Annex A - Local SEND Reform Plan feedback for Nottinghamshire

1. Local SEND Reform plan

Q1 - Vision - What is the local area trying to achieve?
The local area sets out a compelling and well-developed vision aligned to SEND reform principles, with measurable goals, strong mainstream inclusion ambitions and an exceptional golden thread linking delivery activity to outcomes. This could be strengthened further by continuing to demonstrate how delivery mechanisms and outcome measures evidence progress across all reform priorities as implementation matures.
Q2 – Where does the local area partnership expect to be in the next 3 years?
The plan presents a highly integrated and ambitious three-year future state underpinned by a mature Experts at Hand model, strong partnership arrangements and realistic outcome trajectories. This could be strengthened further by continuing to demonstrate how the ambitious outcome framework will be tracked and sustained as reforms become fully embedded.
Q3 – What is your local strategy to deliver your 3-year vision?
The strategy provides a comprehensive and evidence-informed theory of change, shaped by the Local Partnership Maturity Assessment, local evaluation evidence and extensive co-production, with clear links between identified weaknesses and reform activity. This could be strengthened further by continuing to use learning, evaluation and performance intelligence to refine delivery as implementation progresses.
Q4 – Maturity Assessment Tool
The completed maturity assessment provides detailed analysis of strengths, gaps and improvement priorities across all pillars and is clearly connected to the local change story and reform plan. This could be strengthened further through continued development of integrated data arrangements, governance structures and co-production feedback loops identified within the assessment.

Q5 – What is your roadmap for the next 3 years?
The roadmap sets out a coherent three-year programme with clear progression from mobilisation to embedding, supported by measurable outcomes and strong alignment to the future-state vision. This could be strengthened further by continuing to develop workforce planning, partnership arrangements and the formalisation of a co-produced universal offer as delivery matures.
Q6 – What will you deliver in the first year?
The Year 1 programme provides a comprehensive mobilisation plan covering workforce, inclusion, governance, alternative provision and data, with workstreams clearly linked to reform objectives. This could be strengthened further by continuing to develop milestone detail, commissioning arrangements and measurable outputs across all workstreams.
Q7 – How will local area partnerships deliver the first-year plan?
The plan demonstrates clear governance structures, programme delivery arrangements and a commitment to developing shared data and analytics capability to support implementation. This could be strengthened further as integrated analytics capability and operational programme management arrangements continue to mature.
Q8 – Other Funding (Capital)
The capital strategy sets out a clear approach to expanding local capacity through Enhanced Provision Units, SEND Units and satellite provision, with strong links to sufficiency planning and inclusion objectives. This could be strengthened further by continuing to evidence how opportunities for inclusive mainstream provision are being maximised alongside wider estate development.
Q9 - System partner and stakeholder engagement, and co-production
The plan demonstrates well-established stakeholder engagement and co-production through strong governance arrangements, extensive participation activity and active Parent Carer Forum involvement. This could be strengthened further by continuing to enhance the visibility of children and young people’s influence, SENDIASS arrangements and engagement with the Schools Forum.

Q10 – Risks and Mitigation
The plan identifies relevant delivery risks and sets out practical mitigation strategies supported by established governance, monitoring and escalation arrangements. This could be strengthened further through the continued development of escalation thresholds, trigger points and residual risk measures.
Q11 - Dependencies
The partnership demonstrates a strong understanding of key dependencies, including health, local government, workforce and family reform programmes, with proportionate mitigation strategies embedded within delivery planning. This could be strengthened further by continuing to develop contingency planning, scenario modelling and formal assurance arrangements.
Q12 - Monitoring and Evaluation - How will you know if you are succeeding?
The monitoring framework combines governance, performance data, quality assurance and stakeholder feedback to provide a comprehensive approach to tracking delivery and outcomes. This could be strengthened further through continued refinement of KPI definitions, escalation thresholds and the triangulation of qualitative and quantitative intelligence.
Q13 – Monitoring and Evaluation – Reporting to DfE
The required data template has been completed and is supported by dashboards, KPI reporting and developing child-level data infrastructure that will support monitoring and accountability. This could be strengthened further by continuing to enhance clarity around assumptions, metric definitions and quality assurance arrangements for reporting data.
Q.14 - Governance
The governance framework provides clear accountability, strong multi-agency representation and defined escalation routes, supported by strategic and operational oversight structures. This could be strengthened further as delivery group maturity, risk management consistency and the integration of performance data into decision-making continue to develop.

2. Policy-specific feedback

Families First Partnership (FFP)
Alongside, the SEND reforms, you'll be very aware that delivery of the Families First Partnership (FFP) programme is a priority for the government. Similarly, FFP will also improve support for children, young people and families, and overtime build a more inclusive, responsive and sustainable system. The FFP programme guide sets out the expectations for this year with a focus on fully operational delivery across the three strands by 31 March 2027. The programme guide also highlights the link between FFP and SEND, where often the same children may be receiving services. It makes clear that the local Family Help offer should reflect the needs of disabled children and provides examples of how this can be achieved. You have a ring-fenced grant for spend on FFP and a delivery plan, agreed across your safeguarding partnership, that articulates your local approach. These plans were shared with the department in December 2025 and quarterly reporting on progress is a grant condition. It is vital that progress on FFP delivery is prioritised, alongside your SEND reform plan. The department will consider local authority progress across both reform programmes and failure to spend the FFP funding appropriately or meet the March 27 deadline may impact future decisions on support.
Post-16
From a post-16 perspective Nottinghamshire is planning on strengthening preparation for adulthood by mapping local and out-of-area post-16 pathways, embedding transition planning from Year 9 and expanding supported internships, employer engagement and independent travel training. A dedicated post-16 multi-agency inclusion team and specialist outreach offer will improve access to support, progression routes and employment opportunities, including continued collaboration with Portland College.

Early Years (EY)
As implementation progresses, local area partnerships should ensure that delivery of SEND reforms for children aged 0-5 remains aligned with local Best Start in Life plans, bringing together early years setting, Best Start Family Hubs, health and family services to support earlier identification of need and provision of appropriate support. This includes clear routes to access the Experts at Hand service. Early years providers and Best Start Family Hubs should be meaningfully engaged in local governance and delivery arrangements, with appropriate representation of the early years sector in strategic decision-making. Partnerships should maintain strategic oversight of early years SEND provision, including the sufficiency and quality of support available to children aged 0-5.