

DERBYSHIRE SEND IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE BOARD MINUTES

Wednesday the 19th of March 2025,

Brackenfield SEND School, Bracken Road, Long Eaton, Nottingham NG10 4DA, 10:00-13:00

MINUTES:

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/01	<p>Welcome, introductions and apologies</p> <p>The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees and thanked them for their time and commitment to the Board.</p> <p>Headteacher at Brackenfield welcomed the Board to Brackenfield the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities School and reminded everyone present that they would be welcome to have a tour around the school once the meeting had concluded.</p>
DSIAB2425/02	<p>Declarations of Interest</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>
DSIAB2425/03	<p>Governance & Risk Management</p> <p>A Board Member initiated the discussion by emphasizing the importance of a structured approach to managing risks and ensuring effective governance within the SEND framework. They highlighted that effective governance is crucial for the successful implementation of SEND services and for maintaining accountability among stakeholders.</p> <p>The process for identifying risks was outlined, highlighting the need for a comprehensive Risk Register. It was explained that risk mitigation involves strategic actions and collaboration among stakeholders to address identified risks. The risk escalation process was described in detail, with three lines of defence:</p> <p>Initial Identification: Risks are identified at the operational level.</p> <p>Delivery Groups: If risks cannot be managed at the initial level, they are escalated to delivery groups.</p> <p>Board Level: Further escalation to the Board occurs if delivery groups are unable to mitigate risks. It was also mentioned that the need to address strategic risks such as capacity issues and workforce challenges, which are critical for the effective delivery of SEND services.</p> <p>If not resolvable at Board level, the Chair will escalate to the Chief Executive at Derby and Derbyshire Integrated Care Board and the Managing Director at Derbyshire County Council.</p>

Item No:	Minutes:
<p>DSIAB2425/03 continued</p>	<p>There has been the expectation that a Partnership Delivery Group would be established to oversee the implementation of priority actions, clarification on the roles and responsibilities within the governance structure, ensuring accountability and clear reporting lines. It is suggested that the Delivery Group meets at least a week before the Board meetings to review progress and address any issues. The Board emphasized the importance of detailed action plans and highlight reports to monitor progress effectively and ensure that all stakeholders are informed and engaged. A Board Member has identified a colleague within the Integrated Care Board, another Board Member, who will potentially chair the Partnership Delivery Group, this will be confirmed in due course. The Delivery Group will be implemented before the next Board meeting which is taking place on the 23rd of April.</p> <p>A Board Member has created templates for the more detailed action plans that sit under the Priority Impact Plan. These will assist in writing the highlight reports and streamline documentation and reporting. They highlighted the importance of monitoring activities and ensuring timely completion of actions. Leads are encouraged to complete the templates and provide detailed information to support governance processes. This approach aims to create a more organized and efficient system for tracking progress and addressing challenges.</p> <p>A Board Member is leading a workshop regarding the templates and will give a tutorial on how the Board would like to see them populated moving forward. This workshop is open to the Priority Action Leads and will take place during the week commencing 24th of March 2025. The Board Member did raise that should individuals not be able to attend that date, another Board Member is more than happy to discuss individual reports with individuals outside of this date.</p> <p>Various speakers acknowledged the challenges related to capacity and the need for additional resources to support governance activities. The discussion also covered the importance of effective communication with stakeholders, including parents and MPs, to address concerns and improve customer service. Emphasis was placed on the need for collaboration among different stakeholders to ensure a cohesive approach to governance and risk management. Solutions to these challenges were discussed, including exploring ways to increase capacity and improve communication channels.</p> <p>A Board Member concluded the discussion by outlining the next steps. The proposed governance structure and risk management processes need to be implemented to enhance accountability, collaboration, and communication among stakeholders. A review of the governance and risk management framework is scheduled for the next Board meeting. Board members were encouraged to provide feedback and suggestions to improve the governance processes. The commitment to better communication and engagement with parents and other stakeholders was reiterated.</p> <p>Another Board Member highlighted the frustration of the Parent Carer Forum regarding their lack of involvement in workstream meetings. Despite their efforts to engage, the Parent Carer Forum feels excluded. Currently, they are involved in two workstreams, which they joined before the Board's inception. The Board Member identified this exclusion as a risk, emphasizing the importance of the Parent Carer Forum's voice, particularly in representing the SEND community. The Chair acknowledged the disappointment and stressed the need for the Parent Carer Forum's involvement. To address this, the Chair requested all workstream leads to contact and invite the Parent Carer Forum to future meetings. Additionally, the Board Member noted that education representatives have not been invited to workstream meetings where the Parent Carer Forum was present.</p>

