
York Schools Forum**22nd January 2026**

Report of Assistant Director, Education and Skills

**Safety Valve Year 4, Quarter 3 monitoring report
Summary**

1. This paper provides the members of the School Forum with an update on the progress being made to deliver the Safety Valve High Needs recovery plan. The Year 4, Quarter 3 monitoring report was submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) on 2nd December 2026. The DfE has confirmed that the final Safety Valve payment will be made on 30th January 2026. The December reports were the final reports for the 2025-26 financial year, and the January payment completes the total agreed Safety Valve funding for York.

Progress on the Safety Valve Recovery Plan

2. The table below summarises the position at the start of the final year of the Safety Valve agreement:

Safety Valve Priority	Year 4, Quarter 3 update
Manage demand appropriately by supporting more children and young people in mainstream settings and appropriate and timely ceasing of Education, Health and Care plans.	<p>Numbers of EHCPs have continued to rise – however, overall percentage remains below national (4.6% York, 5.3% national). SEN Support is 11.6% in York as against 14.2% nationally. At the end of Qtr 2 of 2024/25 43 EHC plans had been appropriately ceased. The percentage of children with an EHCP in mainstream remains above national. This is being further supported in 2025/26 through the targeted use of SEND capital. Schools have submitted expressions of interest to access SEND Capital to support inclusion in mainstream. As of 24th November, 13 EOLs have been received. These are being assessed by a capital panel on 4th December.</p> <p>SEND capital is also being used to create additional secondary enhanced resource provision places for September 2027.</p>

<p>Reduce the costs of SEND transport and support independence by improving strategic and individual commissioning and contract management. This will include reductions in the costs of out of city placements, a review of banding and SEND transport.</p>	<p>This workstream is complete as the transport savings from the High Needs DSG have been achieved.</p> <p>The extension of funding to support the York Independent Travel Training Service (YILTS) is allowing the team to work with more children and young people to help them to travel independently and reduce reliance on taxis. At the end of Qtr 2 2025/26 21 additional children were travelling independently as a result of working with YILTS.</p>
<p>Support the inclusion of children and young people with SEND in mainstream settings to improve outcomes and reduce requests for specialist provision, including the development of pre-and post-diagnosis support pathways.</p>	<p>SEND Central (the Family Hub) opened on 20th September 2025.</p> <p>This is a hub where families can seek advice and information about what's available in York when they have children and young people who have additional needs, any age from 0 to 25. SEND Central provides a warm, welcoming, and supportive environment where families can go for information, advice, and support on all aspects of SEND and where they can find out more about the Local Offer in York. SEND Central is an inclusive hub with no specific threshold or level of need required for families to access. Front of house is provided by navigators who are people with lived experience of SEND and are employed by the York Parent Carer Forum.</p> <p>Learning from the successful launch of SEND Central is being used to develop the Best Start in Life Hub offer in York which will ensure that interventions in the early years reduce the need for specialist services in later life</p>
<p>Create more enhanced resource provision in mainstream schools to support the transition of children with a primary need of autism and associated social, emotional and mental health needs to reduce out of city placements.</p>	<p>A review of the effectiveness of current and future ERP provision has taken place and is informing the revision of the SEND Sufficiency plan and the allocation of the remaining unallocated SEND capital. School Forum have supported the request for disapplication from the schools block and this will be reinvested in supporting the initial</p>

	<p>revenue costs associated with growing enhanced resource provision places as will the reprofiling of special school banding from implementation from September 2026.</p> <p>The growth in SEMH as an area of primary need continues and this is a specific focus on work to develop inclusive mainstream practice in 2025/26 through early identification and better targeting of evidence-informed interventions. This includes a workforce development plan focused on removing barriers to belonging and a implementation of an Inclusive Attendance project from January 2026</p>
<p>Increase the number of young people with SEND in employment in the 19-25 age range by preparing post 16 and post 19 for adulthood, with a focus on routes to employment post 19.</p>	<p>A post 16 review is taking place during 2025-26 to identify gaps in the city provision map and to inform a post 16 and post 19 PfA commissioning plan. This workstream has been adopted as a priority by the York Schools and Academies Board.</p> <p>26 young people have been recruited on to the supported internship programme in 2025-26. This provides a secure pathway to employment</p> <p>Development of a PfA zone at SEND Central is being planned to provide a one stop shop approach. This will bring together a multi-disciplinary team, including specialist learning and careers advisers.</p>

Next Steps

3. The implementation of the Inclusion and Belonging Strategy which will be delivered through the local area SEND reform plan.
4. The local area SEND reform plan will include a focus on financial planning to ensure that the progress made during the Safety Valve programme can be sustained so that cumulative deficits do not grow the extent seen before York entered the Safety Valve programme.

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