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Department of Children & Young People

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Minutes

SEND Improvement & Assurance Board Meeting

26th March 2025

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| 1 | **INTRODUCTIONS & MINUTES** |
|  | The Chair welcomed everyone to the SEND Improvement and Assurance Board meeting and acknowledged the presence of Board members joining online and apologies were given.  The Chair emphasised the importance of Board development sessions and proposed small group or one-on-one meetings to collect diverse viewpoints. A sign-up sheet was circulated for members to select their preferred time slots for the one to one. The objective of these development sessions is to identify the Board's strengths and areas requiring improvement. |
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| 2. | **ACTIONS & DECISION LOG** |
|  | Nearly all actions are in progress, with one outstanding action regarding sharing papers with parents – this action is dependent on the wider programme of work to improve the Local Offer and will be commenced as part of the development plan for this area.  A request was made from the Chair to ensure prompt updates to the Action Log from all members of the Board; either directly to the Action Log or to be sent to the PPL project officer lead.  The actions from the log will be updated in the minutes and the copy will be sent to members via email for approval. |
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| 3 | **Contributions from, and engagement with, Children and Young People** |
|  | **Presentation**  The Change Makers Group provided feedback on the SEND strategy. They expressed a preference for more visual data, requested a key be included to explain BRAG rating, and were pleased to see the inclusion of an acronym glossary but requested this was included more consistently and there is less use of acronyms in the reports.  **Youth Voice Network Meetings:**  The Change Makers Group had two meetings since the last Board meeting, on March 11th and March 25th. The Youth Voice Network had one meeting earlier in the week with three schools in attendance.  Feedback from these meetings highlighted the importance of smooth and supportive transitions for primary school children, while teenagers and older young people emphasised the need for timely and efficient support from services.  **Co-production Day Announcement:**  There was an announcement about the upcoming Co-production day, scheduled for Tuesday, April 15th from 10:00 to 14:00. The event will be held in the Peel room, and Scout requested the attendance of 3 or 4 Board members. Several members volunteered to attend.  The event aims to gather feedback from young people and other stakeholders to collaborate on the SEND strategy. The previous Co-production day in June 2024, had about 25 young people in attendance.  **Session Plan and Feedback:**  The session plan developed last month to gather initial thoughts has been delivered to several Children’s groups since the last Board meeting. All feedback has been fed into the SEND Strategy Development Group, and findings will be documented after the Co-production day.  Key insights from the feedback include the need for early identification of support needs and the importance of adults recognizing when young people need support.  There was a presentation on strategies for improving communication between the Board and young people. The focus was on utilising social media effectively, with provisional ideas being developed.  The Change Makers Group will conduct more focused sessions on the Local Offer and the SEND newsletter after the Easter break.  **Vlog Feedback:**  Young people provided feedback on the vlog content, suggesting the inclusion of a faded-out ending, subtitles, and whiteboard animations to emphasise key points. They also recommended more enthusiasm from the speaker. It was noted in the room that the vlog had added a very positive aspect to communication at that while there are areas of improvement as noted from the children’s feedback, that this was a positive addition to communications.  Topics for other videos were discussed, including introductory videos about the PIPS, Instagram reels, and short videos. The length of videos was also considered, with suggestions for quick updates to be about a minute long and in-depth topics to be 2-3 minutes.  **Social Media Engagement:**  The idea of creating a social media account, such as an Instagram page, was discussed. The goal is to provide regular updates and engage with young people through various content formats. The previous Facebook page is being revisited to understand if this would be beneficial to re-launch.  The importance of celebrating and acknowledging the contributions of young people was emphasised. Ideas for recognition included awards, certificates, and reward trips.  **What do young people want from the SIAB?**  Young people want their work to be recognised and appreciated. They suggested receiving formal acknowledgment, such as a letter, for their contributions and reflections.  They want the opportunity to attend more meetings like the ones held by the Board.  They also suggested having Councillors and other senior members of the Council visit their schools and talk to them.  They hope the Council can enforce actions on the things discussed in meetings. They want the Council to address issues such as uniforms and ensure that schools listen and let students speak.  They want more opportunities for entertainment and engagement, such as trips to the cinema and other activities.  An update on the "You Said, We Are Doing" initiative was provided, which is a running document for Board members to answer any questions that young people have. The document is already uploaded onto Teams, and the Board was encouraged to have a look at it. The questions will be added following all meetings with young people and shared with all viewing meetings. Board members are responsible for answering these questions, which will then be shared back with the young people.  