

DERBYSHIRE SEND IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE BOARD MINUTES

Tuesday 16th June 2026

Committee Room 1, County Hall, Matlock, 13:00-16:00

MINUTES:

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/136	Children and Young People's Update The Board noted that an update on Children and Young People's engagement and participation was not presented at this meeting as The Board member for Communications had submitted apologies. In light of this, the Board agreed to utilise the allocated time to extend discussion under the subsequent agenda item relating to the Derbyshire Local Area SEND Reform Plan (Final), recognising the importance of ensuring sufficient time for detailed consideration of this critical system priority. Members acknowledged the importance of the Children and Young People's Update as a key component of Board assurance, particularly in ensuring that the voice, experiences and feedback of children, young people and families continue to inform SEND improvement activity. It was noted that the absence of this update limited the Board's ability to receive assurance on current engagement activity and its impact at a system level.
DSIAB2425/137	Derbyshire Local Area SEND Reform Plan (Final) The Board received the final version of the Derbyshire Local Area SEND Reform Plan for review and sign-off, noting its intended submission to the Department for Education within required timescales. It was acknowledged that the plan reflects a comprehensive whole-system response to increasing demand, rising complexity of need and continued financial pressures across the local area. Members discussed the current system context, recognising the sustained growth in Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) requests and the increasing number of children requiring support. The Board noted the associated pressures on timeliness, sufficiency of provision, and the high level of expenditure linked to independent placements, alongside the ongoing trajectory of the high needs deficit. It was recognised that these challenges reinforce the need for a clear and deliverable reform programme. The Board considered the overarching vision of the Reform Plan, which aims to improve outcomes for children and young people through earlier intervention, clearer pathways for families, increased local and mainstream provision, improved attendance and participation, and a reduction in disputes. The ambition to create a more inclusive, joined-up and locally responsive system was supported. Discussion focused on the core reform priorities within the plan. The importance of improving co-production with families and enhancing the overall experience of services was also highlighted, alongside the need to ensure value for money and stronger partnership maturity across the system.

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/137 Continued	The Board reviewed the maturity assessment and noted that Derbyshire has been assessed as “emerging” across all seven pillars. This was agreed as a fair and realistic reflection of the current position, recognising both progress made and the ongoing variability and pressures across the system. Members emphasised the importance of maintaining an honest assessment of maturity while demonstrating clear evidence of improvement over time. The data and financial modelling underpinning the Reform Plan were considered, with members noting projections of continued growth in EHCP numbers and demand for services. While the modelling was recognised as the best available position, the Board acknowledged that a number of assumptions remain uncertain, particularly in relation to the impact of reforms over time, and that these will need to be kept under review. The “Experts at Hand” model was highlighted as a key enabler within the Reform Plan, with a focus on strengthening early intervention, increasing access to specialist advice and support, and supporting schools to meet need at an earlier stage. Members discussed the importance of ensuring consistency of delivery across the system and noted potential risks relating to workforce capacity. A number of risks and challenges were identified, including continued growth in demand, workforce pressures, limitations in available funding, and the need to ensure that system-wide changes translate into measurable improvements for children and families. The Board also noted the importance of strengthening data quality, communication, and shared understanding across partners. Partner feedback highlighted that, while strategic progress has been made, the impact of changes is not yet consistently visible at a frontline level. The need for clearer communication, stronger engagement with families, and improved evidence of impact was emphasised. In conclusion, the Board recognised the significant amount of work undertaken to develop the Reform Plan and agreed that it provides a credible and accurate reflection of the local area’s current position and future direction. Members supported the plan’s submission, noting that further refinement and ongoing monitoring of delivery and impact will be required. ACTION - DSIABA228 - Share SEND prevalence rates report. Date Due 21/07/2026
DSIAB2425/138	Priority Impact Area Progress Reports A) Priority Impact Area 3 The Board received a detailed update on Priority Impact Area 3, which focuses on strengthening the system enablers required to support sustainable SEND improvement. This included consideration of the maturity assessment, supporting data template, and the seven-pillar framework underpinning the wider reform programme. It was noted that these components are increasingly aligned, providing a clearer structure for assessing progress and identifying areas requiring further development. Members discussed the importance of co-production as a central feature of this priority area, with activity continuing across a number of improvement themes.

