

DERBYSHIRE SEND IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE BOARD MINUTES

WEDNESDAY 13TH MAY 2026

COMMITTEE ROOM 1, COUNTY HALL, MATLOCK, 13:00-16:00

MINUTES:

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/125	<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. None declared.</p>
DSIAB2425/126	<p>Children and Young People's Update</p> <p>The Board received an update on engagement activity with children and young people, including feedback from the Youth Inclusion Forum and wider school engagement work. A young person's contribution at a recent leaders' event was noted as impactful, highlighting aspirations for independence and the importance of being meaningfully involved in shaping services.</p> <p>Feedback from young people emphasised the need for direct engagement from leaders, clear and honest communication, and practical responses to their input. Young people challenged the system to simplify processes and focus on changes that make a tangible difference to their day-to-day experiences.</p> <p>The Board also noted ongoing work to capture pupil voice across schools, with visits taking place to understand children's experiences of support and services. This work is intended to strengthen the use of lived experience in informing system improvement.</p> <p>A key theme identified was the importance of language and communication, with young people raising concerns about terminology used by professionals. It was recognised that both the words used and the manner in which they are delivered can impact how children and young people feel about their interactions with services.</p> <p>The Board agreed the need to embed a more person-centred and neuro-affirmative approach to language, ensuring that children and young people's preferences inform practice across policies, guidance and workforce development. Opportunities to incorporate this into workforce training and communications activity were highlighted.</p> <p>Overall, the update reinforced that while engagement is strengthening, further work is required to ensure children and young people's voices consistently influence decision-making and lead to visible, practical improvements in their experience of the system.</p> <p>ACTION - DSIABA217 - Share slide deck of top ten tips for leaders of the future, from CYP perspective and invite 'challenging' words for CYP to review. Due – 21/07/2026</p>

Item No:	Minutes:
<p>DSIAB2425/127 Continued</p>	<p>Derbyshire Local Area SEND Reform Plan (Draft)</p> <p>The Board received a detailed update on the development of the Derbyshire Local Area SEND Reform Plan, which was presented in draft format. The plan was described as a significant partnership achievement, incorporating multiple components including the narrative plan, maturity matrix, delivery plan and “Experts at Hand” model. It was noted that the content reflects extensive work across the partnership, including a series of structured workshops involving a wide range of stakeholders.</p> <p>The Board was asked to provide a steer on the overall direction of travel, rather than sign off a final version at this stage. It was confirmed that further refinement would take place following Board feedback, with the plan to be shared with the DfE adviser and subsequently developed ahead of final submission.</p> <p>A central element of the discussion focused on the maturity matrix, which underpins the reform plan and sets out the local area’s self-assessment across key system pillars. The majority of areas were assessed as “emerging”, reflecting progress made since inspection, but also acknowledging that improvements are not yet consistent across the system. The Board noted that while there are examples of strong practice particularly in areas such as partnership working with health and elements of inclusion these are not yet sufficiently embedded or widespread to justify a higher grading.</p> <p>Board members provided constructive challenge on the proposed ratings, emphasising the importance of maintaining a realistic and evidence-based position. There was specific discussion about avoiding overly optimistic self-assessment and ensuring alignment with national expectations. It was agreed that the assessment should reflect both strengths and ongoing inconsistencies, particularly where implementation varies across schools, services, and geographical areas.</p> <p>The Board also discussed key areas for further development highlighted within the plan, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving consistency in co-production and communication with families • strengthening governance across the wider system, beyond individual boards • developing more robust use of both quantitative and qualitative data addressing variability in inclusive practice across education settings • strengthening workforce capacity and ensuring coordinated workforce development <p>These areas were recognised as critical to moving the system from “emerging” towards higher levels of maturity.</p> <p>A particular focus was given to partnership working, where the initial assessment suggested a more advanced position. However, the Board challenged this, noting that while relationships between health, education and social care leaders are strong, engagement is less consistent across all parts of the system particularly with schools, early years and post-16 providers. It was therefore agreed that this area should be reviewed carefully to ensure it accurately reflects system-wide practice rather than strong relationships at senior level.</p>