The importance of regularly checking the document was emphasised to ensure that questions are being answered promptly. This initiative aims to keep the communication transparent and ensure that young people's voices are heard, and their questions are addressed. The document will be checked every week to make sure that the questions are being answered, and the feedback is being incorporated into the Board's actions.  **Some questions young people asked are:**  How can young people get involved in staff training?  How long will it take for new training to be rolled out and how long will it take until we see the effect?  Young people were asked about their views on the Council's efforts, specifically:  **What do you think Bury Council is doing well for young people with disabilities?**  Young people think the Council is working hard to help young people who are struggling in school and making them feel safer.  One person mentioned that their voice is being heard, and their thoughts and feelings are validated. Another person commented on the youth service groups, saying that the Council is taking their feedback into consideration.  **What is the most important thing Bury Council should do?**  Young people hope the Council can enforce actions on the things discussed in meetings.  Some young people feel that the Council is not doing enough with schools, but they appreciate the helpful teachers and other support provided. They want more communication between the Council and schools, ensuring that teachers listen to students.  They also mentioned issues with uniforms and the need for Council members to visit schools in casual clothes to see what is happening.  **Discussion**  The Board asked what young people like to do? Young people would like to do video interviews with Board members, and for there to be regular updates on social media page and blogs.  The Board discussed the potential of creating a social media account, specifically an Instagram page, to enhance communication and engagement with young people. The idea is to provide regular updates through short posts, reels, and stories. The young people suggested that the account should include a mix of updates from the Board, engaging content, and interactive elements like memory hooks and whiteboard-style animations. They also emphasised the importance of subtitles and more enthusiasm in the videos.  The Board considered the logistics of maintaining the account, including the frequency of posts (3-4 posts a week), the type of content, and the metrics for evaluating success (number of followers, views on reels, etc.). They discussed the need for a conversation about populating and evaluating the content to ensure it meets the needs and interests of young people. The Board acknowledged the positive feedback from young people and their desire for more engaging and interactive content.  The Board also discussed the approach of the Corporate Parenting Board, which also has a strategy for engaging young people including them attending the meetings, where they review and rate reports. They also write summary versions of reports for young people to read and provide feedback on. This approach ensures that young people's voices are heard and considered in decision-making processes.  The Board noted that the Corporate Parenting Board's method of involving young people could be a model to follow. They discussed the importance of recognising young people's contributions and suggested drafting a letter or certificate to acknowledge their efforts. This would help young people feel valued and appreciated for their input.  The Board discussed the issue of uniforms as raised by young people. They mentioned that uniforms are a common issue in schools and that students often feel not listened to regarding this matter. The Board acknowledged these concerns and emphasised the importance of ensuring that schools listen to students and address their feedback about uniforms. This discussion was part of a broader conversation about improving communication between the Council and schools and making sure that students' voices are heard and considered in decision-making processes.  It was noted that feedback on staff was referring specifically to Council staff, but that a broader question and response on wider staff would be useful. The Board is considering a draft of a workforce strategy plan that outlines different levels and types of training for various staff members. This plan aims to ensure that staff at different levels of engagement and proximity to young people receive appropriate training.  The Board discussed the importance of involving young people in the development and delivery of staff training. They emphasised that young people could provide valuable insights and perspectives that can enhance the training content and make it more relevant and effective.  The Board mentioned a previous example where young people were involved in delivering training on mindful practice. This training was well-received and highlighted the benefits of having young people directly involved in training initiatives.  The Board agreed that they need to provide young people with clear information about the training being developed and explore opportunities for their involvement. They also emphasised the need to respond to young people's questions about staff training with detailed answers.  The discussion focused on the importance of smooth and supportive transitions for young people, particularly those moving between different educational stages. Members emphasised the need for clear communication and adequate support during these transitions.  Concerns were raised about the early recognition of support needs. Board members stressed that adults should be able to identify when young people need support and provide timely and efficient assistance.  The Board asked how can we improve the early recognition of support needs? And response received was by developing training programs for schools that focus on identifying and supporting young people earlier.  The development of training for schools to help identify and support young people earlier was discussed. Updates on this training will be provided in the next term.  