

## **Local Area SEND Improvement Plan Wirral, May 2024**

On 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024, the Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing issued Wirral Council with an improvement notice due to poor progress in addressing each of the areas of significant weakness detailed in the Local Area SEND Inspection of September 2021.

This Improvement Plan, which will be monitored by Department for Education and NHS England, will focus specifically on the ten areas of weakness set out in the inspection findings:

- strengthen the quality and timeliness of EHC assessments and annual reviews,
- embed meaningful co-production with parents and carers,
- increase parent satisfaction with the area's provision,
- improve the use and utility of the published local offer,
- improve communication with parents and carers across the area,
- improve the relationship between the Local Area Partnership and the Parent Carer Partnership Wirral,
- increase joint commissioning of services in the area,
- embed effective strategic oversight to ensure effectiveness of plans and provision and hold leaders, managers and partners to account,
- address the lack of accurate, up-to-date and useful information informing the area's plans and the impact of these actions,
- embed the graduated response consistently across all schools and settings.

In April 2024, Wirral Council revised the governance arrangements for SEND, establishing a Local Area SEND Partnership Board served by five key subgroups: SEND Strategic Performance Group, SEND Continuous Improvement Group, Delivering Better Value (DBV) Project Board, Participation and Engagement (P&E) Subgroup, and the Written Statement of Action (WSOA) Impact Group. The Local Area SEND Partnership Board is accountable to the Health and Wellbeing Board, with additional regular reporting to key committees and partnership meetings.

The Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing has set clear expectation for accelerated improvement, indicating that this plan needs to be fully delivered by October 2025 at the very latest.

This revised plan has been developed to address outstanding actions from the Written Statement of Action (March 2022) and to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families, based on the feedback they have provided independently and through Wirral's parent carer forum.

**WSOA Success Statement 1:** Strengthen the quality and timeliness of EHC assessments and Annual Reviews

METRICS	HISTORIC			TARGET	TRAJECTORY						
	10/21	10/22	10/23		04/24	07/24	10/24	01/25	04/25	07/25	10/25
EHC 20-week compliance for new plans	29%	38%	33%	75%	15%	26%	37%	49%	57%	67%	75%
Annual Review 4-week compliance				90%			30%	45%	60%	75%	90%
Annual Review 12-week compliance				90%			30%	45%	60%	75%	90%
% of quality assurance reviews 'good' or better				75%		30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	75%
Number of tribunals lodged	4	8	5	N/A	Monthly record to demonstrate trend						

Outstanding WSoA Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
2.1.q	Implement 5-day response to all communications	SEND Manager	07/2024	SEND Strategic Performance Group
2.3.a 2.3.c	Develop and implement a clear multi agency approach for Annual Reviews, with effective means of communication	SEND manager	09/2024	SEND Strategic Performance Group
2.3.b	Implement prioritised approach for Annual Reviews	Head of SEND	12/2024	SEND Strategic Performance Group
2.3.d	Evaluate impact of specialist services through Annual Review process	Head of SEND	Quarterly	SEND Strategic Performance Group

New Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
AIP1	Deliver the EHCP Recovery Plan as approved by LASPB	Head of SEND	10/2025	SEND Continuous Improvement Group
AIP2	Deliver the Educational Psychology Service restructure as approved by LASPB	Head of SEND	10/2025	SEND Continuous Improvement Group
AIP3	Complete SENDSTART Service restructure as approved by LASPB	Head of SEND	10/2024	SEND Continuous Improvement Group

Business As Usual Assurance Activity Expectations
Service Scorecard performance monitoring, 4-weekly cycle
SEND Quality Assurance Framework, 4-week cycle
Quality assurance of SEND Workforce Development Plan- 4 week cycle
Completion of Satisfaction Surveys

**WSOA Success Statement 2:** Embed meaningful co-production with parents and carers

METRICS	HISTORIC			TARGET	TRAJECTORY						
	10/21	10/22	10/23		04/24	07/24	10/24	01/25	04/25	07/25	10/25
Number of monthly co-production activities				Higher	5	>6	>6	>6	>6	>6	>6
% Children’s staff trained in co-production				95%	10.2%	20%	35%	50%	65%	80%	95%
% of parent carers who ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ that they have been involved in EHCP process				80%		30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%

Outstanding WSoA Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
3.1.c	Deliver mandated induction training for new employees in children’s services on good coproduction practice, based on the Wirral Coproduction Charter	Stakeholder Manager	Monthly	P&E Subgroup
3.2.b	Information exchanges on key SEND matters are shared regularly	Stakeholder Manager	Monthly	P&E Subgroup
3.3.g	Increased communication with parents and carers following all decisions	SEND Manager	Daily	SEND Strategic Performance Group

New Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
AIP4	Co-produce the SEND Strategy 2024-27	Principle EP	03/2025	SEND Continuous Improvement Group
AIP5	Deliver the Co-production pilot as part of the EHCP Recovery Plan approved by LASPB	Head of SEND	03/2025	SEND Strategic Performance Group
AIP6	Deliver the SEND Offer via Family Hubs	Op. Manager	10/2024	P&E Subgroup