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/04	<p>JSNA content – initial data</p> <p>A Board Member presented an initial analysis of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Derbyshire. They emphasized that the JSNA is a process, not a product, and the current presentation is an early version aimed at starting the discussion on understanding the needs of Children and Young People with SEND in Derbyshire.</p> <p>The Board Member outlined the principles guiding the JSNA. The JSNA is a collaborative effort involving multiple stakeholders, including the Integrated Care Board and Children's Services from the Local Authority. The focus is on a full assessment of needs, not just a collection of data. The JSNA will include recommendations for action based on the data collected. The process is ongoing, with the aim to fill data gaps and improve the understanding of needs over time. The Board Member presented various data points and trends, highlighting key areas of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derbyshire has fewer younger residents compared to national averages, with projections indicating an increase in the older age groups over the next 10 years. • There are significant areas of deprivation, particularly in the North East of the county and around certain urban areas, which correlate with higher needs for SEND services. • The number of children with SEND, including those with Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs), has been increasing. The data showed a doubling of maintained EHCPs over the last six years, with a notable increase in new EHCP requests in recent years. However, Derbyshire has fewer children with EHCPs in comparison to statistical and national benchmarks and a higher number of SEN Support. This is a positive position. • The most common primary needs for children with SEND in Derbyshire are Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), social, emotional, and mental health needs, and speech, language, and communication needs. • The data on educational outcomes for children with SEND showed mixed results, with some areas performing better than others. <p>The Board Member acknowledged that there are still gaps in the data, particularly in capturing the voice of children and young people. The next steps involve identifying and addressing gaps in the data to ensure a comprehensive understanding of needs. Ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the data collected is crucial. Developing recommendations based on the data to inform service planning and delivery is a priority. The JSNA process will be continuously reviewed and updated to reflect new data and insights.</p> <p>Board members discussed the presented data, highlighting areas that need further exploration and understanding. Concerns were raised about the timeliness of EHCP assessments and the impact of delays on service delivery. The importance of ensuring data accuracy and addressing any discrepancies between different data sources was emphasized. The need for effective communication with parents, schools, and other stakeholders was discussed, with a focus on improving customer service and responsiveness.</p> <p>A Board Member emphasized the usefulness of data in demonstrating progress. They posed two questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What data is missing and what are the barriers to obtaining it? 2. What data is available on children missing education? <p>Data sources include the Integrated Care Board, Local Authority, and Government statistics. There was a concern that data appeared high three years ago, possibly due to a backlog from COVID. The focus is on readily available data and making sure that it is valid and reliable.</p>

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/04 continued	<p>Board members highlighted that data from SEND2 is self-reported. Nationally available data can be manipulated, so the Board needs assurance of its reliability. The Data and Performance group flagged the need for data cleansing, and the Chair expressed a lack of confidence in the current numbers, seeking clarity on data origins. A Board Member assured the Board that Derbyshire County Council is not withholding data. It was noted that more work could be done on Health data and Board members expressed a desire to collaborate with the Board Member. Another Board Member reassured that the workflow for data input has been reviewed and improvements are expected. Currently, Derbyshire has issued over 8,000 Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) but there is not assurance that this is a totally accurate number. Numbers alone don't tell the full story; the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment aims to provide a comprehensive understanding.</p>
DSIAB2425/05	<p>Enabling Activity – Update</p> <p>The Communications Group met yesterday, on the 18th of March, chaired by a Board Member. It was agreed after yesterday's meeting that two other Board Members, who are the leads for this Priority Impact Area, will take on the chairing from now on.</p> <p>During the meeting, it was noted that Education/schools representation was missing. Board members highlighted this as a challenge, and it was agreed that the group needs to expand to ensure the right representation. The importance of engaging all stakeholders, including parents, schools, and other partners, was emphasized. The group aims to improve communication channels and ensure timely responses to enquiries, both at micro and macro levels. The Chairs will reach out to each of the other Leads to gather input on communication needs and strategies. This will help in creating a more cohesive and effective Communication Strategy and plan.</p> <p>There was a broader discussion on the need for better participation and representation across all Enabling groups. Every stakeholder group must be involved in the workstreams to ensure a comprehensive approach to SEND services. It was noted that some groups were not yet fully engaged, and efforts are being made to address this. There is a need to shift from internal-focused meetings to more inclusive and participatory approaches. This will help in capturing diverse perspectives and improving service delivery. Leads were asked to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are involved in their workstreams by the next Board meeting. This will help in creating a more collaborative and effective framework for SEND services.</p> <p>The update on Enabling activities highlighted the progress made by the Communication and Data and Performance groups, as well as the challenges related to representation and participation. The discussion emphasized the importance of engaging all stakeholders, ensuring data accuracy, and creating a collaborative approach to improving SEND services.</p>