Members emphasised the importance of including feedback from children and young people in the training development process. Concerns were raised about the potential challenges in implementing this training effectively.  Members discussed the importance of ensuring that staff working with young people are adequately trained and supported. The strategy aims to address these concerns by providing comprehensive training programs.  The Board asked about the progress on the slides for the Co-production Day and how the engagement notice was being handled, preparations and the level of engagement expected for the event and progress with EOTAS (Education Otherwise Than At School). Preparations for the Co-production Day are ongoing. The project will also be reaching out to primary schools and other organisations to improve engagement with those children and young people who have education other than in school (EOTAS). They acknowledged the challenges but emphasised the importance of gathering feedback from young people with additional needs who are supported outside of school including those who are electively home educated (EHE).  The programme will also engage with EOTAS providers and gather feedback to inform the Board's strategies and actions.  **Actions**   1. Members of the board to attend Co production day on the 15th of April Due date: 15th April 2. Chair will draft a letter to young people to acknowledge their contributions and express gratitude for their efforts. This initiative aims to help young people feel valued and appreciated for their inputDue date: May 28th 3. Members of the board will provide detailed answers regarding the timeline and impact of new training to young people and contribute to the workforce strategy plan; ensuring feedback from children and young people in the training development process and providing updates on the training development in the next term Due date: May 27th 4. Liaison on further school visits to gather feedback Due date: May 28th |
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| 4 | **DEEP DIVE UPDATE** |
|  | **Presentation**  Presentation on the recent DfE and NHSE Deep Dive into the Graduated Approach as follows:  **Key Findings:**  There are numerous activities and services supporting the Graduated Approach, particularly around early identification and assessment of needs. Early stages and indications of progress were observed in the use of the Graduated Toolkit, with some evidence of changing practices. However, the Graduated Approach is not well communicated across the Local Area Partnership. It lacks a format that allows consistent advocacy across education, social care, and other services. The need for an integrated offer to support holistic assessment and meeting of children's needs was identified.  The toolkit is predominantly utilised to support schools in meeting needs, but there is a lack of confidence in the system regarding available support and how to access it. A high reliance on statutory support was observed, with a need for a better-understood and implementation of the graduated approach at the point of request for access and assessment.  Feedback from Bury2gether and outcomes from the questionnaire highlighted the need for the Graduated Approach to align with principles of strength-based working and promotion of independence. The Graduated Approach should continually monitor children's progress and support the development of independence, particularly at key points of transition.  **Next Steps**  There will be a rapid review of the Graduated Approach offer across Education, Health, and Social Care. This review aims to ensure the approach is described simply, widely available, and communicated effectively, for example, on the Local Offer and Graduated Approach Toolkit.  Focusing on target groups to move the Graduated Approach forward is essential. This includes headteachers, SENCOs, teaching assistants, pastoral support, and school nursing support. Engaging better with SENCOs by bringing SENCO networks together will help target and work cooperatively with schools across the partnership to influence content and detail of required actions.  Establishing a design group to map out the holistic support available and ensure a key understanding of the Graduated Approach is necessary. This group will bring together the services recognised in the deep dive to provide a coordinated and comprehensive support system.  **Discussion**  The preparations over the past six months have been commendable, with the partnership working well together and engaging in challenging financial conversations. The Board has discussed the next steps and is pleased with the progress made. The summary of the meeting and the intentions were clearly communicated, which is appreciated.  The Board noted that feedback has underscored the critical importance of effective communication. While a substantial amount of impactful work is being undertaken, it is imperative that these efforts are communicated clearly and effectively. This Communication Strategy will ensure that all stakeholders, including young people, fully comprehend the objectives. There appears to be a disconnect between the perceptions of young people and the actual efforts being made by the Council, which highlights the necessity for clear and consistent communication.  Members stated that the Deep Dive has provided an opportunity to understand the Graduated Approach better. It has been noted that the Graduated Approach has been overlooked nationally in the implementation of the SEND Code of Practice from the Children Family Act 2014 and requested that the focus should be on early identification rather than relying solely on Education, Health, and Care plans. The Partnership needs to move towards a comprehensive understanding and implementation of the Graduated Approach.  Everyone should be able to describe and understand it. The session was productive, with appropriate challenges and reflections from various organisations. The set of actions agreed upon within the day is a positive outcome.  