

# **DERBYSHIRE SEND IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE BOARD**

## **MINUTES**

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2025**

**Committee Room 1, County Hall, Matlock, 10:00-13:00**

### **MINUTES:**

<b>Item No:</b>	<b>Minutes:</b>
<b>DSIAB2425/01</b>	<p><b>Welcome, introductions and apologies</b></p> <p>The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees and thanked them for their time and commitment to the Board.</p>
<b>DSIAB2425/02</b>	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>The Chair asked if there were any conflicts of interest or declarations of interest that needed to be noted. No conflicts of interest or declarations were reported by the attendees at that time.</p>
<b>DSIAB2425/03</b>	<p><b>Children &amp; Young People Focus: Children and Young People participation</b></p> <p>The Board welcomed direct contributions from the young people for the first time, marking a significant milestone in its eighth meeting. The youth representatives, part of a newly formed group, expressed enthusiasm about engaging with SIAB and presented their initial priorities and questions.</p> <p>Young people outlined five key priorities they had developed as a group. These included improving communication channels, particularly through social media and websites, to ensure young people are informed and their voices are heard. They also suggested using these platforms to advertise local job opportunities. The group emphasised the importance of not overwhelming users with excessive information and advocated for clear, accessible messaging.</p> <p>A central theme was the desire for meaningful involvement in commissioning services. Young people expressed that they want to be part of designing local services, not just consulted. They discussed the need for safe spaces for those feeling overwhelmed and stressed and highlighted the importance of being included in service design processes that reflect their lived experiences and needs.</p> <p>They raised concerns about the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) process, particularly the requirement for reassessment after being out of education for 12 months. Young people called for annual reviews to be standard practice regardless of education status.</p>

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<p><b>DSIAB2425/03</b> <b>Continued</b></p>	<p>They also stressed the need for longer transition periods when moving between schools or colleges to allow time to build relationships and feel secure. Inconsistencies in support due to staff turnover were highlighted, with calls for better staff preparation and continuity of care.</p> <p>The group voiced strong concerns about the lack of vocational opportunities and work experience, which they felt hindered their ability to secure employment after education. They proposed partnerships with local businesses, councils, and health services to create community-based training and work placements. Examples included successful models such as farm shops and garden centres pairing young people with staff mentors. The Board acknowledged these suggestions and committed to exploring vocational pathways across sectors.</p> <p>Transport was identified as a barrier to participation in education and extracurricular activities. Young people proposed reducing reliance on escorts in taxis to foster social environments and suggested improved travel training. They also recommended alternative transport solutions to support after-school activities, including voluntary sector involvement and parental support.</p> <p>The group requested a bulletin in schools to share updates from the Board in a format accessible to young people. They offered to help design these communications to ensure relevance and clarity. The Board agreed to collaborate with the group on this initiative and committed to checking the messaging with them before dissemination.</p> <p>Young people asked how they would know their input was being acted upon. In response, the Board agreed to establish a log to track feedback and actions taken. Board members also committed to attending Youth meetings over the next 12 months to strengthen engagement and transparency. The group was invited to name the log and help shape its format.</p> <p>Further discussions included the need for more choices and opportunities to explore interests and talents, particularly for those unsure of their career paths. The importance of extracurricular activities and hobbies was emphasised, along with the need for transport solutions to support participation. Concerns were also raised about Ofsted inspections and the need for inspectors to have classroom experience to better understand school environments.</p> <p>The Board expressed deep appreciation for the contributions made by the young people and committed to ongoing collaboration. It was agreed that youth participation would become a regular feature of future meetings, with adjustments made to ensure accessibility and inclusion.</p> <p><b>ACTION DSIABA117 – Administrator for the Board to share a list of Board members to Board member for Communications.</b>  <b>ACTION DSIABA118 – Board members to liaise with Board member for Communications to attend Children and Young People Groups/meetings.</b>  <b>ACTION DSIABA119 – Tracker to be developed for capturing young people's comments and how they are responded to.</b>  <b>ACTION DSIABA120 – Cllr Support member for SEND to meet with Children and Young People to discuss vocational opportunities.</b></p>

