
York Schools Forum

1st February 2024

Report of Assistant Director, Education and Skills

Safety Valve Year 2, 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 2, Quarter 3 monitoring report was submitted to the Department for Education on 15th December 2023.

Progress on the Safety Valve Recovery Plan

2. The council remains **on track** to meet the deficit reduction targets set out in the Safety Valve agreement.
3. As reported to the members of Schools Forum in October 2023 we are now entering the most difficult phase of the Safety Valve agreement as we begin to plan for a sustainable SEND system post 2025. Central to this planning is the work we are doing on our SEND Sufficiency Strategy. This strategy is focusing on short term remedies and longer- term change. A growing pressure is the increasing number of requests for places in York's specialist provision from neighbouring local authorities. This adds an additional pressure for us when trying to manage the sufficiency of provision in the city.
4. Autism is the prevalent area of primary need in York. 48% of children attending one of the two generic special schools in York have autism recorded as their primary areas of need compared to 35% nationally. This is being factored in to work with health partners as we begin the review of the joint commissioning strategy.
5. All aspects of neurodiversity are an important context to understanding the current and future needs of children and young people in the city. This is particularly significant in planning for successful transitions between the primary and secondary phase, particularly in relation to understanding the sensory needs of neurodiverse children and young people. Further developing an understanding of neurodiversity through a strengths based approach is the focus of work with the ADHD foundation during 2024.
6. In the last two years there has been an increase in demand for special school places at points of transition. There have been 59 City of York children requesting moves from mainstream primary or moving from nursery to reception who gave a preference for a specialist place from September 2024. 34 of these children have not been offered a place in a specialist setting.
7. In order to manage this, the plan is to offer enhanced support from the autism specialist teachers to some of these children. Autism is the prevalent area of primary need in York.

The teachers and Tas will be allocated to work with the children and settings in the Summer 2 and Autumn 1 half terms to ensure a smooth transition.

8. The priority will be for those transitioning from nursery to reception and this work will include an initial meeting with the family and both settings. Where capacity allows, the team will also work with those transitioning from Reception to Year 1 and Y6 to Y7.

9. Additional capital works at Hob Moor Oaks Primary Special School and Danesgate SEMH provision have been included in the 2023-24 school capital plan and approval has been given for the works by the council's Executive.

10. The work taking place on the Local Plan is being used to identify future requirements for SEND places and this is being reflected in Education Section 106 linked to new developments.

11. The table below summarises the operational activity that has taken place in Quarter 3 of Year 2 against each of the priorities in the Safety Valve agreement:

Safety Valve Priority	Activity in Year 2 Quarter 3 (September 2023-December 2023)
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>The ordinarily available provision guidance was launched at our SEND Conference on 20th November. The guidance was developed through coproduction with schools and parents and carers and provides guidance about how mainstream schools can support children and young people with SEND. This is central to the work we are doing with early years settings and schools to support inclusive practice and to re-establish parental confidence in mainstream provision.</p> <p>The new SEND Graduated pathway has been developed and launched with schools. The pathway supports attendance at school and gives strategies for schools to implement to support attendance for children whose mental health and/or neurodiversity is presenting a barrier.</p>

	<p>A school reintegration worker post has been developed and recruited to and is being funded by health.</p> <p>The total number of plans appropriately ceased between 1st September and 11th December 2023 was 48.</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>The DSG element of the transport savings have been delivered.</p> <p>£25,236 less was spent on taxis than Autumn Term 2022. This is a 43% saving.</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>As part of our SEND operational plan we have fully redeveloped York's SEND local offer website (www.yorksend.org). The new website has been co-produced with parents and carers, children and young people and professionals and feedback has been very positive about the new website feeling much cleaner and easier to navigate.</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>The new secondary ERP has successfully opened.</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>Good progress has been made with implementing the supported internship action plan since September 2023. The action plan was launched at the Inclusive Employment Network event on 28th September. The SEND Employment Forum has been established and a potential cohort of young people to be supported by Project Search has been identified.</p> <p>The Skills team are supporting this strand of the SEND improvement work</p>

	<p>through the work they are leading on supported internships. This is part of a national initiative which has provided local authorities with support from the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi)</p> <p>.</p> <p>The supported internship grant is being used to develop partnership activity, to increase the number of supported internships and other pathways to employment for young people with SEND.</p> <p>Specific actions in Qtr 3 have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND Employment Forum first official meeting (9 Nov 2023) • Employer engagement training for SLEAs (11 Oct 2023) • Vocational profiling training for SLEAs and partners (8 Nov 2023) • SEND Opportunities event (25 October 2023)
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Next Steps

6. The Quarter 3 monitoring report has demonstrated that the local authority is on track to achieve an in-year balance in 2023-24.
7. The focus of work for 2024-25 will be:
 1. Completing the SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment which will inform the review of the Joint Commissioning Strategy and development of the Area Inclusion Plan.
 2. Publishing and implementing the SEND Sufficiency Strategy.

Recommendations

6. Note the progress on the Safety Valve recovery plan between the Department for Education and the council which forms the basis of the grant agreement that the council has signed up to.

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