

Transfers from Statements of SEN to EHC Plans

SUMMARY

- 1.1 The transfer process is one, where Local Authorities (LA) are expected to have completed the transition of existing statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) to Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans by the statutory deadline of 31 March 2018, as set under the Children and Families Act 2014.
- 1.2 On 17 January 2018 the SEND and Disability Adviser, Department for Education (DfE) wrote to the LA again to gain further assurance that the remainder of Derby Statements of SEN were to be completed on time. The LA reports through the DfE monthly survey with a commitment to meet this deadline. The Council has reported that good progress continues to be made to meet the conversion deadline of 31 March 2018.
- 1.3 The LA has two teams dedicated to conversions. The teams are committed to this shared priority and every effort is being made by all to ensure that there is no slippage and that EHC Plans are finalised by 31 March 2018.

An updated position will be provided to Scrutiny at the meeting since the numbers are dynamic and change daily.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To be noted that the completion of transfer process is an absolute priority for the Council and the conversion teams continue to make good progress.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Derby Local Authority is committed through the Council Plan 2016-2019 as one of its eight priorities and the Vision for SEND to protect and to ensure the best possible outcomes for vulnerable children and adults.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 Local Authorities are expected to have completed the transition of existing statements of SEN to Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans by the statutory deadline of 31 March 2018, as set under the Children and Families Act 2014.
- 4.2 There are two teams working on the transfers. The capacity for casework and management has been increased and regrouped since the launch of the SEND Reforms in 2014 to ensure compliance and that the needs for those Derby children and young people with SEND are met.
- 4.3 The Council also completed a successful tender exercise to write both new and transfer EHC Plans with Aspire Children's Services. There have been three review meetings held with Aspire Children's Services to ensure the quality and timeliness of writing EHC Plans.
- 4.4 In terms of the latest position; this will be provided to Scrutiny at the meeting since the numbers are dynamic and change daily.
- 4.5 Regular detailed monitoring of all stages of the conversion process are used to ensure that every step of this process is progressing swiftly and every effort is being made to ensure that the statements are converted by the deadline.
- 4.6 The Council continues to make good progress in relation to the conversion of statements to Education Health Care Plans for the 31 March 2018 deadline.
- 4.7 The teams have achieved their target for Phase Transfers by 15th February 2018 for September 2018. The completion date for Y11 transfer is the same as for the transfer process; being 31 March 2018. Last year the LA completed 80.5% Phase Transfers by the deadline. This year the percentage achieved is 93%.
- 4.8 The LA continues to experience high demand for requests for EHC plans. The demand has meant that the timeliness of statutory assessment has had an impact. The timelines should slowly begin to improve as the conversions are being completed.
- 4.9 The LA has completed a detailed consultation on citywide SEND review to improve provision for Derby. The key proposals related to Enhanced Resource School and Special School Placement Criteria, improving SEND pupil pathways between primary and secondary Enhanced Resource School placements to help effective transition planning for Children, developing an Early Years Inclusion Fund for all Early Years providers and capital investment to increase and improve Enhanced Resource School provision. The consultation outcomes are now being considered and will be reported to Council Cabinet for consideration in due course.

- 4.10 The Specialist Teaching and Educational Psychology Service (STePS) have developed Guidance for Implementing the Graduated Response Strategy. This strategy is now at a pilot stage since the launch on 22 October 2017 and four follow-up training sessions for all Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) have been set to focus on each area of need. These have been timetabled for Spring and Summer Terms 2018. The Graduated Response Strategy will set out the steps to be taken by the LA schools and colleges to support children and young people with SEND. It will provide support to all schools, colleges and post-16 providers and clarity around the process and criteria for determining the level of provision needed to effectively support an individual pupil's progress. The strategy will incorporate the 'assess', 'plan', 'do' and 'review' cycle as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25. The LA will develop a Graduated Response Strategy which will be reported to Council Cabinet in due course.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The DfE does not allow LAs the option of non- completion of the transfers from SEN to EHC Plans by 31 March 2018.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

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IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 The LA has invested £762,000 in 2017/18 in the assessment and conversion team workforce. The DfE only allocated a grant of £191,000 for 2017/18 to support the delivery of SEND Reforms, and the Council has invested the additional £571,000.

Legal

- 2.1 The LA needs to complete the transfer process by the set deadline of 31 March 2018 in meeting its statutory duties.

Personnel

- 3.1 The teams have been given permission by the director to carry over 10 days of annual leave to the next financial leave to ensure maximum capacity at work until the completion of the transfers.

IT

- 4.1 Synergy is the IT system and the baseline for any case review progress update.

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 Children and young people with SEND are entitled to good services.

Health and Safety

- 6.1 In the latest sickness report from April 2017 to December 2017 the Inclusion Services lost 262.9 days.

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.1 There are no implications to environmental sustainability.

Property and Asset Management

- 8.1 There are no implications to property and asset management.

Risk Management

- 9.1 Monitoring, tracking and reporting by the Conversion Team Manager and 16-25 VLS Manager through Management Meetings, Schools' Information Portal, Headteacher Leadership Meetings SEND Improvement Board and SEND Commissioning Board, DMT, lead member and DfE.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 10.1 One of the eight priorities in the Council Plan 2017-2019 is to protect vulnerable children and young people.