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DSIAB2425/04	<p data-bbox="355 103 659 136"><b>Terms of Reference</b></p> <p data-bbox="355 174 1528 427">The Board revisited the Terms of Reference (ToR), which had previously been deferred pending a review of Board membership. It was acknowledged that while the membership review is still ongoing, the Board is now in a position to agree the majority of the contents and expectations. Members were asked to confirm their agreement to proceed with the ToR as drafted, with the understanding that any updates to membership would be finalised by October, with a working target of September.</p> <p data-bbox="355 465 1528 685">The Chair emphasised the importance of distinguishing between the strategic and operational functions of the Board. Going forward, the Board will focus more on strategic oversight, while the Operational Delivery Group will take responsibility for implementation and delivery. This shift will result in some current Board members transitioning to roles within the operational group, allowing for more targeted engagement.</p> <p data-bbox="355 723 1528 943">Additionally, the Board is reviewing how schools and education providers are represented. The aim is to ensure that representatives can speak on behalf of broader groups such as all secondary schools, primary schools, special schools, and alternative provision settings rather than solely representing their individual institutions. This is intended to strengthen the strategic voice of education within the Board and ensure more inclusive representation.</p> <p data-bbox="355 981 1528 1126">The Chair reiterated that this change is not a reflection on the contributions of current members, who have provided valuable input, but rather a necessary evolution to support the Board's strategic direction. Updates on the membership review will be shared in future meetings.</p> <p data-bbox="355 1164 1187 1198">The Terms of Reference were <b>agreed</b> by Board members.</p>

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/05	<p data-bbox="354 98 510 138"><b>Stocktake</b></p> <p data-bbox="354 174 1532 425">The Board revisited the outcomes and implications of the recent Stocktake, which had previously been presented by representatives from the Department for Education (DfE) and NHSE. The Chair noted that while no written feedback had been received from Board members ahead of this meeting, a summary document had been prepared by Graham outlining the key areas for action identified during the Stocktake. This document was shared with attendees and formed the basis of the discussion.</p> <p data-bbox="354 465 1532 716">A 'Reset meeting' had been held with senior leaders and Priority Impact Area leads to review the Priority Impact Plan in light of the Stocktake findings. As a result, several timeframes were adjusted to reflect a more realistic delivery schedule, particularly now that much of the diagnostic work had been completed. The Stocktakes 'plan on a page' was being integrated into the operational planning process, with a focus on the next three to six months leading up to the general inspection.</p> <p data-bbox="354 757 1532 1008">The Chair emphasised the importance of preparing for a Monitoring Inspection focused on 'effective action', noting that current evidence of impact remains insufficient. Board members were reminded that future reports must include clear data demonstrating the outcomes of actions taken, including measurable improvements and quality assurance indicators. This includes feedback from children, young people, and families to ensure their experiences are reflected in the evidence base.</p> <p data-bbox="354 1048 1532 1232">The discussion also highlighted the need to differentiate between actions and impact. While actions are necessary, the Board must now shift its focus to demonstrating the difference those actions are making. This includes identifying and tracking 'impact milestones' that show progress toward desired outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p data-bbox="354 1272 1532 1456">It was agreed that the Board would revisit the original inspection letter later in the year, either before Christmas or early in the New Year, to ensure that all elements have been addressed and nothing has been overlooked. The Chair reiterated the importance of building a robust evidence bank to support the system's progress and readiness for inspection.</p> <p data-bbox="354 1496 1532 1635">Board members expressed support for the approach and acknowledged the need for continued collaboration and transparency. The Operational Delivery Group was tasked with ensuring that the Stocktake priorities are embedded in ongoing work and that progress is monitored and reported back to the Board.</p>