The Board noted that the Local Offer needs significant improvement in terms of investment, creativity, functionality, and content. It is one of the keyways to communicate effectively and must be prioritised. There is a need for a clear understanding of the Local Offer within the partnership to tell the story accurately.  A question was raised about the training during the onboarding of new staff regarding the Graduated Approach. It was acknowledged that currently, there is no specific training; this needs to be addressed. Social care has some specific induction elements around children with additional needs, and it was suggested to check if the Graduated Approach is included.  The discussion also highlighted the need for strategic support from communicators to provide a clear explanation of the Graduated Approach, finding alternative explanations that are easy to understand will be beneficial.  **Actions**   1. Communications to lead on a project of improvement for the Local Offer looking at both the accessibility/presentation and the content. Due date for next update: April 29th 2. Social Care members to check if the social care induction includes the graduated approach and ensure it is integrated. Due date: May 28th 3. Health leadership to work on articulating the graduated approach clearly within the wider health and care partnership. Due date: May 28th |
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| 5 | **SEND STRATEGIC VISION AND WORKFORCE STRATEGY DRAFTS** |
|  | **Presentation**  Two documents were presented for the Board's consideration: the Workforce Strategy and the SEND Strategic Vision.  **Workforce Strategy**  The development of the Workforce Strategy involved a process of communication and engagement. A version of the strategy was presented at the January meeting, but it was deemed cumbersome and not sharp enough. The current version has been thoroughly edited to deliver on the feedback. This sets out the key workforce outcomes against key workforce groups; with the recognition that the current focus are statutory services but that a future focus will be on school staff and the unpaid workforce (e.g. carers and families).  It was emphasised that strategic frameworks like the Workforce Strategy should never be considered complete; they need to be kept under review and developed continuously. The Board's consideration was sought on whether the revised strategy is better and tighter than the previous version, if the content addresses the local need, and if the Board could endorse the approach to move forward with the implementation model. The importance of incorporating feedback from children and young people about their opportunity to engage in the training was also mentioned.  **Discussion**  The Board noted that the document is clear and a significant improvement to the previous addition and is significantly more concise.  The question was raised on how to ensure Primary Care understands their responsibilities without being able to mandate training to staff who are in independent organisations. There is a need to include primary care in the strategy explicitly, as they are often the first point of contact for parents.  The strategy will continue to be developed and improved, and it was emphasised that it must incorporate input from children and young people.  The Board members unanimously agreed to approve the strategy.  **Actions**   1. Inclusion of an explicit statement in the strategy about the inclusion of primary care and the ongoing work to address this. Due date: April 29th 2. Proceed with the implementation planning for the workforce strategy. Due date: May 28th 3. Further engagement with children and young people on the progress of the workforce strategy. Due date: May 28th   **Presentation**  **SEND Strategic Vision**  The development of the Strategic Vision for SEND in the Borough is a complex undertaking. In January, the SIAB discussed the necessity for a broader strategic framework. Previous iterations of strategic frameworks were reviewed, but they lacked traction with all partners. In February, a small representative group of the Board convened to consider the approach for developing the strategy. This group reflected on good practices from elsewhere in the country, with advice from DfE and NHSE.  The group reviewed various strategy documents, ranging from 80 page documents to single slides, and everything in between. They concluded that the strategy should be accessible, brief, tight, but meaningful. The framework aims to address SIAB priority improvement areas and reflect good work done previously, as well as using outcomes identified by children and young people to inform the strategy.  The current draft of the Strategic Vision was presented for consideration. The draft includes an opening statement slide written by children and young people, a single strategy page that can be extracted and used in isolation and clarifies the purpose and commitment to co-production.  There is an opportunity for further feedback from the children and young people during the Co-production day on April 15th.  **Key Points:**   * The strategy should be accessible, brief, and meaningful. * It should reflect previous good work and outcomes identified by children and young people. * The draft is presented for feedback and further development. * Co-production is a key element, with feedback opportunities on April 15th and April 29th.   **Areas for Improvement:**  There are a couple of gaps in the draft that need to be addressed. Particularly, the outcome for children and young people to have fun needs more focus, as it has not been consistently presented in the programme of work.  **Discussion**  The Board noted that the document is clear and concise. They appreciated the structure but felt it lacked a sense of overall achievement, focusing more on individual achievements. They suggested making the goals more aspirational.  The Board acknowledged the significant progress made on the document. However, they also recognised the complexity arising from the inclusion of multiple goals, priorities, aspirations, and programs. They recommended simplifying and aligning these elements for greater coherence.  