SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy & Partnership Board

1 October 2026, 11.00 – 13.00, Cathedral Room, Chichester College

Chair: Brian Pope, Independent Chair	**NHS Sussex ICB**
WSCC	Emma Davies, Designated Clinical Officer
Aislinn Fletcher, Team Manager, Commissioning	**Councillor Representative**
Andrew Parker, Head SEND & Inclusion A	Sam Raby, Cabinet Member
Anna Parsons, Early Years SEND Lead (maternity cover)	**Apologies**
Daniel Ruaux, Director of Children's Services	**WSCC**
Claire Hayes, AD Education & Skills	Charlene Hornsey, Early Help
Graham Olway, Head of Organisation and Planning	Adrian Dyka, Interim Assistant Director Corporate Parenting
Jack Jones, Head SEND & Inclusion B	Natalie McNeill, Designated Social Care Officer
Jade Fellows, Practice Development and Improvement Lead	Karen Furse, Head of Standards & Effectiveness
Jo Hill, SEND Reform lead	Heidi Farr, Head of Assessment & Family Safeguarding Central
Kathryn Kellagher, SEND Development Officer	Kelly Steel, Head of Service Assessment and Family Safeguarding Western
Katie Bates, Public Health	Kieron Lyons, AD Children's Social Care and Early Help
Laura Tomlin, Schools Planning Officer, SEND	Loretta Rogers, AD Adult Operations
Rebecca Turner, Head of Commissioning	Mark Dodson, Adult Social Care
Sarah Bloor, Interim Head of Service, Children with Disabilities	Steve Trippier, CYPL Programme Director
Vicky Richardson, Head of Practice, Improvement & Inspection	Sarah Clark, Head of Virtual School
Education and schools	**Education and schools**
Doug Thomas, Head APC	Phillip Potter, Head Oak Grove College
Simon Liley, Head Angmering secondary school	Ruth Campbell, Head Chichester Nursery
Zoe Gordon, Head North Mundhan Primary School	**NHS Sussex ICB**
Simon Brown, Chichester College	Naomi Ellis, Deputy Chief Nursing Officer and Director of Safeguarding, NHS Surrey and Sussex
Parent Carers	Louise Needham, Senior Designated Clinical Officer, NHS Surrey and Sussex
Rowan Westwood, Head of Partnerships, Policy and Advocacy, Amaze	**Department for Education**
Dr Helen Fairman, Strategic Lead, West Sussex Parent Carer Forum	Elizabeth Roff
Nicky Hiscock, Chair, West Sussex Parent Carer Forum	Liz Flaherty
Department for Education	**NHS England SE SEND Advisor**
Luke Parker	Adeline Gibbs

1. Welcome

Brian noted that this was Simon Brown's last meeting as Head of SEND at Chichester College. He thanked him for his active involvement in the board and for being a thoughtful advocate for post -16. His replacement will be announced shortly.

Brian welcomed Dr Helen Fairman and looked forward to working with her; he also congratulated Nicky for her new role as Chair of the WSPCF.

Finally a reminder to present papers to Kathryn in good time to allow board members time to read the papers in advance and to come prepared with questions.

2. Action Log

Action 135 Small capital award scheme evidence file

Covered in today's update. Close action.

Action 154 WSPCF Partnership Agreement

Now resolved. Close action.

Action 155 River Beach SSC

Continue to monitor and keep on action log.

Action 159 EHCP / annual review audit cycle

Shared with SENCOs via SEND & Inclusion Newsletter. To be shared with headteachers via weekly mailing. Close action.

Actions 164, 165, 166, 167 – health actions

WSPCF requested we change rag rating to red and this was agreed.

3. Report by Exception

DfE report from 6 month review

While progress is acknowledged in areas such as partnership working, preparation for adulthood and specialist places, there are two key areas for us to work on: governance and data.

Brian spoke to Liz to get a better understanding of what is required with regards to governance and there are three aspects:

1. All board members need to come to meetings prepared to act as critical friends, asking questions of partners and providing critical challenge.
2. We have collective responsibility for outcomes and need input from all partners to improve key areas such as communication.
3. It needs to be clearer what workstreams sit beneath the board and how these feed into the board updates.

We need to have confidence in the Ofsted datasets to be submitted as part of Annex A and to have a shared, clear understanding of our strengths as well as our areas for improvement.

At the review session itself, it's vital that partners provide a collective responsive. To help with this, Vicky will provide key questions for partners to gather information.

Chichester College Group

Chichester College Group has won the Best Use of External Special Needs Professionals Award at the National SEND Awards.

