



COUNCIL
FOR DISABLED
CHILDREN

Improvement Board Toolkit Phase 1 Exemplar: Terms of Reference

SEND Strategic Improvement Board

Terms of Reference

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| Version: | Final 1.0 |
| Date: | June 2024 |
| Chair: | Name of Independent Chair |
| Council Lead: | |
| ICB Lead: | |
| Contact: | Usually the project lead/support to the Board |

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The (name of Local Area) SEND Strategic Improvement and Assurance Board (SIAB) will provide strategic system and partnership leadership, assurance, and oversight of the (add number here) improvements detailed in the priority actions identified in the (date) Local Area SEND and AP Inspection, across the local area system in (name of Local Area) for children and young people with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) and their families.
- 1.2. It will use its influence and accountabilities to drive forward improvements, at pace, across the Local Area, identifying any barriers, consolidating what is working well and improving what is not.
- 1.3. The Board will provide transparent visibility of progress, constructive and robust challenge as well as celebrating what is working well and improving. It will be self-critical and escalate appropriately where sufficient sustainable progress is not made.
- 1.4. The Board's primary focus is the partnership and system improvement and impact across the (add number here) priority areas, however it will also consider oversight and assurance of other identified improvements across the Local Area system.
- 1.5. The Board will use its authority to agree the necessary actions that are needed at a partnership and system-wide level on improvement priorities. The Board Members will need to be empowered with sufficient delegated authority to agree actions in principle on behalf of their organisation or partnership body, in order make swift and decisive progress. If necessary, decisions will be taken through appropriate organisational governance arrangements (for example Executive key decision by the Local Authorities Cabinet Member, or NHS decisions through the Integrated Care Board and The NHS Trust Board).

- 1.6. The Board will be focused on ensuring partnership actions make a difference in improving impact and outcomes and ensure that the voice and lived experience of children, young people, carers and families with SEND is heard. It will champion extending participation, reach and engagement and ensure that children, young people, carers, and families have an opportunity to provide direct input to the work of the Board and inform the development of improvement activities through co-production.
- 1.7. The Board will receive assurance reports on a monthly basis from SEND Partnership operational boards and focus groups, supported by high quality, robust multi-agency data, monitoring and quantitative and qualitative analysis of impact. The Board will interrogate this data and be supported in this by expert advisers from DfE, Local Authority and Health systems. Where Councils are subject to Safety Valve or Delivering Better Value arrangements this will also be reported to the Board where it affects improvement programmes. Links to the Change Programme will also be made where relevant.
- 1.8. The Board will consider partnership/system level risks, issues and performance monitoring, including a partnership RAID log and collectively agreed Key Performance Indicators, Impact/Outcome Measures and Key Risk Indicators.
- 1.9. The Board will provide oversight and assurance for the partnership delivery of the SEND Strategy and Action Plan, and the SEND Communications and Engagement Strategy which contains additional and complementary work to ensure delivery of improvement priorities.
- 1.10. The Board will also maintain oversight of key transformation activity in relation to improving services and outcomes for children and young people with SEND across the local area.

2. Governance and accountability

- 2.1. Governance arrangements diagrams are provided at Appendix A and B – a supporting governance arrangement pack is available to explain the purpose and role of different governance functions within the local area. (Attach Local Area structures).
- 2.2. The Board is independently chaired by (insert name), with administrative and business support provided by (insert name).
- 2.3. The relevant Cabinet Member, or councillor with responsibility for Children's Services will be a Member of the Board, in addition to a standing invitation to representatives from each Opposition Group to strengthen cross-party oversight and transparency.
- 2.4. Wherever possible, the Board will seek to resolve and mitigate risks and issues within its remit. Where necessary, the Board will escalate risks and issues directly to the Council's Chief Executive as the responsible Local Authority for SEND transformation and improvement and to the Senior Responsible Officer in the ICB. They will advise on appropriate escalation.