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<p>DSIAB2425/127 Continued</p>	<p>The discussion also highlighted risks and dependencies impacting delivery, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • workforce capacity pressures across services • variability in communication across the system • the upcoming change in senior leadership (Director of Children’s Services), which was recognised as a potential risk requiring careful transition planning <p>These factors were acknowledged as important considerations in both the reform plan and wider system delivery.</p> <p>Overall, the Board recognised that significant progress has been made in establishing the foundations of system reform, including improved structures, clearer partnership working and a comprehensive strategic framework. However, members emphasised that the next phase must focus on demonstrating measurable impact, ensuring that improvements are consistently experienced by children, young people and families.</p> <p>The Board agreed to provide further feedback outside the meeting and noted that a refined version of the reform plan would be brought back for formal sign-off, following additional assurance and alignment across partner organisations.</p> <p>Action - DSIABA218 - Review and incorporate DSIAB feedback on Maturity Matrix Assessment (language, reassess partnership pillar) and Experts at Hand (language, graphics, enhanced inclusion support to include P/C information, widen remit for 'Training Sensory Champions') as part of the Reform Plan. Due - 16/06/2026</p> <p>Action - DSIABA219 - Link reform work back to Stepping Stones document. Due – 16/06/2026</p>
<p>DSIAB2425/128</p>	<p>Priority Impact Area Progress Reports</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">A. Priority Impact Area 1 - Transitions</p> <p>The Board received a comprehensive update on the Transitions workstream, which has developed significantly since the SEND inspection and is now a formalised part of the Priority Impact Plan. The work was presented as a substantial, system-wide programme focused on improving transition experiences for children and young people, particularly in relation to preparation for adulthood (PfA), movement between settings, and transitions across education, health and social care services.</p> <p>It was emphasised that this work is being delivered through a multi-agency structure, with representation from across education, social care, health, public health, economic development and wider partners. The group meets regularly and has established terms of reference, with additional sub-groups used to deliver specific pieces of work. A strong focus has been placed on maintaining key principles throughout, including co-production, collaboration, and engagement with children, young people and families, with efforts made to embed lived experience into both design and delivery.</p>

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DSIAB2425/128 Continued	<p data-bbox="300 103 1492 421">A major component of the update was the development of two key guidance documents: one focused on transitions and the other on preparation for adulthood. It was explained that these had originally been intended as a single document but were separated to improve clarity, particularly given the complexity and variation in how the term “transitions” is understood across different services. The documents are designed to be used together and aim to provide a consistent framework for schools and services, covering all transition points from early years through to post-16 and adulthood.</p> <p data-bbox="300 472 1492 752">The Board noted that the work places a strong emphasis on early and continuous preparation for adulthood, rather than limiting this to later stages of education. The guidance reflects a graduated approach (universal, targeted, specialist) and adopts a strengths-based language, moving away from deficit-focused terminology. There was recognition that terminology remains a challenge, particularly ensuring that professional language aligns with how young people themselves describe their experiences.</p> <p data-bbox="300 790 1492 1070">Alongside the guidance, a significant programme of supporting tools and resources is being developed, including toolkits for schools, transition timelines, provision maps, lesson plans, and templates for capturing pupil voice. These resources are designed to support consistent implementation and improve understanding of good practice across settings. There is also work underway to make information more accessible to families, including updates to the Local Offer, use of video content, and development of frequently asked questions based on engagement sessions.</p> <p data-bbox="300 1081 1492 1317">The Board also heard about pilot projects, particularly a secondary transition pilot responding to concerns raised by families about the move from primary to secondary school. This pilot is being delivered over a full academic year to allow for meaningful evaluation, with a focus on capturing qualitative feedback from children, young people and families. A separate, more complex post-16 transition pilot is also underway, although challenges were noted in engaging settings in this area.</p> <p data-bbox="300 1368 1492 1603">Further discussion highlighted the importance of ensuring accessibility of the guidance for children, young people and families, not just professionals. The Board agreed that a child- and young person-friendly version should be developed as an action. There was also a strong focus on ensuring that the needs of specific groups, such as children in care, are explicitly reflected, recognising that transitions can present heightened vulnerability.</p> <p data-bbox="300 1641 1492 1877">In addition, the Board considered a related update on health transitions, specifically the development of a standard operating procedure for transitions from continuing care to continuing healthcare. This work has been introduced to ensure consistency, transparency and continuity of support, and highlighted the importance of a whole-family approach, recognising that transitions impact families as well as the young person.</p> <p data-bbox="300 1928 1492 2123">Overall, the discussion concluded that substantial progress has been made in establishing a coherent framework, guidance and tools for transitions, but the key next step is implementation and demonstrating impact. The Board emphasised the need to ensure consistency of practice across settings and to evaluate whether the work is improving outcomes and experiences for children and young people.</p>