This was in recognition of their innovative and collaborative approach of placing local authority Special Needs Officers within colleges to manage annual reviews and work proactively with young people and parent carers. Simon very kindly gave the award to Jack Jones to give to SENAT.

Selective Mutism

We continue to engage with families around this and are about to have our second meeting. It would be helpful to have more involvement from health – Emma Davies to follow up.

High needs funding for post-16

Our figures for this are very low compared to national data. Simon Brown and Jack Jones have started to work with East Sussex and Brighton & Hove to understand why this is.

SEND Reform health data

We're waiting for data from health. Emma Davies to follow up.

ACTIONS

3.1 Kathryn to produce summary highlights for partners to discuss with their sectors about what they can do to support improvement. Feedback from these discussions to be emailed to Kathryn.

3.2 SEND Reform graphic about governance to be included for discussion at the next board meeting.

3.3 Claire, Brian and Vicky to meet with the 4 workstream leads to unpick what the DfE says in the letter, and ensure the actions are covered in the next board reports.

3.4 Ofsted data to be standing agenda item for next three months.

3.5 Create a data dashboard, showing what's changed, where we are now and the trajectory. Headline data only.

3.6 Vicky to provide key questions for education settings to take to their sectors, along with the SEND-AP Board summary highlights.

3.7 Emma Davies to follow up re health engagement over Selective Mutism work.

3.8 Emma Davies to follow up re health data for SEND Reform.

4. Ofsted datasets

Discussion:

- The board would like to see the headline data for each dataset, the narrative around the data, its trajectory and what is the confidence in that trajectory. This can be done in stages with the aim of having a complete dataset by December/January.
- Early Years data is not included in WAND – Anna Palmer will share SEND Under Fives.
- There will be some cross-over with the social care Performance and Assurance Board (PAB) and Vicky will feed in where relevant.

- Vicky will link the next SEF updates with the Ofsted data lists and show how that data informs our practice.
- Jack formally thanked Lisa Keets for her work on the datasets to date.

ACTIONS

4.1 Dataset position statements to be brought to future SEND-AP Board meetings

4.2 Anna Palmer to meet with Vicky Richardson, Lisa Keet and Jack Jones to discuss how to include Early Years data.

4.3 Jack to explain methodology behind rag ratings, and provide headline data for each dataset, narrative around the data, its trajectory and the confidence in that trajectory.

5. SEND Reform Plan

We hope to have sign-off in the next few weeks and in the meantime are continuing with the mobilisation plan, a key element of which is recruitment.

Communication with partners has to be managed carefully as we may have to change our plans at short notice with the publication of further guidance from the DfE.

Workstreams are being aligned with Connected Council projects to avoid duplication.

Jo Hill's role is to put structure around the Reform plan. There will be 9 projects within the workstreams, the main one being Experts at Hands which will be delivered in West Sussex via Local Inclusion Networks, to be known as LINs. Each LIN will have a lead role who will coordinate the support as required from a network that will include an Educational Psychologist, a representative from the Special Advisory Teaching Service, an Occupational Therapist and a Speech and Language Therapist.

Feedback from engagement sessions

Primary schools: Zoe reported that it felt that a lot of information was presented and it was yet another change – we had LISOs, now we have LINs – it will take time to understand it all. It's positive but feels very early stages and is too soon to communicate with parents.

Secondary schools: they were generally optimistic. It was accepted that this is an evolution, which is being informed by learning from previous initiatives.

- The Educational Psychology service has been tasked to meet with all schools individually, to get a fuller understanding of the school community and the needs of their children.
- To help with consistency across schools, we're working on an Inclusion Charter.

WSPCF: families are worried about SEND reform and don't know what it means for them or what impact it will have on their children.

- once we have a ratified, signed-off plan, we will work on how we engage with parents to alleviate these concerns.

6. SEND Sufficiency quarterly focus

Discussion:

- We need to continue making better use of existing mainstream capacity.
- We are starting to map Support Bases in schools and are planning a quality framework around these to help with consistency.
- Work is being done to improve forecasting methodologies. We currently use Edge which has failed to keep pace with the rapid growth in EHCPs. The Board needs to

have oversight of the best estimate of data arising from forecasting model for both specialist placements and AP placements. This needs to align with the increasing capacity being created through the capital programme. The key question to be answered is: what is the estimated shortfall in places.

- Work is ongoing to align commissioning and sufficiency planning with SEND Reform activity.
- SEND provision should be viewed as a whole-system ecosystem, recognising that changes in one area can significantly affect another.
- Work in this area is led by the SEND Sufficiency Board.