



## April Summary 2023

### SEND Accountability Board and SEND Programme Board

All agendas, minutes and paperwork for these meetings are supplied by Suffolk County Council and can now be found on their Infolink page: [SEND Governance](#).

### **During the April meetings:**

Early years, education and skills shared slides on their statutory duties and what their department does. This included training in SEND, welcome packs to screen for language delays, provision mapping, EHCNA panels, SENCOs, transitions, as well as much more. These should be updated on the link above shortly.

SENDIASS reported that due to a spike in communications they had to close the communication channels during the Easter holiday so that the team could get through the backlog. They are now back open.

Only 3% of plans had been issued within 20 weeks. SPCF raised concerns about this figure and the current wait of 34 weeks and 4 days. We were informed that they would be looking for a company to outsource the Educational Psychologist requests as they had not been able to recruit to posts.

The focus of the May meeting will be Permanent Exclusions. This will follow the meeting for the Board to go over the Education Access Team presentation on 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

The Board has requested that Alternative Provision be discussed and this has been put in the forward plan for June. Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) has also been put in the forward plan.

### **We were able to raise the following:**

- Feedback we had received in regards to the Activities Unlimited – Short Breaks Awards
- Concerns around the lack of email as a method to request an Education Health and Care Needs Assessment. This has now been formally escalated (further information below).
- Concerns around the lack of involvement from IMPOWER (further information below)
- Our meeting with Anthony Douglas and how we welcome the invitation to be involved with the work he has been tasked. We also asked that he involve other groups to ensure an accurate representation across Suffolk.
- We also shared information on our Define Fine Workshops and Open Forum event.



### SEND Priority 1 – The Local Offer

We were advised that the webchat on the Local Offer page has been paused due to technical issues. This is being rectified as soon as possible.

There has been a reduction in output through social media due to the issues arising from the Activities Unlimited new portal. This will be rectified soon and normal output will resume. AU appeals process information is now on the Local Offer page with further information on the new criteria: [AU Appeals](#).

Website re-platforming is continuing and further meetings are to be held to update the website information ensuring appropriate content and accuracy. Two new part time staff have been recruited to help support current projects and AU social media. They will be starting in May 23.

### SEND Priority 2 – The SEND Journey

There were discussions around mandatory SEND training for staff. SPCF voiced how important this training is not only at the time of induction but for existing staff too.

Embedding the Graduated Response is an important part of the SEND Journey that in order for this to happen properly, it needs to be described fully in a clear format. It also needs to be compliant with the Code of Practice.

The process of an Annual Review needs to be clear to all involved. There is training that is in the process of being written but it was also agreed that having an easy read in the subject would be beneficial for parents.

### SEND Priority 3 – Services & Provision

The team are looking at potential gaps in care such as Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy. Significant work is still required to map out all the current provision and clearly identify the gaps. Special School have identified funding for this financial year. Recruitment plan is in the process of being developed.

Wave 10 for mental health in schools is ready. new trainees are to be recruited and will start training in Jan 2024 with starting date Summer 2024. Wave 10 will lead to 50% of schools in Suffolk having access to this.

Discussion around the 'I want' statements provided by our young people involved the ensuring that the [Ideal Worker](#) was included in all job descriptions as well as the continued development of the [Safe and Supported](#) map.



### SEND Priority 4 – Transitions to Adulthood

During this meeting, we had a representative from Bradford Council's Preparation for Adulthood team give a presentation around what that had achieved in this area over the past 3 ½ years.

They have a dedicated team which is something that Suffolk doesn't currently have. This has given them the opportunity to have a Lead developing the 5 day offer. They devised a 'My perfect week' in which young people could discuss what their perfect week would look like and the providers could sit down and see how they could best fill the timeslots of their week. All attendees agreed that this would be a great model to replicate in Suffolk as we still receive a lot of feedback around the impact of a non 5 day offer on, not only the young person, but the families as a whole.

### SEND Priority Meeting

After the release of the results for our Annual Survey, we have come together with SEND Leads to break down elements of the report to ensure that there are works currently in place to improve the lived experience. For areas which are not currently covered, actions will be formed. This was a continuation from the March meeting and it has not been completed. There will be separate communications around this.