It was raised that discussions with parents focused on the implementation and use of the strategy rather than the strategy itself. The importance of using the strategy as an evolving working document was emphasised.  The Chair suggested that the strategy should capture aspirations and have a focus on early identification and support.  It was pointed out that the language on Slide 9 changes from focusing on young people to focusing on services. The Board suggested the language needs to be reviewed to maintain focus on children and young people and clearly defining the impact.  **Actions**   1. Simplify and align the goals, priorities, and programmes to create a clear and cohesive strategy. Due date: April 29th 2. Make the goals more aspirational and clearer about how to achieve them. Due date: April 29th 3. Capture individual aspirations and focus on early identification and support. Due date: April 29th 4. Ensure the language throughout the document remains consistent and focused on children and young people. Due date: April 29th 5. Clearly define the difference we want to make and how we will measure impact. Due date: May 28th 6. Incorporate feedback and present a refined document. Due date: May 28th |
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| 6 | **THEME 3 UPDATE** |
|  | **Presentation**  The discussion focused on bringing together the three priority areas: Preparation for Adulthood, Transition, and Alternative Provision. The aim is to understand how these areas link together, and the emerging impacts and differences being made in relation to the actions completed within these areas.  **Highlight update for PIP 4 –Preparing for Adulthood**  Thereport highlighted the ongoing work in Preparing for Adulthood, driven by the audits conducted a few months ago and the needs analysis. The current focus is on developing provision within Bury and engaging with existing providers to explore opportunities for better post-16 provision.  The discussion also covered alternative provision, with efforts to engage with providers who have post-16 provision. Meetings and projects in Radcliffe and collaboration with Manchester City Council were mentioned. The goal is to find providers who can offer suitable premises and staff to support young people in transition.  The importance of partnership engagement was emphasised, including opportunities for work experience within the Council, Health, and Schools. The need for a broad range of opportunities and support for young people in transition was highlighted.  **Discussion**  Members asked about the opportunities for work experience within the Council, Health, and Schools, and how the partnership is engaged in finding opportunities for young people. The response received was that there are opportunities for internships and employment forums working with supporting bodies. The challenge is finding suitable provision for young people aged 16-17 who are not in college but not necessarily high needs.  Questions were raised including further information about different cohorts and the progress being made in the report and Will stated that the report includes information about different cohorts, but it would be helpful to have standalone documents with more detailed information about the offer for children with different needs.  Board members emphasised the importance of understanding the pathways and options available for young people, reflecting on the last deep dive and the need for clarity in the partnership.  The Board agreed on the need for clarity and mapping out available options for young people. The next report will include this information.  The Board also highlighted the need for data to understand the numbers, ages, gender, and ethnicity of young people being supported and the idea of collecting feedback from parents and young people, with support from schools and other partners.  **Actions**   1. Include further information about different cohorts and the progress being made in the report. Due date: May 28th 2. Develop standalone information sets with detailed information about the offer for children with different needs; to be included in appendices. Due date: May 28th 3. Include contextual data on numbers, ages, gender, and ethnicity of young people being supported in future reports. Due date: May 28th 4. Look at ways to collect feedback from parents and young people, with support from schools and other partners. Due date: April 29th 5. Ensure reports are responding to the key outcome indicators agreed as part of the Priority Impact Plan. Due date: April 29th   **Presentation**  **Highlight update for PIP 5 Transitions**  An update on the progress of transitions from nursery into school, school into high school, and high school into college was given. The key focus was on the year six to year seven transition, and the digital solution "6 into 7."  Strong progress has been made in the year six to year seven transition. All schools have signed up to “6 into 7”. The data is expected to be received on time, and a staged approach to information dissemination has been implemented. SEND information will be made available earlier to high schools to facilitate additional planning for SEND children.  Additional support includes home visits, events at the Elizabethan Suite, and drop-ins at family hubs. Over 200 home visits were conducted last year, and this practice will continue. The transition process is enhanced by the digital solution but this is only available for 6 into 7 – an alternative is being investigated for other years, with additional support in the interim being provided.  For other transitions, such as from nurseries to primary schools and from high school to college - enhanced non-digital solutions will be used this year. Briefings with private, voluntary and independent (PVI) nurseries have started, and Early Years advisors are providing information and advice on quality transitions. Face-to-face transition events and training are planned to support access to primary schools.  