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/06	<p data-bbox="316 120 754 159">Priority Impact Area Reports</p> <p data-bbox="316 197 810 235">Priority 1 & Improvement Area 2</p> <p data-bbox="316 237 1533 817">Board members suggested that an easy-to-read version of the SEND Improvement and Assurance Board minutes would be beneficial. A Board member discussed the Local Offer Communications group, emphasising the need to enhance the user-friendliness and accessibility of the Local Offer on social media. With the end of April approaching, concerns were raised about meeting the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) deadline due to the extensive data cleansing required. It was suggested that a publishable first iteration might be more feasible. The Chair noted that this afternoon's meeting of the Data and Performance will focus on data, specifically IDOX and JSNA, and that data cleansing for JSNA as well as other data capture and presentations will be an ongoing process. A Board member stressed the importance of understanding the use and purpose of JSNA. A Board member raised concerns about the Local Offer's usability, noting that work began in Summer 2024 to make the website more user-friendly. Feedback from parents and carers indicated outdated information and unclear pathways. A video introduction to the Local Offer, co-produced with Children and Young People, is in progress, with plans for video introductions for each area.</p> <p data-bbox="316 819 1506 931">A Board member raised a suggestion in adding a "BRAG" section in the highlight report to showcase where the priority area is in terms of progression (BRAG = blue, red, amber, green).</p> <p data-bbox="316 969 416 1008">Area 2</p> <p data-bbox="316 1010 1541 1335">The Transitions workstream is active with good representation. There is a focus on using data to identify high-risk Children and Young People, working with schools to pinpoint at-risk students. Pilot projects are underway, particularly around the transition from Key Stage 2 to 3 for students going through changes from year 6 in school to secondary school stages of year 7. The Chair emphasised the need for specific data when engaging with Children and Young People and parents/carers. A Board member noted a significant bulge in the 20-25 age group regarding transitions. The Board had limited assurance on priority impact area 1 and Improvement Area 2 in relation to being on track but thought that there had been sufficient challenge.</p> <p data-bbox="316 1373 459 1411">Priority 3</p> <p data-bbox="316 1413 1538 1554">Priority Action 3.1: A Board member reported that the framework to assess needs has been completed by schools and will be reviewed. Inclusion support will be used for SEND Children and Young People, with a clear process for applying for inclusion funding. A roadmap is scheduled, but dependent on other factors being in place first.</p> <p data-bbox="316 1592 1541 1995">Priority Action 3.2: Draft banding will be reviewed, and a capacity review has been conducted. IDOX standard operating procedure will be in place by March 31st, with risks identified around data accuracy and cleansing. The rollout of IDOX has been planned to be achieved within one year for Derbyshire. There has been analysis of the 20-week process and adaptations to letters sent to parents and carers. Parent Carer Forum colleagues asked if a QR code could be placed on the adapted letter sent to the parents and carers so that they can access the Parent Carers Forums website for advice, support and guidance around what is stated in the letter. Concerns were raised about data breaches and guidance needed for navigating the system due to the amount of data being placed. The Board had limited assurance on priority impact area 3 in relation to it being on track.</p>

