ONE (Inclusive Whole School Approaches)

Relational Approach
*Relationships first
*PACE approach
*Key adults
*Family Groups
*Family support team

Inclusive Quality First Teaching
*High Expectations/Consistent routines
*Reasonable adjustments e.g:
*Differentiation
*Visuals, scaffolds & resources

Inclusive Curriculum
*Inclusive Curriculum
*Equal Opportunities
*Targeted SEMH Curriculum
*Personalisation

Trauma/ attachment responsive
*Inclusive & Safe Environment
*Differentiated discipline
*State dependent interventions
*Low Arousal approach

Restorative responses:
*Use of Language
*Steps to success
*Conversations
*Class Circles
*Natural/Logical Consequences

Although this is a new service, we are confident that it offers a service that schools need in order to support and develop inclusive practice, reduce exclusions and improve outcomes.

We will be able to provide support from practitioners with a range of experience, knowledge and skills to initially assess children and young people and to signpost evidence-based intervention. These officers and specialists are drawn from our schools and Local Authority services. This ensures the service schools receive will be of the highest quality.

4.10 Information about Trainers and Training Offers in BRICS Program

Low Arousal Approach - <https://www.studio3.org/low-arousal-training>

Restorative Practice - <https://130relationalsystems.co.uk/school-services/>

Creative Education - <https://www.creativeeducation.co.uk/>

Creative Education provide:

- A separate membership for each school
- A designated client relationship manager at Creative Education as your main point of contact and for continued support throughout the membership
- Termly meetings to discuss each schools' goals and training requirements
- Help with course suggestions
- Help to create Teams within each school's membership and the allocation of courses either to individuals or Teams
- We would be open to discuss the creation of new courses/webinars should there be a need across a number of the schools within this membership
- This membership would provide a complete CPD log for each school and any external courses can also be added. A report can then easily be printed/downloaded at a touch a button.

Autism Education Trust - <https://www.northstarfederation.org.uk/niat/autism-education-trust>

The Autism Education Trust (AET) helps children and young people with autism to receive an education, enabling them to reach their potential.

The AET is a not for profit programme led by two national autism charities – the National Autistic Society and Ambitious about Autism. Established and supported by the Department for Education, the AET promotes and supports partnerships throughout the education system to improve educational access, experience and outcomes for children and young people with autism.

Underpinned by current research into good education practice, the AET programme is structured around the three education phases – early years, school and post 16. Their core values are: person-centred, outcomes and process focussed, inclusive and accessible, evidence-based, high quality and

working in partnership. Training can be delivered face-to-face or virtually for professionals working with Autistic children and young people up to the age of 25. The modules include Good Autism Practice, Transition to Employment, Autism and anxiety, Autism and Exclusions and Making sense of autism

5.0 Improving Outcomes 2023

- 5.1 The number of schools in Walsall being judged to be good or outstanding by Ofsted has risen significantly over recent years. Provisionally, the overall percentage of schools in Walsall judged to be 'good or better' by Ofsted, is now above the national average at 89.3% compared to the national figure of 88.7%.
- 5.2 Pupil outcomes in our nursery and primary schools has improved this year on last year's outcomes. The gap to national is closing in all measures, with the exception of Y1 Phonics.

Phase	Measure	2023 vs 2022	Vs National – gap
EYFS	%Achieving good level of development	Better	Improving
Y1 Phonics	% at expected level	Better	Widening
KS1	% achieving expected standard – Reading	Better	Improving
	% achieving expected standard –Writing	Better	Improving
	% achieving expected standard – Maths	Better	Improving
KS2	% achieving expected standard – Reading, Writing and Maths	Better	Improving

- 5.3 Secondary schools outcomes at KS4 for the percentage of students achieving 5+ in English and Maths and achieving the Ebacc have improved this year on 2019 outcomes prior to Covid.

Phase	Measure	2023 vs 2019
KS4	% Achieving 5+ In English and Maths	Better
	% Achieving <u>Ebacc</u>	Better

National figures are not yet available for comparisons.

6.0 Conclusion

The programs for learning recovery in schools and educational settings represent a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to addressing the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. These initiatives range from academic support to mental health resources, recognizing that learning recovery is not limited to the classroom but extends to the well-being of students. By investing in these programs, the DfE demonstrates its commitment to providing the necessary resources and support to

ensure that all students have the opportunity to thrive in their education. Monitoring and evaluation by schools will be essential to assess the impact of these programs and make adjustments as needed to continue supporting learning recovery effectively.

7.0 Reducing Inequalities

7.1 Where provisional results are available this year such as Early Years (Good Level of Development), the gap for our disadvantaged pupils is narrowing. We will be completing a detailed analysis of our most vulnerable cohorts as the data is available.

