

## Nottinghamshire SEND Partnership Improvement Board: October 2023 stakeholder update.

Following the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) local area inspection undertaken by Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) in early 2023, the SEND Partnership Improvement Board has been established to oversee SEND improvement activity in Nottinghamshire, with a focus on improvements identified in the inspection report. The Board meets monthly and is chaired independently by Dame Christine Lenehan, formerly Director Council for Disabled Children.

The aim of the Nottinghamshire SEND Improvement Board is to provide both challenge and support across the partnership, facilitating solution-focussed practice to resolve issues and barriers impacting on the timely delivery of the Nottinghamshire SEND Improvement Programme. It ensures the aims are achieved at the required pace and through joint ownership of partner members, whilst maintaining a relentless focus on the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND in Nottinghamshire.

The most recent Board meeting took place on 22 September with a particular focus on the Priority Action One and the recent DFE & NHS England's Deep Dive review. The following points were acknowledged by board members:

- Progress is being made in Priority Action one with a significant amount of drive, albeit at an early stage. Assurance is required that pace, momentum, and future accountability will be sustained and the recent first Department for Education's / NHS England's Deep Dive review acknowledged the role of the Improvement Board in achieving this.
- The Deep Dive recognised there has been substantial activity and additional resources, both of which are having a positive impact on achieving statutory timescales. However, there is a need to improve co-ordination across the two priority action areas.
- There have been improvements to the average waiting times for the completion of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). Currently the average time is 26 weeks, a reduction from over 31 weeks in January 2023. Improvements have been made to the communications with families waiting for an EHCP.
- The Board referred to the pressures surrounding educational psychologist (EP) capacity. The Local Authority is increasing agency EP capacity and approval has been provided to increase the in-house EP establishment.

- The SEND Improvement journey is at an early stage, and it is recognised that educational settings have a critical role especially in developing and supporting inclusion.
- The Board recognised the importance of the role of Educational Psychologists (EPs) in improving SEND outcomes and the school leaders on the Board commented that schools need to support each other, and that valuable knowledge is being provided by expert practitioners.
- Further partnership improvement work requires active listening and learning from parents to enhance parental confidence as well as to carers, and from children, young people, education, social care, and healthcare providers to ensure their voices are clearly heard. It was agreed to give consideration on how to enhance parental confidence at the next Board meeting.
- The Board discussed the robust requirement for multi-agency support in the role of SEND improvement. There is an ongoing requirement to share knowledge, understand and be accountable around the Improvement Programme across the education, health, and care sectors, as well as shared commitment to support change and improvement.

#### Improvement Board attendees

- Dame Christine Lenehan: Independent Chair, Council for Disabled Children
- Councillor Tracey Taylor, Lead Member for Children and Families at Nottinghamshire County Council
- Nick Harrison: Senior Programme Manager, Children and Young People and SEND, NHS England (NHSE)
- Peter McConnochie, Service Director, Education, Learning and Inclusion at Nottinghamshire County Council
- Georgina Palmer: Lead of Nottinghamshire Parent/Carer Forum, Nottinghamshire Parent/Carer Forum
- Paul Roberts, Head of Vulnerable Childrens Unit, Department for Education
- Kevin Rowland, SEND Professional Adviser, Department for Education
- Paul Heery: Chief Executive Officer, White Hills Park Trust
- Matt Rooney, Principal, St Giles School
- Rosa Waddingham: Director of Nursing & Joint SRO of the SEND Improvement Programme, NHS Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board
- Colin Pettigrew: Corporate Director, Children and Families & Joint SRO of the SEND Improvement Programme, Nottinghamshire County Council
- Melanie Williams: Corporate Director, Adult Social Care & Public Health and Member of Integrated Care Partnership Board, Nottinghamshire County Council

- Kevin Rowland, Regional SEND Adviser, East Midlands and Yorkshire, Department for Education
- Deborah Glassbrook, SEND Improvement Adviser, Local Government Association
- Gemma Foster, SEND Improvement and Interventions Case Lead, Department for Education
- Julie Cuthbert, Head of Communications, NHS Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board
- Nicola Ryan, Deputy Chief Nurse, NHS Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board
- Michelle Sherlock, Designated Clinical Officer for Special Education, Needs & Disabilities (SEND), NHS Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board
- Lynda Poole, Group Manager, ICDS, Nottinghamshire County Council
- Dr Orlaith Green, Group Manager, Psychology and Inclusion Services, Nottinghamshire County Council
- Robert Briggs, Service Manager, EHCP (pre-16), Nottinghamshire County Council
- Chris Jones, SEND Strategic Lead, Nottinghamshire County Council
- Heather Bennett, Executive Officer, Nottinghamshire County Council

Apologies:

- Lucy Dadge, Director of Integration, NHS Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board
- Tina Ward, Children and Young People Learning Disability and Autism and SEND Senior Manager (East Midlands), NHSE
- Natasha Mathers: SEND Improvement Programme Manager, NHS Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board *and* Nottinghamshire County Council
- Sarah Dalgress, SEND Improvement Programme Business Administrator, Nottinghamshire County Council
- Simon Ray, Team Manager, Nottinghamshire County Council