We are still looking at ways to improve our parent carer representation for 17-25 year olds. Do you have any suggestions on how we could better reach this cohort?

### NDD Pathway Service Review

The review has come to an end and we are awaiting the formal report of outcomes. Something that we did raise and were assured would change was the lack of communications with families. The webpage was also difficult to navigating and the information confusing. This will all be included in the outcomes plan.

### IMPOWER Update

We raised concerns with SCC and IMPOWER around the fact that we the forum was not being involved in specific pieces of work and we were learning of pieces of work through the news rather than directly from them. They were also contact parents directly for feedback solely instead of also asking the forum. We had a meeting with IMPOWER to discuss the concerns on 19<sup>th</sup> April. They were apologetic for the lack of involvement and have offered 2/3 weekly meetings going forward to ensure that we are involved and can oversee the work as a strategic partner. We have also been assured that we will also be contacted if parent feedback is required to make sure there is an impartial voice too.



### LiquidLogic Update

We had a number of questions and concerns after the recent launch of the LiquidLogic platform. We relayed them promptly to the team who have been addressing them and raising directly with the LiquidLogic developers. We are still outstanding on the response around the lack of acceptance of requests by email as we had to escalate within Suffolk County Council leadership as we are not comfortable with just the telephone and portal request methods.

Reminder: There will be a dedicated team for the first 6 weeks for all EHCNA requests going forward. Those who have a request open will be manually transferred over slowly, they will receive contact when that happens. There will remain an option for those who are unable to use the system. There will be a phone number to access a paper copy or offer the opportunity to have a supported completion. The next stage, set for September 23, will be for schools to use LL for Annual Reviews.

### CYP Co-Production Network

The new Engagement Hub website, [The Source](#) went live on 27<sup>th</sup> April 23. The site was coproduced with young people and the content is aimed at them. There is also a CV builder to help assist the young people in the quest for employment. There are now dedicated pages for post 16, care leavers etc with the age range of the site at 12-25yrs. however there is valuable information and resources that parent/carers and professionals can access. There is a walkthrough video on the website showing how to navigate the new site.

The SEND young person's survey has recently been released. The aim of the survey is to help support priorities for the council and with the aim of helping young people 16+ with their options moving forward into employment. We have offered to share the survey with you all in case it is relevant for your young person.:

*"Suffolk County Council is repeating the SEND CYP survey to empower children and young people with special educational needs to share their experiences. As part of the SEND Strategy, we need to hear how the services that young people access impact on their lives and the choices they make about their futures.*

The survey can be accessed here: <https://forms.office.com/e/bOU9CQR15Z>.

*All responses are anonymous and there is the incentive of a free prize draw."*



### Anthony Douglas – Independent Special Advisor

"An independent special advisor has been commissioned to further strengthen reform of special educational needs and disabilities services (SEND) at Suffolk County Council.

Well-respected senior leader in children's services, consultant Anthony Douglas CBE, will work with SEND system leaders and the SEND networks to support the reforms already underway. He will draw on his years of experience to focus on how services are impacting upon the everyday experience of children and young people with SEND."

We met with Anthony Douglas this month and have arranged 6 weekly meetings to ensure we are keeping him up to date with the feedback we receive from families. We shared the feedback we had received from parent carers as well as our surveys and reports. We hope to help build a picture of what the lived experience in Suffolk is like.

### Define Fine Workshop

After the very successful first workshop – 'Have you tried a sticker chart?' We wanted to share that we still have spaces in the 'Meeting and Working Effectively with Professionals' Workshop.

If you would like to book a place or find out more, please see the poster: [Define Fine Workshop](#)

### Open Forum Event

We have booked our Open Forum Event for the West in Morton Hall, Bury St Edmunds for Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> June from 10am to 1pm. We would love to see you there! If you would like to see who's already confirmed attendance, check out the poster: [Bury SE Open Forum](#)

### SPCF Half Term Opening Hours – Advance Notice

The SPCF team will be closing over the half term holidays. We will be closing on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and reopening on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023. On our return we will respond to all emails, phone calls/voicemails and social media messages so please bear with us if there is a delay in getting a response.

Thank you.