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/06	<p data-bbox="355 98 943 136"><b>Priority Impact Area Progress Reports</b></p> <p data-bbox="501 174 861 212">a. Priority Impact Area 2</p> <p data-bbox="355 250 1528 394">The Board received an update on Priority Impact Area 2, which focuses on commissioning and service design. The lead for this area reported that the workstream is progressing well and remains on track, with an overall progress rating of Amber.</p> <p data-bbox="355 432 1528 687">The team has been actively engaging with young people and stakeholders to ensure that services are co-designed and reflect the needs and experiences of those who use them. The group has been gathering feedback on how young people wish to be engaged and what matters most to them. This includes the need for safe, welcoming spaces where young people can go when feeling overwhelmed. Feedback indicated that the emphasis should be on creating opportunities for connection and community, rather than solely on formal service provision.</p> <p data-bbox="355 725 1528 936">The commissioning scope is being refined into three distinct categories: individual commissioning (e.g. personal support packages), service-level commissioning (e.g. broader service offers), and system-wide commissioning (e.g. strategic planning across agencies). This clarification aims to help professionals and stakeholders better understand their roles and responsibilities in shaping and delivering services.</p> <p data-bbox="355 974 1528 1162">The team is also working to ensure that commissioning decisions are informed by robust data and that the impact of services can be clearly demonstrated. Strategic outcomes are being identified, and indicators are being developed to track progress. No new risks were identified at this stage, and the team expressed confidence in the current trajectory.</p> <p data-bbox="355 1200 1528 1411">Additionally, the group is exploring alignment of commissioning approaches across Derby City and Derbyshire County, particularly in areas such as Early Years and multi-agency working. Shared processes and learning from other councils with similar models are being considered. A pilot project is underway to test the commissioning approach through a central processing topic developed in collaboration with partners.</p> <p data-bbox="355 1449 1528 1565">The next phase of work will focus on further engagement with young people and families, refining the commissioning framework, and continuing to build a data-informed, inclusive approach to service design.</p> <p data-bbox="355 1603 762 1641">b) Priority Impact Area 5</p> <p data-bbox="355 1680 1528 1785">The Board received an update on Priority Impact Area 5, the lead for this workstream outlined the evolving Communications Strategy. The strategy is structured around three key strands:</p> <p data-bbox="355 1823 1528 1890">Mass Communications – including newsletters, website content, and media outreach.</p> <p data-bbox="355 1897 1528 1964">Engagement and Participation – involving co-production, voice, and feedback mechanisms.</p> <p data-bbox="355 1971 1528 2038">Individual Communications – such as updates on EHCP applications and service interactions.</p>

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<p><b>DSIAB2425/06</b> <b>Continued</b></p>	<p>It was noted that while a full strategy was initially targeted for completion by September, it is now being developed iteratively due to the need for more evidence and stakeholder input. A monthly communications action plan has been implemented, with updates published via the Derbyshire County Council and NHS channels, reaching tens of thousands of people.</p> <p>The Board emphasised the importance of co-producing communications goals and values with parent carers and young people. Workshops are being planned to support this, with flexibility to accommodate the pace and preferences of participants. The Young People's group expressed strong interest in contributing to the strategy, and mechanisms to facilitate their involvement are being explored.</p> <p>A key theme was the need to improve system-wide understanding of complaints and feedback. It was noted that communication issues frequently appear in complaints, and that feedback loops must be strengthened. The Board agreed that complaints data should be reviewed by the Data and Performance group and used to inform quality assurance and service improvement.</p> <p>The Board also discussed the importance of ensuring that all members see communication as part of their role, not just those formally responsible for communications. There was consensus that improving public confidence in the SEND system requires consistent, transparent, and proactive communication across all services.</p> <p>The Board agreed that communications should focus on evidencing progress and impact, not just preparing for inspections. The lived experiences of children, young people, and families must remain central to all communications and service evaluations.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">b. Priority Impact Area 6</p> <p>An update was provided on Priority Impact Area 6, which focuses on inclusion and mental health support. The Board received a positive evaluation of the PINS (Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools) pilot project, which has completed its first year. The pilot involves a multidisciplinary team, including parent/carers, working with a small number of primary schools to support staff in maintaining inclusive environments and preventing exclusions. The feedback from participating schools has been encouraging, and the pilot is now entering its second year with additional schools expressing interest in joining.</p> <p>The Inclusion Support Advisory Service in Derbyshire has adopted the PINS approach as part of its whole-school support offer. While only a few schools are formally part of the pilot, all schools across Derbyshire have access to elements of the programme, including webinars and online resources. The Board noted that this inclusive model is being considered as part of the broader change programme under the local inclusion support offer.</p> <p>In addition, The Board was informed of a significant investment into CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), approved by the Integrated Care Board. This investment aims to increase service capacity and reduce waiting lists. The governance framework is in place, and the next step is to collect and analyse data to demonstrate the impact of the investment. However, challenges remain around data capture and reporting from Providers. The ICB is addressing these issues through contractual mechanisms, including informal agreements and development plans where necessary.</p>

