

Strategic Update

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Chief Executive

Significant areas of improvement

- Early Help
- CS less children in care and more children in care in Devon
- Babies staying at home
- Permanence planning
- Family Hubs and partnership working
- EHCP backlog reduction

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Measure	Period	Devon	Comparators	SW	England
Looked after children per 10,000 aged U18	22/23	61.0	68	63	71
Prevalence of overweight (including obesity) yr6 aged 10/11	22/23	30.3	33.8	32.9	36.6
Education – average attainment score	22/23	45.7	45.4	47.2	46.5
NEETs 16-18 yr olds not in education, employment or training	22/23	6.4	5	5.8	5.2
Care leavers aged 19-21 suitable accommodation (%)	22/23	73	89	89	89
Permanent Exclusions state funded secondary schools (%)	22/23	0.36	0.24	0.25	0.22

- School exclusions
- School attendance
- NEET
- Unsuitable accommodation
- Action on neglect
- Attainment of children experiencing adverse experiences

Priorities for 2025

Delivery of
FFP/Improving
processes in
SEND

SEND – delivery
of key work
packages in the
Safety Valve

Completion of
Restructures
/Directorate
Changes

Children's
Services
Improvements

Leadership,
,Learning and
Performance

Cultural Change

SEND Transformation - Background

- SEND activity across the Authority (High Needs Block and Core SEND Budget) currently makes up around 12.5% of our gross budget. Budget requirement has however increased 130% in 5 years, at a time of wider budget restraint.
- Over the past ten years, system has been under sustained pressure. Growing demand for plans exacerbated by historic process and practice issues. Significant financial deficit accrued through to 2023, coupled with poor Ofsted outcomes in 2020 and 2022.
- Need to ensure that our SEND service is fit for purpose, for young people, for parents, for partners. Must place the young person at the centre of our support and ensure their education and support is fit for purpose. Must also provide value for money and allow the County to live within its means.
- Safety Valve Deal in 2023 provided a significant financial settlement to address the financial deficit, but subject to stringent financial targets and performance requirements.
- Simultaneously, expectation from Department for Education that we will address long term issues around appraisal rates of plans, service provision, communication, and wider practice. Can't slow number of plans.

SEND Transformation – Current Position

- Safety Valve Agreement and establishment of the SEND Transformation Programme reset our position in 2023, with a focus on achieving a tight financial position alongside improving practice.
- Two elements often indivisible (better practice delivers savings).
- Safety Valve requires year on year reduction in expenditure trajectory to hit deficit targets / triggers for capital lump sum. Coupled with tight DfE improvement /performance targets around plans, lead times and outcomes.
- In 2024/25, target of £15.4m of spending reductions required against previous trajectory. Increases in future years as targets are cumulative.
- SEND Transformation Programme to achieve savings and improve practice established and delivering around 6 core strands

SEND Transformation Programme

- **Inclusion and Early Help (£2.8m)** – Strengthening the targeted support to those with SEND and the seeking to intervene earlier to support decision making and opportunities.
- **Preparation for Adulthood (£3.6m)** – Working with those approaching and over 16 as they move into adulthood, with a focus on ensuring they are able to access the right educational offer for them and move towards employment and independent living.
- **Sufficiency (£4.7m)** – Ensuring that we have the right educational places in the right places with the right king support, working with our mainstream schools, special schools and independent providers.
- **Financial Management and Placements (£4.1m)** – Ensuring our systems and data is fit for purpose, and that we fully understand our cohort, the finances linked to them and are able to make more informed decisions.
- **Multi Agency Pathways / Health (£0m)** – Working with partner services to create a seamless and cost-effective offer for our young people and their families, with a focus on making key services more effective.
- **Inclusion and Learning Redesign (£0m)** – Review and renewal of teams in Education and SEND into a new structure, better focused on correct practice, joint working and improved process.

Pressures and Challenges

- Currently on track to deliver £11m of £15.4m cost reduction required by the SV in 2024.
- Significant slippage in 2 core areas at present
 - **Additional Schools Places** – Pace of delivery of additional school places has been slower than anticipated due to DfE decision making / delivery Demand has also seen more young people with complex need come forward than originally anticipated. Requires additional innovation and action.
 - **Plus Packages / School Top Ups** – Speeding up of EHCP appraisals has seen a surge in demand for packages and support. As a statutory duty, can't say no. Additional costs of over £5M
- **High Demand a key factor at present.** Over 300 additional plans currently in play in 24/25 than originally forecast, in part due to pressures to clear backlog.
- Demand and additional workload of clearing backlog also making it difficult for staff resource to find time to deliver wider transformation objectives alongside day jobs. Will impact of future saving requirement.

SEND Transformation – Why it matters to us all?

Discussion and questions