

## Bury Council Joint Position Statement

The Department of Children and Young People is committed to transforming special Educational Needs and Disability provision in Bury as part of the improvement journey in an area of delivery to the Borough's children, young people and families. As a Local Area for SEND we are currently reviewing our Local Area Strategic Action Plan.

We recognise our council as a key partner and the commitment and passion of our staff for children and young people with SEND in Bury. We thank you for your continued hard work. We acknowledge that our council has not been well supported in the past by the council's system and our approach to SEND assessment. There are many system changes which require addressing. Whilst we acknowledge that we have some excellent SEND provision across the Borough, there is much work to be done to achieve consistently good standards across all services and providers.

Bury Council is currently engaging with the Department of Education who are working with a small number of authorities with the greatest dedicated special needs deficit nationally of which Bury is one (in a national programme called Project Safety Valve). The outcome of this work has been an agreement on an approach that will reduce the deficit and ultimately achieve a balanced budget that can only be achieved through SEND transformation of which Project Safety Valve is a part.

Bury and the DfE have signed an agreement in which the Council has agreed to implement the action plan that is set out in the funding bid in return for an additional £20m in grant over the next five years. This includes action to:

- strengthen and improve the special Educational Needs assessment and placement process working with our council and the Local SENDCO to improve the experience for children, young people and their families and to achieve a consistency of approach across the Borough.
- Ensure robust planning for future provision including reducing the use of independent special placement by increasing the availability and suitability of local provision within Bury. This will include developing a model for forecasting future need.
- Improve quality and timeliness of management information to enable the evaluation of the impact of the council's SEND support services and agree with our council what they require to attract them in meeting demand.
- Review the way we use the finance available for supporting children and young people with SEND in an effective and efficient way where possible.
- Develop a culture in which demand is more effectively managed through the authority resulting in a more equitable allocation of resources and services.

The SEND transition programme, of which Project Safety Value is part, is an opportunity to build the foundation over the next two years to fully transform how we meet the diverse outcomes of children and young people with SEND in our schools. We expect to see a positive impact on their health and well-being, particularly in the areas of participation, social inclusion, and family engagement. The key aim of the transition will include:

- ensure that every child, young person, school, college and other provider is able to support children to live, learn and grow up locally and achieve their full potential
- Communicate with the health professionals; the voice of our children, young people and families is heard so they can help inform how we work together to achieve the best results.
- The evidence base on the effectiveness of prevention to help meet the needs of children and young people, including the impact of high cost, one-time interventions.
- Communicate and empower staff to prevent the need for specialist services.
- Investing in our workforce, where it has the most impact. For example: developing local provision for children with autism, speech and language communication difficulties; improving provision for children and young people with social, emotional and mental health issues; ensuring early intervention so we can get SEND to allow children to continue in mainstream education wherever possible.

We want to be working closely with schools and other providers throughout the transition programme. We will be working together with the Local Authority of Plymouth Secondary Health Trust, the Local Authority of Plymouth and members of the School Forum to do this process. We would be very interested to hear your view on the views of your SENCO to the priorities we've set out in this letter if you have any suggestions to ensure you think should be included.

If you feel that you would have the capacity to contribute to our group that we are setting up to take this work forward, we would be very grateful to hear from you. Please contact Deborah Cole at [i.boole@bu.y.gov.uk](mailto:i.boole@bu.y.gov.uk) or [PAS.CYPC@bu.y.gov.uk](mailto:PAS.CYPC@bu.y.gov.uk). We will of course be continuing to work with the ASH, APH, HA and school clusters.

This transition will be successful if we all get it right, by ensuring that all children and young people have the opportunity to achieve their full potential, including the opportunity to participate with schools, providers, children, young people, and their families.

We look forward to working with you on this challenging programme in which we are committed to making a difference to the lives of our young children and young people with SEND in our schools, providing a better life for all.