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<b>DSIAB2425/06</b> <b>Continued</b>	<p>The Board agreed that updates on provider compliance and progress against contractual requirements should be shared regularly. Members also discussed the importance of ensuring that all children and young people waiting for services, including wheelchair provision, are being appropriately supported and communicated with. The Board emphasised the need for robust data sharing and system-wide visibility to prevent similar issues from going unnoticed.</p> <p><b>ACTION DSIABA121 – Updates on provider compliance and progress against contractual requirements to be regularly updated on.</b></p>
<b>DSIAB2425/07</b>	<p><b>Intervention Support Fund – Derbyshire Eligibility</b></p> <p>An update was provided on the Intervention Support Fund, specifically regarding Derbyshire's eligibility and progress. It was confirmed that colleagues had returned the draft proposal with helpful comments, and minor revisions were underway. These updates were expected to be completed the following day and shared for final review. The Board was informed that the changes were minor and largely related to accountability and scrutiny, with some additional feedback from policy colleagues at the corporate level. These adjustments were not expected to materially alter the content of the proposal.</p> <p>The discussion highlighted the transitional nature of the current phase, described as a 'twilight world' where a new framework and way of working are emerging. The proposal had been developed collaboratively and was well received, but additional scrutiny from political stakeholders had prompted further refinement. The Board acknowledged the importance of ensuring clarity and transferability in the documentation, given its role in overseeing the fund's implementation.</p> <p>It was also noted that the Board would not be meeting again before the finalisation of the proposal. The Board expressed confidence in the process and agreed that the revisions would strengthen the proposal without delaying its progress</p>
<b>DSIAB2425/08</b>	<p><b>Enabling Groups</b></p> <p>Quality Assurance</p> <p>The Board received an update on the role and function of the Quality Assurance Group, which is being set up again to support the delivery of the SEND improvement programme across Derbyshire. Adele will be chairing the group with the first meeting being held next week.</p> <p>The Enabling Groups (Data and Performance, Quality Assurance and Communications) operate flexibly and engage with each priority area to understand how their work contributes to the overarching communication and engagement strategy, and to identify opportunities for sharing and collaboration.</p> <p>It was noted that the Enabling Groups are instrumental in maintaining the communications action plan and supporting month-by-month activity tracking. They also play a key role in collating and aligning person-to-person communication efforts across the system. The Board acknowledged the importance of these groups in ensuring that actions are not siloed and that there is a coherent approach to engagement and service improvement.</p>

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<b>DSIAB2425/08</b> <b>Continued</b>	<p>The discussion emphasised the need for continued collaboration between the Enabling Groups and Priority Area leads to ensure that progress is captured and shared effectively. The iterative nature of the strategy development was highlighted, with the Enabling Groups contributing to evidence gathering and impact measurement. Their work is seen as essential to building a robust and responsive SEND system that reflects the lived experiences of children, young people, and families</p>
<b>DSIAB2425/09</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> June and the 16<sup>th</sup> of July 2025</b></p> <p>The Chair led the Board through the minutes from both the June and July meetings. The Board confirmed acceptance of the June minutes as an accurate record. It was noted that these had already been redacted and were ready to be published on the Local Offer website.</p> <p>During the review of the July minutes, a correction was raised regarding a missing reference to a specific item on page 7. The Chair acknowledged the oversight and requested that appropriate wording be added to the action log to reflect the correction. The Board then continued reviewing the remaining pages and agreed the July minutes as accurate, subject to the noted amendment.</p> <p><b>ACTION DSIABA122 – July minutes missing discussion and action on sufficiency in schools</b>  <b>ACTION DSIABA123 – July minutes correction - Lincolnshire not Leicestershire</b></p>
<b>DSIAB2425/10</b>	<p><b>Action Log</b></p> <p>Reviewed in the meeting and updated.</p>
<b>DSIAB2425/11</b>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>Under Any Other Business, the Board discussed proposed changes to the reporting schedule and structure. It was recommended that from October onwards, the Board move to a quarterly reporting cycle to allow more time for operational delivery and impact. Reports would be grouped by Priority Areas, with Areas 1 and 2 reporting together, followed by Areas 3 and 4, and then Areas 5 and 6. This approach aims to provide a clearer view of progress and reduce the frequency of reporting for leads, while maintaining accountability and oversight.</p> <p>The Board also reviewed the format of assurance reports, with a suggestion to shift from highlight reports to more comprehensive assurance reports that integrate data, quality assurance findings, and delivery updates. Members agreed that future reports should clearly establish baseline data to better demonstrate progress and impact.</p>



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<b>DSIAB2425/11</b> <b>Continued</b>	<p>A proposal was made to reprioritise the strategic intent and rationale within the reporting framework, placing greater emphasis on the lived experiences of children, young people, and families, rather than inspection readiness. This was supported by The Board as a more meaningful and child-centred approach.</p> <p>Additionally, the Board discussed the scheduling of future meetings to accommodate young people's participation. It was agreed that meetings involving youth input should be held outside of school hours, potentially in the afternoon or during school holidays, to ensure accessibility and engagement.</p> <p>Finally, the Board acknowledged the emerging bid through the Department for Education (DfE) to support additional workshops and strategic development. It was noted that coordination with existing plans would be essential to avoid duplication and maximise the value of stakeholder and parent participation.</p>