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/06 continued	<p>Priority 4</p> <p>The discussion highlighted the importance of ensuring a complete and accurate data set for Children and Young People not attending mainstream school. There is a significant effort to prioritise this data collection to address the needs of these students effectively. The alignment with the early years Board is ongoing, focusing on how Early Years services are accessed and funded. This includes looking at Section 23 under health and the integration review at age 2. The goal is to ensure younger children receive the necessary support and funding. Plans are in place to expand special schools, including Brackenfield, which will increase its capacity by 80 pupils in September. Meetings with schools and cluster meetings have concluded, with all Headteachers attending. Headteachers were asked to propose creative solutions for expanding space and ensuring financial sustainability. There is anticipation regarding potential additional funding from the government. Particular attention is being paid to schools with high levels of children and young people missing education and high levels of exclusions. A Board member raised the need for a contingency plan around spending, emphasising the importance of being strategic with the remaining £7 million allocated to mainstream schools. The aim is to create at least two more classrooms and ensure their sustainability. A Board member sought assurance regarding Health inputs for children and young people missing school. Support services are being implemented in schools by the Integrated Care Board, and the NHS has been mandated to have neighbourhood teams to help with attendance. The attendance strategy was co-produced with schools, ensuring their involvement in its development. A Board member emphasised the need to review actions with the Parent Carer Forum. The Chair stressed the importance of updating deadlines and escalating issues if timelines within the Priority Impact Plan are not on track and are not going to be met. The Communications group announced that a newsletter will be released within six weeks.</p> <p>Priority Action 4.1: Data and information linked to children and young people not attending mainstream school. There have been drives to ensure a complete data set and trying to make sure this is a priority.</p> <p>Priority Action 4.2: Early years, plenty of alignment with the early years Board, aligning how we work with early years services and access to services along with funding.</p> <p>The Board had limited assurance on priority impact area 4.</p>
DSIAB2425/07	<p>Minutes from the meeting held in February</p> <p>A Board members name was misspelled on page 6, and there were some capitalisation issues for "Local Authority" and Local Offer on page 7. These corrections were noted, and with those changes implemented, the minutes were accepted as an accurate record.</p> <p>The minutes will be redacted and anonymised and place on the Local Offer website.</p>

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/08	<p data-bbox="316 125 1015 159">Action Log from the meeting held in February</p> <p data-bbox="316 199 863 232">Reviewed in the meeting and updated.</p> <p data-bbox="316 273 1078 306">Action DSIAB030 due 19th March 2025 – Complete</p> <p data-bbox="316 309 1485 454">The first action was about clarifying the Governance diagram with solid and dotted lines. Solid lines represent direct reporting, while dotted lines indicate information loops. This distinction helps in understanding the flow of communication and responsibilities.</p> <p data-bbox="316 495 1114 528">Action DSIAB031 due 19th March 2025 – In progress</p> <p data-bbox="316 530 1522 676">There was a need to clarify the SEND business as usual governance alongside improvement. This action was noted, and it was agreed that further discussion would be needed to ensure everyone is on the same page. Action now due 23rd April 2025.</p> <p data-bbox="316 716 1078 750">Action DSIAB034 due 19th March 2025 – Complete</p> <p data-bbox="316 752 1453 824">The priority area plans were to be shared with the Communications area lead to ensure transparency and engagement. This action was noted for follow-up.</p> <p data-bbox="316 864 1038 898">Action DSIAB035 due 19th March 2025 – Closed</p> <p data-bbox="316 900 1506 1046">A risk meeting was held, but not all partners could attend. The outcomes of the discussion will be picked up in subsequent meetings to ensure all perspectives are considered. Risk Register approach was highlighted during the meeting. This action has been closed and replaced by Action DSIAB039</p> <p data-bbox="316 1086 1078 1120">Action DSIAB037 due 19th March 2025 – Complete</p> <p data-bbox="316 1122 1528 1301">It was emphasised that all highlight reports moving forward should include risks. This ensures that potential issues are identified and managed proactively. The importance of understanding different risks across the system was highlighted. This involves getting to know each other's business, identifying strengths and challenges, and supporting each other in managing risks.</p> <p data-bbox="316 1341 1430 1413">There was a reminder to time scale actions explicitly. This means setting clear deadlines for each action to ensure accountability and timely completion.</p>
DSIAB2425/09	<p data-bbox="316 1447 619 1480">Any other Business</p> <p data-bbox="316 1520 1528 1630">A Board member provided the Board with an update regarding staffing cost reduction within Derby and Derbyshire Integrated Care Board and how the Government has instructed all Integrated Care Boards to reduce running costs by 50%.</p> <p data-bbox="316 1632 1528 1742">The Board member also provided assurance in relation to the prioritization of SEND and the improvement work required following last Thursday's announcement from the Prime Minister regarding the abolishment of NHS England.</p>