The transition from high school to college will not use the "6 into 7" digital platform this year. However, robust systems are in place, and colleges are actively participating in transition events. The transition work is strong, and there have been no issues reported.  **Discussion**  The Board asked for assurance that there is no detriment to children and young people due to the lack of a digital platform and the response received was that the transitions last year were positively received, and there has been no negative feedback from SEND parents and families. Enhanced feedback mechanisms are being discussed to ensure continuous improvement.  The Board recommended including more quality assurance and feedback from schools, parents, and young people in future reports.  The Board raised the idea of retiring the term "SEND" and using "children with individual needs" instead. Mixed feelings were expressed about changing the term due to legislative implications. The focus should be on actions rather than names, and any change should come from the top down.  The Board emphasised the importance of capturing the impact and differences made by the transition work and for future reports to include this information.  The importance of ensuring that the transition process is seamless and that all stakeholders are engaged in providing opportunities for young people was highlighted and it was noted that there are ongoing efforts to engage with various stakeholders, including schools, health services, and the Council, to provide a comprehensive support system for young people in transition.  It was suggested that the strategy should reflect the broader goals and aspirations for young people, not just the immediate transition needs. The strategy aims to be aspirational and comprehensive, addressing both immediate and long-term needs of young people. Future iterations of the strategy will include broader goals and aspirations.  Questions were raised about the specific measures in place to support young people who are not in college, but also not high needs and it was stated that there are ongoing efforts to provide support for young people in this category, including internships, employment forums, and collaboration with existing providers to offer suitable opportunities.  The Board emphasised the need for clear communication and consistent language throughout the paper to ensure all stakeholders understand the goals and objectives and for future reports and strategy documents to ensure this clarity.  **Actions**   * Include more comprehensive feedback and quality assurance from schools, parents, and young people in future reports. Due date: June 24th * Enhance feedback mechanisms to ensure continuous improvement. Due date: June 24th * Capture the impact and differences made by the transition work in future reports. Due date: July 22nd * Consider the implications of changing the term "SEND" to "children with individual needs" and discuss further with stakeholders. Due date: August 31st   **Presentation**  **Highlight update on EOTAS and Alternative Provision:**  The report provided an update on the Educated Other Than at School (EOTAS) provision and alternative provision. The key points included definitions, current practices, and future plans.  EOTAS refers to education provided for young people who might not otherwise receive it due to permanent exclusion, medical reasons, or other circumstances. It is distinct from alternative provision, which is education provided by the local authority within a different framework. The new guidance from the DfE states that EOTAS is not considered alternative provision, although there is some overlap.  Efforts have been made to clearly identify and categorize cohorts of children receiving EOTAS and alternative provision. This includes ensuring secure oversight and tightening processes around these provisions. Schools are required to inform the local authority about children in alternative provision, and data collection sheets are used to maintain oversight.  The policy for EOTAS has been completed and shared with parent forums for feedback. Amendments have been made based on this feedback, and the policy is ready for approval. An ongoing EOTAS Parents Forum will be established to discuss issues and collect feedback regularly. Efforts are also being made to ensure that children in EOTAS have access to services and support typically available in schools.  **Discussion**  Board Membersasked for definitions of EOTAS and Alternative Provision to be emailed for reference.  Board Member suggested having a breakdown of all children with SEN support and an education, health, and care plan by provision, including alternative provision, EOTAS, missing education, and elective home education.  Members asked if the local authority has a full understanding of where all children are, including those in alternative provision commissioned through schools.  There are checks and balances in place, and schools are required to provide information about children in alternative provision. Data collection sheets are used to maintain oversight.  The Chair highlighted the importance of knowing about all children in Bury, including those in unregistered schools and the need for cross-referencing data with health and social care to ensure all children are accounted for. In the same vein, the number of children currently in EOTAS and the main cohorts were requested for. Currently 41 children in EOTAS, with 70% in year 11 or post-16. The main cohorts are children with Social Emotional Mental Health and Autism.  The Board suggested establishing ongoing forums to discuss issues and collect feedback from EOTAS parents and emphasised the importance of ensuring children in EOTAS have access to services and support typically available in schools. Efforts are being made to ensure access to services, including educational psychology services, to support children in EOTAS and facilitate their return to the school system where possible.  Questions were asked if children and young people have seen the policy and provided feedback and it was confirmed that he policy has been shared with parent forums, but feedback from children and young people is still needed. Efforts will be made to gather this feedback through various channels.  