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/138 Continued	It was acknowledged that while co-production is becoming more embedded, there remains a need to ensure consistency in approach and to evidence how feedback from children, young people and families is influencing decision-making and service design. The Board emphasised that co-production should move beyond engagement activity and become fully integrated within governance, planning and delivery processes. The Board considered progress in strengthening leadership and governance arrangements, noting that work is underway to ensure governance is more clearly defined, embedded and understood across the system. It was recognised that strong and visible governance is critical to enabling effective system oversight, supporting delivery against priorities, and ensuring accountability across partners. Members highlighted the importance of maintaining a clear line of sight between strategic decision-making and operational delivery. A key area of discussion centred on the development and use of data, including both quantitative and qualitative intelligence. In particular, the Board noted the importance of improving the accuracy and consistency of understanding need across the local area, aligned to Pillar 3 of the maturity framework. It was acknowledged that while progress has been made in strengthening datasets, further work is required to ensure data is used effectively to inform planning, commissioning and performance management. The role of qualitative data in capturing lived experience and informing service improvement was also emphasised. The Board discussed the alignment of this work with the Inclusion Strategy, recognising its role in setting a clear system-wide direction and supporting a shared understanding of inclusive practice. Members highlighted the need to strengthen communication and ensure that a consistent narrative is communicated across all partners, including schools, health services and families. It was noted that clearer articulation of priorities and expectations will support greater consistency in delivery. Overall, the Board acknowledged that while progress is being made, there is a need to increase pace in some areas to ensure that improvements are realised at a system level. Members emphasised that the focus must remain on translating strategic developments into tangible improvements for children and young people, supported by robust governance, high-quality data and effective partnership working. A) Priority Impact Area 4 The Board also received an update on Priority Impact Area 4, which centres on strengthening partnership working and engagement across the Derbyshire local area. It was recognised that effective collaboration between education, health and care partners remains fundamental to delivering SEND improvement and achieving better outcomes for children and young people. Members discussed ongoing efforts to enhance partnership engagement, including the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders across the system. It was acknowledged that there has been positive progress in developing collaborative working arrangements; however, variability remains in the level of engagement and consistency across different parts of the system.

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/138 Continued	The Board emphasised the importance of ensuring that partnership working is meaningful, coordinated and focused on shared outcomes. The Board considered the current position in relation to system risk, noting that an inconsistent level of risk remains across different service areas. Members were advised that a set of core risks has been identified, covering system-wide, operational and outcome-based challenges. These include pressures associated with demand, capacity, and delivery of improvement activity, and highlight the ongoing complexity of the system. It was noted that work is underway to further refine and strengthen the risk register to ensure that it provides a clearer and more comprehensive overview of risk across the local area. The Board agreed that a more robust and transparent risk framework will support improved oversight, enable more effective mitigation, and ensure that risks are actively managed at both strategic and operational levels. Members were advised that an updated risk register will be brought back to a future meeting for further review and assurance. Discussion also highlighted the importance of ensuring that partnership working translates into measurable impact for children, young people and families. While structures and forums are increasingly in place, the Board recognised that further work is required to demonstrate how collaborative arrangements are improving outcomes and experiences. This includes strengthening communication, ensuring alignment of priorities, and maintaining a clear focus on delivery. In summary, the Board acknowledged the progress made in strengthening partnership working under Priority Impact Area 4, while recognising that further consistency, clarity and impact are required. Members emphasised the need for continued focus on risk management, system alignment and demonstrating the tangible benefits of partnership working for children and families across Derbyshire. ACTION - DSIABA229 - Determine clear timeline of expectations for All Through Banding. Report back via next highlight report for PIA3/4 Date Due 20/10/2026 ACTION - DSIABA231 - Ensure graduated response work is cross referenced with Specialist schools/heads to ensure inclusivity. Date Due 21/07/2026 ACTION - DSIABA232 Identify quantifiable measure for impact/effectiveness of graduated response work Date Due 09/09/2026 ACTION - DSIABA233 Review amber RAG ratings aligned to delays in Priority Impact Plan, flagging revised timelines at next Board. Date Due 21/07/2026 ACTION - DSIABA234 - Specify what progress has been made around sufficiency planning to mitigate against related risk, initially identified in 2025. Report back via next highlight report for PIA3/4. 20/10/2026
DSIAB2425/139	KPIs, Plan Tracker & Risk Review The Board received an update on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), the Plan Tracker and the system risk position, with discussion focusing on strengthening the use of data to support assurance, oversight and improvement across the SEND system.