- 2.5. Via its membership, the Board will also agree appropriate sharing or escalation of issues into partner agency governance arrangements which will include a range of arrangements such as:
 - Integrated Children's Partnership Board.
 - Children and Young People's Programme Board.
 - Parent Carer Forum.
 - Association of Headteachers.
 - Further Education Representatives.
 - Early Years, Special School and Mainstream School Representatives.
 - And others identified locally.
- 2.6. Representatives from the DfE and NHS England will attend Improvement Board meetings to receive insight into progress made against delivery of actions and improvement outcomes as identified in the Inspection process.

3. Responsibilities and behaviours

All Board members are expected to:

- 3.1. apply and agree to the 'Principles of Board Membership'.
- 3.2. ensure that the partnership improvement and transformation activity is delivering the required impact for children and young people with SEND, at pace.
- 3.3. provide opportunities for children and young people's participation, including to contribute to the work of the Board.
- 3.4. ensure that co-production is embedded in the culture of SEND services.
- 3.5. offer advice, challenge and support to secure sustainable improvement in a respectful manner.
- 3.6. support the resolution of escalated risks and issues and remove all barriers to agreed activity, pace and performance.
- 3.7. take a solutions-focused approach to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people.
- 3.8. maintain confidentiality on specific issues, if required in order to enable the meetings to be productive.
- 3.9. provide regular communication about the work and impact of the Board to all stakeholders.
- 3.10. individual board members to refrain from speaking publicly on behalf of the board unless agreed by the partnership.

4. Board meetings

- 4.1. The Board will meet on a monthly basis, with clear minutes, actions and decision log, with a review/evaluation at 6 months. There is a commitment to transparency for minutes and actions. Minutes and actions should be recorded and published within 2 weeks of the Board on the LA website.

5. Review of Terms of Reference

- 5.1. The Terms of Reference will be reviewed in 6 months by the Board.

6. Membership

- 6.1. Board members are identified in the table below.
- 6.2. Additional attendees may be asked to attend Board meetings for specific agenda items or to update on the progress of actions, including Participation Leads, the SEND Transformation Programme Team, Designated Clinical Offers, Leads of Operational Groups etc.
- 6.3. Participation from the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE, or Third Sector) will be agreed locally and include key partners in the area.

SEND Strategic Improvement and Assurance Board Members to be considered at a local level.

Example job titles suggested below but will be dependent on LA context:

| Title | Name | Organisation/Partnership Body |
|--|------|-------------------------------|
| Independent Chair | | |
| Cabinet Member for Education and Skills/councillor with responsibility for Children's Services | | |
| Director for Children, Young People and Education | | |
| Director for Education | | |
| Director of Children's Services | | |
| Director for Adult Social Care | | |
| Participation Manager | | |
| Chief Nurse | | |
| ICB Lead for SEND / DCO | | |
| Commissioners | | |
| Chair, Parent Carer Forum | | |
| Chair, SEND Partnership Operational Board or equivalent | | |
| Director of Public Health | | |
| Chair, Early Years and Childcare Provider Association | | |

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| Primary Headteachers Executive group representative | | |
| Secondary Headteachers Executive representative | | |
| Special School Executive Headteachers representative | | |
| Representative for FE | | |
| DfE SEND Advisor | | |
| NHSE Advisor | | |
| Representative(s) from the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Sector | | |
| <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standing open invitation should be extended to Opposition Group Leads, to enhance cross-party oversight, transparency, and assurance. • A transparent arrangement which ensures children and young people can directly engage with the board should be in place, supported by the Participation Manager (e.g. at the board, in advance or via other engagement means). | | |

Appendix A –SEND Strategic Improvement Board – Local Area Governance Overview

Appendix B – SEND Strategic Improvement Board – oversight, assurance and escalation points

EXEMPLAR



United for Disabled Children

The Council for Disabled Children brings people and organisations together to drive change in society and deliver a better childhood for disabled children in the UK. We interrogate policy, uncover evidence, and develop more effective ways of supporting disabled children and families. Together with National Children's Bureau we are united for a better childhood.

Let's work together: 020 7843 6000 | cdc@ncb.org.uk

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Part of the family

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BUREAU

National Children's Bureau is registered charity number 258825 and a company limited by guarantee number 00952717. Registered office: 23 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.