The Board Members suggested having a register of all strategies to ensure a clear strategic framework.  **Actions**   * Email definitions of EOTAS and alternative provision. Due date: April 29th * Provide a breakdown of children with SEN support and education, health, and care plans by provision, including those outside the maintained sector, and cross-referencing with health and social care data. Due date: May 28th * Establish EOTAS Parents Forum to meet regularly. Due date: April 29th * Gather feedback from children and young people on the policy. Due date: July 22nd * PPL to create a register of all strategies. Due date: April 29th   **Presentation**  **Highlight update on EHC Process:**  The report provided an update on the progress of the annual review recovery plan for Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plans. The focus remains on delivering the Annual Review-based recovery plan, with progress being made despite significant barriers related to data management.  One of the major barriers to developing the recovery plan beyond the initial phases is the management of annual review data. The systems are currently being updated to hold annual review data effectively, including information on who has had an annual review, who hasn't, and who has been waiting. The data cleansing process is underway, with staff being trained to ensure accurate data management.  Progress and Achievements:   * Achieved a 94% compliance rate (completion within 20 weeks of due date) for transfers by the 15th of February, with 76% of placements named according to parental preference. * On track to ensure every year 11 plan includes a preparing for adulthood element by the 31st of March deadline. Quality remains a focus, but statutory compliance is being maintained.   **Next Steps**  The next phase of the recovery plan will focus on year 11 transitions and ensuring statutory compliance. The goal is to address reviews and move to a position of no back log. This will take longer than 12 months due to the scale of the challenge.  **Discussion**  There was a discussion on the roles of Providers and how they have evidenced outcomes, and the extent to which providers can recognise and advocate for improvements. Efforts are being made to improve relationships and communication with providers.  Concerns were raised about prioritisation of EHC plan reviews in the staging of the recovery, particularly those outside of transition points and asked how parents can trigger the process for prioritising their child's review. Annual Review triage has been established to manage the high volume of reviews. The triage process prioritises Reviews based on risk factors such as crisis situations, exclusions, and other urgent needs. Further refinement of the process is needed to ensure seamless management.  There was a suggestion to include all providers in the annual SEND survey to capture feedback from all services that children and young people touch. The importance of capturing feedback from a broad range of stakeholders was emphasised.  The importance of understanding the whole position of children with SEND, including those outside the maintained sector was discussed.  The current approach delivers on bringing different but related elements together. There is a need to better bring together and describe the whole experience of transitions in the executive summary, highlighting key challenges and questions for the Board.  The report includes tables with red RAG ratings. It is important to explain these ratings in the report and reset dates for those that have not been met. The Board needs to approve new dates to ensure they are achievable.  The report indicates that outcome measures are to be confirmed. The Board looks forward to having these measures completed by the next meeting.  The importance of building a partnership approach and thinking about children holistically was highlighted as the reason for bringing together these areas in to one report, so that should be the focus, not just a better report. It was suggested that the Delivery Group should ensure joined-up work.  It was suggested that the Executive Summary could be sharper and that in doing this we may also deliver on the action at the beginning of the report on how to communicate key messages to families, children, and young people.  It was agreed that further audits of plans should be conducted to identify progress on inclusion of the Preparing for Adult elements.  The Board emphasised the importance of engagement of parents, children, and young people but that we should think about the impact on parents.  **Actions**   * Reset request for overdue milestones to be brought to the future Boards. Due date: April 29th * Audits of plans to look at quality of preparing for adulthood elements and provide an update. Due date: May 28th * Development of an approach to engage parents and carers. Due date: April 29th * The future approach to review planning should consider how parents can feed in to the process to ensure their perspectives are considered as part of prioritisation. Due date: June 24th |
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| 7 | **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** |
|  | **Thoughts/communications from today’s meeting:**   * Strengthening within the partnership across the Board. * Quality of reports is improving, with expectations for further enhancement through data and quality assurance. * There is greater challenge and support among partners. * Positive feedback from children, emphasising the importance of early identification of needs. |
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| 11 | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** |
|  | 29th April 10.00 – 13.00 Town Hall Committee Room A & B  28th May 10.00 – 13.00 Town Hall Committee Room A & B  24th June 10.00 – 13.00 Town Hall Peel Room  22nd July 10.00 – 13.00 Town Hall Peel Room  23rd September 10.00 – 13.00 Town Hall Peel Room  21st October 10.00 – 13.00 Town Hall Peel Room  25th November 10.00 – 13.00 Town Hall Peel Room  16th December 10.00 – 13.00 Town Hall Peel Room |