8.0 Decide

8.1 The committee may decide to request further information on the education outcomes of children within Walsall.

9.0 Respond

9.1 Any recommendations made by the committee will be responded to by the appropriate service area

10.0 Review

10.1 The actions and outcomes within this report are monitored by Access & Inclusion SMT and by individual schools. Schools have to report use of grants etc directly to the DfE.

Author(s)

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And

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Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Recommendation Tracker (22/23)

29 June 2023	Procedural questions	Request for additional information on co-opted Members of the Committee and their voting rights.	Jack Thompson	Complete	31 August 2023	Email sent to Members clarifying the legislation and convention behind co-opted Members, their voting rights and how they are appointed.
	Areas of focus	That the suggested items for the Committees work programme be compiled, ordered in themes and be sent via email to all Members of the Committee.	Jack Thompson	Complete	5 July 2023	Agreed work programme sent to Members via email.
4 September 2023	Children not in School Update Report	That the Cabinet write to the Secretary of State for Education to implement the Children Not in School Register as soon as possible.	Jack Thompson	In Progress		Report to be presented to Cabinet on the 18 October 2023.
		To request that Cabinet asks that the Government pay the fees for children in Elective Home Education to sit standardised examinations.	Jack Thompson	In Progress		Report to be presented to Cabinet on the 18 October 2023.
		That the Cabinet note the concerns of the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the disproportionately lower school attendance figures of boys, SEN pupils and those pupils receiving free school meals.	Jack Thompson	In Progress		Report to be presented to Cabinet on the 18 October 2023.

		<p>That the Committee receive an updated report on attendance in the future. An interim report being made available to Members of the Committee in January and a full school term update being presented at its meeting in February 2024.</p>	<p>Jack Thompson/ Sharon Kelly/ Rob Thomas</p>	<p>In Progress</p>		<p>Committee to receive update via email in January and a report presented at the meeting in February 2024.</p>
		<p>That the Committee receive the following additional information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of ongoing legal proceeding in relation to school attendance orders; • To seek advice on whether individual school attendance data can be shared with the Committee and to write to Members once this determination had been made; • To be given the percentage of change in the Total EHE Registrations table comparing the Council with regional and statistical neighbours; • To provide data on the number of referrals for exclusions to the Councils Inclusion Hub in the 	<p>Jack Thompson/ Rob Thomas/ Lorraine Thompson</p>	<p>In Progress</p>		

		report on the Hub to be presented at the next meeting of the Committee in October.				
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Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Work programme 2023/24

Main agenda items	05/09/23	03/10/23	21/11/23	11/01/24	15/02/24	26/03/24
Theme: Children not in School						
Attendance	X					
Children Missing in Education (CME)	X					
Exclusion and Suspensions	X					
Theme: Inclusion						
SEND Developments inc EHCPs		X				
Inclusion Hub		X				
Transitions		X				
Learning Recovery		X				
Theme: School Place Planning						
Specialist Provision Plan inc SEN school places			X			
Mainstream Pupil Place Planning and Capital Strategy			X			
School Admissions			X			
Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring & Budget Setting 2024/25			X			
Theme: Outcomes						
School Attainment Data				X		
Ofsted Data and Outcomes				X		
Schools Causing Concern				X		
Theme: Skills and development						
Skills Strategy and Development					X	
Post 16 Provision					X	
Alternative Provision					X	
Attendance – full term update report					X	
Theme: Early years						
School Readiness and EYFS (Early Year Foundation Stage) Outcomes						X
Early Years SEN Development						X

Childcare Sufficiency and Plans						X
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FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

**Council House,
Lichfield Street,
Walsall, WS1 1TW**
www.walsall.gov.uk

4 September 2023

FORWARD PLAN

The forward plan sets out decisions that are termed as “key decisions” at least 28 calendar days before they are due to be taken by the Executive (Cabinet). Also included on the plan are other decisions to be taken by the Cabinet (“non-key decisions”). Preparation of the forward plan helps the Council to programme its work. The purpose of the forward plan is to give plenty of notice and an opportunity for consultation on the issues to be discussed. The plan is updated each month with the period of the plan being rolled forward by one month and republished. Copies of the plan can be obtained from Democratic Services, Walsall MBC, Council House, Walsall, WS1 1TW craig.goodall@walsall.gov.uk and can also be accessed from the Council’s website at www.walsall.gov.uk. The Cabinet is allowed to make urgent decisions which do not appear in the forward plan, however, a notice will be included on the agenda for the relevant Cabinet meeting which explains the reasons why.

Please note that the decision dates are indicative and are subject to change. Please contact the above addressee if you wish to check the date for a particular item.

The Cabinet agenda and reports are available for inspection by the public 7 days prior to the meeting of the Cabinet on the Council’s website. Background papers are listed on each report submitted to the Cabinet and members of the public are entitled to see these documents unless they are confidential. The report also contains the name and telephone number of a contact officer. These details can also be found in the forward plan.