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/139 Continued	Members emphasised the importance of having a robust and reliable set of KPIs, supported by high-quality data packs, to enable effective tracking of progress over time. It was recognised that the ability to monitor trends and trajectories is critical in demonstrating both improvement and areas where further action is required. The Board discussed the current position in relation to the SEND data pack, noting that while a full dataset is being developed, there remains a need for continued refinement to support effective Board-level scrutiny. It was confirmed that a comprehensive dataset, excluding some NHS elements, is now available through a Power BI dashboard, providing an opportunity for more dynamic analysis. Members supported the proposal to arrange a live session at a future Board meeting to walk through the dashboard in detail, enabling greater understanding of the data and how it can be used to inform decision-making and challenge. In considering the development of the Plan Tracker, the Board noted its role as a key tool in strengthening oversight of delivery against the Priority Impact Plan. Members reflected on earlier discussions highlighting the importance of clearly tracking individual actions, including ownership, timescales and delivery status, in order to provide greater transparency and accountability. The Tracker was recognised as an important mechanism for supporting more focused discussion at both Operational Delivery Group and Board level, particularly in identifying areas of delay, escalating risks, and ensuring that corrective action is taken in a timely manner. The Board also reviewed the current position in relation to system risk. It was noted that the risk register has recently been refreshed, with over 35 risks initially identified. Members were advised that this has been refined to address duplication particularly across workforce and data-related risks resulting in a clearer and more manageable set of 12 core risks spanning system, operational and outcome-based categories. Discussion highlighted that, despite this progress, there remains an inconsistent level of risk across the system, reflecting the complexity and variability of delivery across partners. The Board emphasised the importance of maintaining a clear and coherent approach to risk management, ensuring that risks are consistently identified, articulated and monitored. It was agreed that strengthening the alignment between performance data, delivery tracking and risk management will be essential to improving oversight and ensuring that emerging pressures are identified and addressed early. Members were advised that a further updated and refined risk register will be presented at a future meeting, providing enhanced visibility of risks and supporting more effective Board-level assurance. The Board welcomed the progress made to date and emphasised the need for continued development of the KPI framework, data reporting, and tracking mechanisms to ensure that they collectively provide a clear line of sight from activity to impact. In summary, the Board acknowledged the positive progress in strengthening data, performance monitoring and risk management arrangements, while recognising that further work is required to fully embed these approaches and ensure they are consistently used to drive improvement and support informed decision-making across the local area.

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/139 Continued	ACTION - DSIABA235 - Resolve limited access to Power BI data supporting data pack with planned demo for Board Date Due – 09/09/2026 ACTION - DSIABA236 - ODG to review outstanding risks, cross reference with reform risks and flag any concerns to Board. Date Due 21/07/2026.
DSIAB2425/140	Local Partnership Updates - A) Parent Carer Forum update The Board received an update from the Parent Carer Forum, noting a high level of ongoing engagement activity with parents and carers across the local area. Members were advised that the Forum has been actively involved in a wide range of partnership meetings, with approximately 15 engagement sessions attended over the past month. This was recognised as a significant contribution to system-wide co-production activity. The Forum continues to support engagement through both structured events and informal drop-in sessions, including work alongside Neurodevelopmental (ND) Hubs to provide accessible opportunities for families to share their experiences. The Board acknowledged the value of this approach in reaching a broader range of families and ensuring that lived experience continues to inform service development and improvement. It was further noted that work is underway to develop an EHC Hubs survey, which will be shared in the coming weeks. Members recognised that this will provide important insight into user experience and help identify areas for further improvement. In addition, a review of the Parent Carer Forum is currently in progress. The Board noted that this presents an opportunity to strengthen future engagement arrangements and ensure that co-production activity continues to evolve in a meaningful and impactful way. B) Derbyshire County Council The DCC update highlighted two major areas of work. The Council is undertaking a review and redesign of its internal SEND service structure. Work is taking place with staff and finance colleagues to develop a sustainable operating model that can meet future demand, with the ambition of having the revised structure established by September. Members were advised that this work had been developing over many months and represented a significant step in ensuring long-term sustainability of SEND services. Secondly, considerable attention was given to the implications of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). The Board heard that forthcoming government announcements regarding future council arrangements could have significant consequences for local services, schools, communities and partnership arrangements across Derbyshire. Members were encouraged to remain alert to developments, recognising that any changes to local authority structures could have a substantial impact on SEND governance, service delivery and future planning. The Board agreed that it would be helpful to receive a further update on LGR at a future meeting once more information becomes available. It was also announced that the new Executive Director for Children's Services would start in August.

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/140 Continued	C) Derby and Derbyshire Integrated Care Board The ICB update focused on the ongoing organisational restructuring taking place across the NHS. Members heard that new structures had been shared and that a process of job matching and evaluation was underway for remaining staff. A key development was the creation of cluster arrangements spanning Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire, with senior commissioning roles expected to work across these areas to strengthen collaboration and share learning. There would also be stronger links between children and young people's commissioning arrangements and Learning Disability and Autism (LDA) workstreams. While there remained some uncertainty as the restructure progressed, the Board was advised that there continued to be dedicated leadership capacity for SEND, with expectations that clearer staffing arrangements and named postholders would emerge during July and August. ACTION - DSIABA237 - Discuss further support integration requirements for PCF survey at next partnership meeting Date Due 21/07/2026 ACTION - DSIABA238 - LGR implications presented to Board in September. Date Due 09/09/2026
DSIAB2425/141	Minutes of the meeting of 13th of May The minutes from the previous meeting on the 13th of May were accepted as an accurate record of the previous meeting. The minutes will be anonymised and placed on the Local Offer website.
DSIAB2425/142	Action Log Reviewed in the meeting and updated.
DSIAB2425/143	Any Other Business None raised.