Business As Usual Assurance Activity Expectations
Learning from complaints (3.3.f) and tribunals (3.2.f) 4-weekly cycle
Training on Co-Production, Working with Parents, and Working with Professionals, 8-weekly cycle
Monthly co-production case study

**WSOA Success Statement 3:** Increase parent satisfaction with the area's provision

METRICS	HISTORIC			TARGET	TRAJECTORY						
	10/21	10/22	10/23		04/24	07/24	10/24	01/25	04/25	07/25	10/25
Number of complaints (LA)	10	3	15	6	14	13	12	10	9	6	6
Number of tribunals lodged	4	8	5	N/A	Monthly record to demonstrate trend						
% feedback surveys 'satisfied' or better (LA)				80%		30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%
% feedback surveys 'satisfied' or better (health)				80%		30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%

Outstanding WSoA Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
4.1.d	Complete an analysis of school demography based on SEND cohorts.	Head of Improvement	07/2024	SEND Strategic Performance Group
4.1.i	Further training for wider partners across education, health and social care in relation to the revised SEND Code of Practice (2015) and SEND Reforms (2014)	Head of SEND	04/2025	DBV Project Board
4.1.l	Develop a clear network of professionals across the local area to support early interventions and therapeutic approaches	Principle EP	11/2024	DBV Project Board

New Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
AIP7	Deliver the SEND Sufficiency Strategy 2024-26	AD Education	10/2025	SEND Continuous Improvement Group
AIP8	Deliver the SaLT Recovery Plan	Head of SEND ICB		SEND Strategic Performance Group
AIP9	Implement the new neurodevelopmental offer	Head of SEND ICB	09/2024	SEND Continuous Improvement Group

Business As Usual Assurance Activity Expectations
Family and Friends surveys daily
Mediation activity weekly
EHCP Satisfaction surveys daily
SEND Quality Assurance Framework 4-weekly cycle

**WSOA Success Statement 4:** Improve the use and utility of the published local offer

METRICS	HISTORIC			TARGET	TRAJECTORY						
	10/21	10/22	10/23		04/24	07/24	10/24	01/25	04/25	07/25	10/25
Number of hits (monthly)			3212	Higher	Monthly record to demonstrate trend						
Number of new articles (monthly)				>8	>8	>8	>8	>8	>8	>8	>8
Number of new content features (monthly)				>8	>8	>8	>8	>8	>8	>8	>8
% of users 'satisfied' with local offer website				85%	55%	60%	65%	70%	75%	80%	85%

Outstanding WSoA Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
6.2.b	A named local offer lead takes responsibility for requesting relevant data, ensuring that information on the site is up to date and functioning effectively	SEND Manger	08/2024	P&E Subgroup

New Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
NOT APPLICABLE				

Business As Usual Assurance Activity Expectations				
SENDLO activity report monthly				

**WSOA Success Statement 5:** Improve communication with parents and carers across the area

METRICS	HISTORIC			TARGET	TRAJECTORY						
	10/21	10/22	10/23		04/24	07/24	10/24	01/25	04/25	07/25	10/25
Number of complaints due to communication			6	Lower	<6	<6	<6	<6	<6	<6	<6
Number of formal communications to parents and carers			3	Higher	>8	>8	>8	>8	>8	>8	>8
Number of local area engagements with parents and carers			4	Higher	>4	>4	>4	>4	>4	>4	>4

Outstanding WSoA Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
2.1.q	Implement 5-day response to all communications	Head of SEND	09/2024	SEND Strategic Performance Group

New Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
AIP10	Deliver the SEND Improvement Communication Strategy	SEND Stakeholder Manager	04/2025	P&E Subgroup
AIP11	Recruit a Communications Lead for SEND Improvement/DBV	Assistant Director Education	07/2024	DBV Project Board

Business As Usual Assurance Activity Expectations
Annual SEND Survey SEND Quality Assurance Framework 4-weekly cycle EHCP Satisfaction surveys daily

**WSOA Success Statement 6:** Improve the relationship between the Local Area Partnership and the Parent Carer Participation Wirral

METRICS	HISTORIC			TARGET	TRAJECTORY						
	10/21	10/22	10/23		04/24	07/24	10/24	01/25	04/25	07/25	10/25
% of PCPW meeting requests met- LA				100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% of PCPW meeting requests met- health				100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% of PCPW meeting requests met- social care				100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% of Local Area meetings attended by PCPW				100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of formal escalations made by PCPW				N/A	Monthly record to demonstrate trends						

Outstanding WSoA Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
NOT APPLICABLE				

New Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
AIP12	PCPW to lead the Preparation for Adulthood event, with support from the Local Area	PCPW Chair	10/2024	P&E Subgroup
AIP13	PCPW to Chair the Participation & Engagement Subgroup	PCPW Chair	10/2024	WSOA Impact Group