Meetings of the Cabinet are open to the public. Occasionally there are items included on the agenda which are confidential and for those items the public will be asked to leave the meeting. The forward plan will show where this is intended and the reason why the reports are confidential. Enquiries regarding these reasons should be directed to Democratic Services (craig.goodall@walsall.gov.uk).

“Key decisions” are those decisions which have a significant effect within the community or which involve considerable expenditure or savings. With regard to key decisions the Council’s Constitution states:

- (1) A key decision is:
 - (i) any decision in relation to an executive function which results in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant, having regard to the Council’s budget for the service or function to which the decision relates or
 - (ii) any decision that is likely to have significant impact on two or more wards within the borough.
- (2) The threshold for “significant” expenditure/savings is £500,000.
- (3) A decision taker may only make a key decision in accordance with the requirements of the Executive Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

**FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS
OCTOBER 2023 TO JANUARY 2024 (04.09.2023)**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Reference No./ Date first entered in Plan	Decision to be considered (to provide adequate details for those both in and outside the Council)	Decision maker	Background papers (if any) and Contact Officer	Main consultees	Contact Member (All Members can be written to at Civic Centre, Walsall)	Date item to be considered
31/23 (3.7.23)	Deeper Devolution Deal Approval of the West Midlands Combined Authority West Midlands Trailblazer Deeper Devolution Deal and Action Plan.	Cabinet Key Decision	Caroline Harper, Regeneration Officer Caroline.Harper@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	20 September 2023
26/23 (5.6.23)	Draft Revenue Budget and Draft Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2027/28 To provide an updated medium term financial outlook, draft revenue budget and capital programme for 2024/25 to 2027/28, including savings proposals, and to set out the process and timescales for setting a legally balanced budget for 2024/25.	Cabinet Non-key Decision	Vicky Buckley Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk	Rate payers, voluntary and community organisations, Internal Services	Cllr Bird	18 October 2023
32/23 (3.7.23)	Council Plan 2022/25 – Q1 23/24 To note the Quarter 1 2023/24 (outturn) performance against the Markers of Success in the Council Plan 2022/25	Cabinet Non-key Decision	Elizabeth Connolly Elizabeth.Connolly@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	18 October 2023
27/23 (5.6.23)	Corporate Financial Performance 2023/24	Cabinet	Vicky Buckley	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	18 October 2023

	To report the financial position based on 6 months to September 2023.	Non-key Decision	Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk			
40/23 (4.9.23)	Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) To seek approval for the adoption and publication of guidance on BNG, the publication of the Black Country Local Nature Recovery Map and Strategy, and its use as a working document	Cabinet Key Decision	The Black Country Local Nature Recovery Map and Strategy Sammy Pritchard Sammy.Pritchard@walsall.gov.uk David Holloway David.Holloway@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	18 October 2023
41/23 (4.9.23)	Willenhall Framework Plan: Phase 1 Developer Partner Procurement Outcome and Award To provide an update on the outcome of the developer partner procurement <i>This will be a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i>	Cabinet Key Decision	Kauser Agha Kauser.Agha@walsall.gov.uk	Internal services, Legal (external)	Cllr Andrew	18 October 2023
42/23 (4.9.23)	Sale of the Former Allens Centre, Hilton Road, Willenhall To seek approval for the sale of the former Allens Centre in Willenhall. <i>This will be a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i>	Cabinet Key Decision	Nick Ford Nick.Ford@walsall.gov.uk	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	18 October 2023

36/23 (7.8.23)	<p>Healthy Eating for Children and Young People Programme</p> <p>To seek approval to procure a new healthy eating and weight management programme for children and young people in Walsall.</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	<p>Esther Higdon</p> <p>Esther.Higdon@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Internal Services</p> <p>Walsall Healthcare Trust</p>	Cllr Flint	18 October 2023
43/23 (4.9.23)	<p>Integrated sexual and reproductive health services and the Healthy Child Programme 0-19 Section 75 Agreement Extensions</p> <p>To seek approval for the extension of the Section 75 agreement for the delivery of integrated sexual and reproductive health services and the Healthy Child Programme 0-19.</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	<p>Esther Higdon</p> <p>Esther.Higdon@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Internal Services</p> <p>Walsall Healthcare Trust</p>	Cllr Flint	18 October 2023
33/23 (3.7.23)	<p>Winter Service Operational Plan 2023- 2028</p> <p>To approve the winter service operational plan.</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	<p>Paul Leighton</p> <p>Paul.Leighton@walsall.gov.uk</p> <p>Graham Wallis</p> <p>Graham.Wallis@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Internal Services</p>	Cllr Murphy	18 October 2023
44/23 (4.9.23)	<p>Street Lighting Post-PFI Arrangements</p> <p>To approve the service delivery model for the street lighting service from April 2028.</p>	Cabinet Key Decision	<p>Katie Moreton</p> <p>Kathryn.Moreton@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Internal Services</p>	Cllr Murphy	18 October 2023

