

## Nottinghamshire SEND Partnership Improvement Board: May 2025 partner update.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Partnership Improvement Board has been established to oversee SEND improvement activity across the whole system in Nottinghamshire, with a focus on the priorities and areas for improvements identified in the [Ofsted and CQC inspection report](#). The Board meets every six weeks and is chaired independently by Dame Christine Lenehan, Strategic Advisor for SEND for the Department for Education.

The aim of the Nottinghamshire SEND Improvement Board is to robustly track, monitor and oversee the Nottinghamshire SEND Improvement Programme so that the aims are achieved at pace and provide challenge and support to increase the likelihood of the aims being achieved.

The purpose of these partner briefings is to update you on progress of the SEND Improvement Programme so you can share the work that is taking place via your networks. You can see previous [briefings](#) from Improvement Board meetings from June 2023 onwards.

The most recent Board meeting took place on 12 May which focused on the Priority Action Plan, SEND data dashboard and preparation for the Ofsted visit.

### Progress report

The full highlight / progress report has been provided to the Board ahead of the Ofsted visit to update on progress and areas that need further development.

The report now also includes impact statements and feedback from children and young people with SEND, parents and carers.

The improvement programme team are working on two additional documents which cover the areas where more progress is needed – annual reviews and quality assurance. These will be shared with the Board over the next couple of weeks.

### Priority Action Plan position statement

The improvement programme have provided an update on progress since the inspection in 2023. The following examples are a snapshot of this work:

*Leaders, NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board and education, health, and care providers should cooperate to urgently identify, assess*

*and provide for the needs of children and young people with SEND. This includes assessment of needs, timely issuing of EHC plans and holistic oversight of these plans through annual reviews.*

Where we are now:

- In 2025 (year-to-date), 50.26% of EHC Plans were issued within timescales, increased from 4.2% at the point of inspection.
- We have invested in significant locum EP capacity and longer-term expansion of our Educational Psychology Service to improve our EHC needs assessment capacity. Through our 'grow your own' recruitment programme, we have now recruited an additional 9 Full-Time Educational Psychologists to start with us by September 2027. This is a service increase of 55% from the point of inspection. 7 of these staff are also currently working with us as Trainee Educational Psychologists.
- We are getting better at meeting the increased demand for assessments supported by the permanent investment of an additional £1.8 million within the ICDS Assessment team. This additional capacity has helped us to improve our communication and level of service for families.
- SEND Educational Pathway Officers are holding structured conversations to better support decision making at Stage 1 of the EHC needs assessment process. Families are further supported as these officers offer a 'next steps' meeting following a 'no to assess' decision to signpost to appropriate support and ensure needs are met through our [Local Offer SEND Journey Map](#).

*Area for improvement: Leaders, including commissioners and providers, should act urgently to identify and address the delays and gaps in access to some health services, particularly speech and language therapy, neurodevelopmental pathways and equipment services. They should also ensure that they use available performance data to identify where gaps exist and whether actions taken to address these are effective*

Where we are now:

- The Neurodevelopmental Support Team's (NST) waiting times have reduced by 13 weeks, triage times from 12 months to 3 weeks, and there are now improved communications and support to families waiting.
- Wait times are reducing for Speech Language Communication Needs autism pathways and families have provided positive feedback in relation to the advice line and drop-in sessions. Much learning has been collated to support planning for sustainable improvement.
- Enhanced Multi-Agency Reviews where children and young people are jointly reviewed with professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists, CAMHS, and Community Paediatricians when further recommendations or second opinions are needed.

- Complex Communication Clinics are available for cases where diagnosis remains unclear, or second opinions are required.
- New Speech & Language Therapy Advice Line is available for parents, carers (0-19 years), and young people (16-19 years) needing guidance on communication development.
- Early Years Drop-in Sessions are now being held in Family Hubs for children under four, allowing families to access support without an appointment and ensure they are referred to the most appropriate pathway first time.
- Revised Concerning Behaviour Pathways based on family feedback, with updated infographics for clarity.

The Priority Action Plan includes details for how the improvement work will continue to be embedded into regular practice after the inspection period has finished.

### [SEND data dashboard update](#)

The Board were provided with an update on SEND data dashboard.

Data is linked to each of the SEND objectives e.g. I want to be and feel safe and also now includes qualitative information including feedback from parents and carers.

The dashboard shows data over time e.g. percentage of SEND population with an Education and Health Care Plan.

Development work is being carried out on the dashboard on an ongoing basis.

There was a discussion about how some of the information from the dashboard could be made available to parents, carers and frontline staff.

The Board commended the work on the data dashboard.

### [Case study](#)

The Board were presented with a [case study about Emily's story](#).

Emily took part in a one year placement at Nottingham City Hospital through Project Search employment scheme. This helped Emily to build up her confidence by meeting and working with different people. She's now gained permanent paid work as a food service assistant at the hospital.

Dame Christine Lenehan

Independent Chair of the Nottinghamshire SEND Partnership Improvement Board