Business As Usual Assurance Activity Expectations
Survey to demonstrate how well-embedded PCPW is in the Local Area SEND system
Survey to demonstrate understanding of how well Local Area staff understand the role of the parent carer forum
Monthly action log for PCPW and Local Area report

**WSOA Success Statement 7:** Increase joint commissioning of services in the area

METRICS	HISTORIC			TARGET	TRAJECTORY					
	10/21	10/22	10/23		04/24	07/24	10/24	01/25	04/25	07/25
Number of jointly commissioned services			4	Higher	Monthly figure to demonstrate trend					
Number of children and young people with a jointly commissioned package of care			5	Higher	Monthly figure to demonstrate trend					

Outstanding WSoA Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
1.2.g	Develop a clear programme of joint commissioning activity including short term objectives and longer-term strategic aims, using data to drive decision making	Joint Commissioning Lead	10/2024	Joint Commissioning Forum

New Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
AIP14	Co-produce a local Continuing Care protocol	Commissioning Lead	08/2024	Joint Commissioning Forum
AIP15	Implement the local Continuing Care protocol	Commissioning Lead	09/2024	Joint Commissioning Forum
AIP16	Introduce a joint-funded placement panel	Director of Finance	09/2024	Joint Health & Care Commissioning Executive Group

Business As Usual Assurance Activity Expectations
Meeting minutes demonstrate Joint Commissioning Forum meetings optimise joint commissioning opportunities



**WSOA Success Statement 8:** Embed effective strategic oversight to ensure effectiveness of plans and provision and hold leaders, managers and partners to account

METRICS	HISTORIC			TARGET	TRAJECTORY						
	10/21	10/22	10/23		04/24	07/24	10/24	01/25	04/25	07/25	10/25
LASPB meetings delivered (in line with TORs)				19	1	4	7	10	13	16	19
% LASPB actions delivered (within timescale set)				100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of LASPB decisions made				Monthly record to demonstrate trend							
Reports made to HWBB				7	0	1	2	3	4	6	7

Outstanding WSoA Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
NOT APPLICABLE				

New Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
AIP17	Review LASPB effectiveness	Director of Law & Corporate Services	10/2024	DfE and NHS England Review

Business As Usual Assurance Activity Expectations
SEND Exec Meetings twice monthly LASPB Meeting monthly WSOA Impact Group monthly DfE and NHS England 6-monthly reviews

**WSOA Success Statement 9:** Address the lack of accurate, up-to-date and useful information informing the area's plans and impact of these actions

METRICS	HISTORIC			TARGET	TRAJECTORY							
	10/21	10/22	10/23		04/24	07/24	10/24	01/25	04/25	07/25	10/25	
% of service scorecards completed monthly				100%	21%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% SEND Dashboard completed monthly				100%	87%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Annual publication of SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment			1	2	0	1	1	1	1	2	2	

Outstanding WSoA Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
NOT APPLICABLE				

New Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
AIP18	Review the SEND Dashboard effectiveness	Director of Law & Corporate Services	10/2024	DfE and NHS England Review

Business As Usual Assurance Activity Expectations
SEND Strategic Performance Group monthly Service Scorecard performance monitoring, 4-weekly cycle WSOA Impact Group monthly report

**WSOA Success Statement 10:** Embed the graduated response consistently across all schools and settings

METRICS	HISTORIC			TARGET	TRAJECTORY						
	10/21	10/22	10/23		04/24	07/24	10/24	01/25	04/25	07/25	10/25
Reduction in EHC Needs Assessment requests	75	105	113	Lower	76	Monthly record to demonstrate trend					
Increase % of children with an EHCP in mainstream settings			19%	40%	20%	20%	25%	30%	35%	40%	40%
Reduction in children with SEND becoming EHE				Lower	138	<138	<138	<138	<138	<138	<138
Number of children with EHCP persistently absent				Lower	1055	950	850	720	600	500	400

Outstanding WSoA Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
4.1.c	Learn from case studies in settings that have been commended for their inclusive practice to drive improvement across all schools and settings.	Principle EP	03/2025	DBV Project Board

New Action				
Ref	Action	Responsible	Delivery Date	Monitoring by
AIP19	Develop a parent carer guide to the graduated approach	Head of Inclusion	01/2025	DBV Project Board
AIP20	Deliver the workplan for DBV Workstream 1- Quality Assurance Framework for Graduated Approach- Early Years to Post-16	Head of Inclusion	03/2025	DBV Project Board
AIP21	Deliver the workplan for DBV Workstream 2- Training, best practice and capacity to embed the Graduated Approach	Principle EP	03/2025	DBV Project Board
AIP22	Deliver the workplan for DBV Workstream 3- Evidence review of health therapies within the Graduated Approach	Commissioning Lead	03/2025	DBV Project Board

Business As Usual Assurance Activity Expectations
Minutes of DBV in SEND Project Board Meetings Graduated Approach Quality Assurance Activity quarterly