45/23 (4.9.23)	<p>Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2023/24</p> <p>The Food Standards Agency (FSA) requires all local authorities to prepare an annual service delivery plan to reflect the work required of food authorities by the FSA, under the requirements of the Food Standards Act 1999 and the framework agreement on local authority enforcement. In accordance with this requirement a Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2023/24 has been prepared and a decision is required from members to obtain authority to approve this plan.</p>	<p>Cabinet Council Non-key Decision</p>	<p>Paul Rooney Paul.Rooney@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Internal Services</p>	<p>Cllr Perry</p>	<p>Cabinet 18 October 2023 Council 6 November 2023</p>
34/23 (3.7.23)	<p>Early Years Funding Formula 2023/24:</p> <p>That Cabinet approves changes to the Early Years Funding Formula for 2023/24 following notification of an increase in the hourly funding rates.</p>	<p>Cabinet Key Decision</p>	<p>ESFA – Early Years funding operational guide Richard Walley Richard.Walley@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Schools Forum Internal Services</p>	<p>Cllr Statham</p>	<p>18 October 2023</p>
35/23 (3.7.23)	<p>Schools Mainstream Local Funding Formula 2024/25:</p> <p>That Cabinet approves the Mainstream Local Funding Formula, to be used for the allocation of mainstream funding to schools in Walsall.</p>	<p>Cabinet Key Decision</p>	<p>ESFA – Schools revenue funding operation guide Richard Walley Richard.walley@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Schools Forum Internal Services</p>	<p>Cllr Statham</p>	<p>18 October 2023</p>
46/23 (4.9.23)	<p>SEN Place Requirement</p> <p>To approve finance for additional special educational needs school places.</p>	<p>Cabinet Key Decision</p>	<p>Alex Groom Alex.Groom@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Internal services</p>	<p>Cllr Statham</p>	<p>18 October 2023</p>

37/23 (7.8.23)	<p>Autumn Budget and Spending Review, and feedback from Overview and Scrutiny Committees on draft revenue and capital budget proposals 2024/25 to 2027/28</p> <p>To provide an update on the impact of the Autumn Budget and Spending Review on the medium-term financial outlook, and to consider feedback from Overview and Scrutiny Committees on the draft revenue and capital budget.</p>	<p>Cabinet Non-key Decision</p>	<p>Vicky Buckley Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Council tax payers, business rate payers, voluntary and community organisations. Internal services</p>	<p>Cllr Bird</p>	<p>13 December 2023</p>
38/23 (7.8.23)	<p>Treasury Management Mid Year Position Statement 2023/24</p> <p>To note and forward to Council, for consideration and noting (and in line with the requirements of the Treasury Management Code of Practice (2017), the mid year report for treasury management activities 2023/24 including prudential and local indicators.</p>	<p>Council Non-key Decision</p>	<p>Treasury Management Code of Practice. Richard Walley Richard.Walley@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Internal services</p>	<p>Cllr Ferguson</p>	<p>13 December 2023</p>
39/23 (7.8.23)	<p>Strategic Leisure Review</p> <p>To update on the performance and impact of the four leisure facilities. To approve recommendations around the current and future facility stock.</p>	<p>Cabinet Key Decision</p>	<p>Stuart Webb Stuart.Webb@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Internal services</p>	<p>Cllr Flint</p>	<p>13 December 2023</p>
14/23 (6.2.23)	<p>Growth Funding for Schools:</p> <p>To enable the Local Authority to fulfil its duty to secure sufficient primary and secondary school places, through the</p>	<p>Cabinet Key Decision</p>	<p>Alex Groom Alex.Groom@walsall.gov.uk</p>	<p>Internal services, Schools Forum</p>	<p>Cllr Statham</p>	<p>13 December 2023</p>

	adoption of a policy for the application of revenue funding for school growth.					
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Black Country Executive Joint Committee
Forward Plan of Key Decisions

Published up to January 2024

Date Created	Key Decision	Contact Officer	Main consultee	Date of meeting
	Black Country Executive Joint Committee Governance			
04/09/2023	Change Control and Delegated Authority Approval of BCJC Delegated Authority to the Single Accountable Body Section 151 Officer and approval of the revised Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (BCLEP) Assurance Framework Change Control and Delegated Authority delegations, as detailed in the attachment of the report (BCLEP Assurance Framework Appendix 23).	David Moore david.moore@walsall.gov.uk Mark Lavender mark.lavender@walsall.gov.uk	Walsall Council	01/11/2023