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DSIAB2425/128 Continued	<p data-bbox="451 103 815 136" style="text-align: center;">B. Priority Impact Area 2</p> <p data-bbox="300 163 1508 405">The Board received an update on progress in relation to strategic joint commissioning, noting that a significant milestone had been achieved through the finalisation of the joint commissioning partnership agreement. This was described as a key requirement from the inspection and marks a transition from development work into a “business as usual” phase, where the focus shifts to delivering and embedding commissioning intentions in practice.</p> <p data-bbox="300 454 1508 611">The next stage of the work involves developing a commissioning intentions plan, which will set out priorities for service development and investment across the partnership. This reflects a shift from establishing governance and agreements to actively shaping service provision based on identified needs and priorities.</p> <p data-bbox="300 660 1508 943">A key element of the update focused on engagement with children and young people, particularly through a session held with the Youth Inclusion Forum. This was described as highly valuable, providing direct insight into what young people want from services. Feedback highlighted that young people prioritise simple, accessible opportunities, such as safe spaces, social activities, and opportunities to connect with others, rather than complex service models. This challenged professional assumptions and reinforced the need to avoid overcomplicating service design.</p> <p data-bbox="300 981 1508 1223">Young people also expressed a desire to be more involved in commissioning and procurement processes, with discussions exploring how they could contribute ideas, provide feedback, and influence decision making. It was acknowledged that traditional approaches to procurement can act as a barrier to meaningful participation, and there is a need to create more accessible and flexible involvement opportunities.</p> <p data-bbox="300 1261 1508 1543">Another key theme emerging from the discussion was employment and preparation for adulthood, with young people highlighting significant challenges in accessing work opportunities. The Board was challenged to consider how organisations across the system can provide more opportunities for work experience, employment, and meaningful participation, including roles such as citizen researchers. It was agreed that this should be taken forward as a collective responsibility, with all partners asked to identify opportunities within their own organisations.</p> <p data-bbox="300 1581 1508 1823">In response, it was noted that some work is already underway, including initiatives such as supported employment programmes and regional funding streams aimed at supporting people with neurodiversity and mental health needs into employment. However, there was recognition that this activity is not yet fully visible or coordinated at a system level, and there is a need to better connect and communicate these opportunities.</p> <p data-bbox="300 1861 1508 2067">The discussion also reinforced the importance of communication and accessibility of opportunities, with acknowledgement that young people often feel that available options are not clearly signposted or understood by schools and services. This links to wider system challenges around communication consistency, which were raised in other parts of the meeting.</p>

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DSIAB2425/128 Continued	<p>Overall, the Board noted that Priority Impact Area 2 has made strong progress in establishing the foundations for joint commissioning, but the key next phase will focus on translating strategy into tangible opportunities and outcomes, particularly in relation to employment, community engagement, and accessible services for children and young people.</p> <p>Action - DSIABA220 - Transitions (including medical transitions) to be included on Local Offer with page summary for CYP – Due 21/07/2026</p> <p>Action - DSIABA221 - Reports to be circulated and aligned with comms. – Due 16/06/2026</p> <p>Action - DSIABA222 - Board Members to consider employment and work experience opportunities for CYP and report back at next meeting. – Due 16/06/2026</p> <p>Action - DSIABA223 - ND Business case report on waiting list data (extend to include wheelchair wait times), to cover duration to be i) assessed and ii) treated to ensure triage approach is having desired impact. – Due 16/06/2026</p>
DSIAB2425/129	<p>ODG Assurance Report</p> <p>The Board received an update from the Operational Delivery Group (ODG) on system progress against the Priority Impact Plan. It was reported that good progress is being made across all workstreams, however a number of ongoing risks and system pressures were highlighted. In particular, workforce capacity across the system continues to be a sustained risk, affecting both local authority services and wider partner organisations, including the ICB.</p> <p>A significant focus of the ODG discussion has been on communication across the SEND system. The Board was advised that efforts are being made to improve how key developments and progress are communicated, including better use of newsletters and consideration of different communication methods for different audiences (e.g. schools, families and services). It was acknowledged that consistent and effective communication remains a challenge and a priority area for improvement.</p> <p>The Board noted that a revised SEND communications strategy is in development and will be brought to a future Board meeting. The timeline has been adjusted to allow for further refinement and incorporation of feedback and learning from ODG discussions, with the aim of producing a more robust and system-wide approach.</p> <p>ODG has also undertaken a review of the overall Priority Impact Plan to identify areas where progress updates have not recently been brought to the Board. As a result, it was agreed that updates on specific workstreams—such as the banding review and alternative provision framework—will be scheduled for upcoming Board meetings to provide greater oversight and assurance.</p> <p>A key theme in the discussion was the need to ensure that the Board has clear visibility of system performance and impact, particularly in relation to neurodevelopmental (ND) pathways. The Chair emphasised the importance of receiving a comprehensive report on waiting times, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time waiting for assessment • time waiting for support following assessment • the level and type of support available to children while waiting

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DSIAB2425/129	<p>There was a strong emphasis on understanding the full lived experience of children and families, including reassurance that all children on waiting lists are being triaged and supported appropriately.</p> <p>It was also highlighted that future reporting should take a more joined-up, partnership approach, bringing together information from health, education and other services to clearly demonstrate what support is available across the system. This is intended to strengthen assurance and provide a clearer picture of how effectively needs are being met during waiting periods.</p> <p>Finally, the Board reinforced that while progress is evident, there needs to be a continued shift in focus from tracking activity to demonstrating impact. ODG's role in identifying risks, coordinating system delivery, and escalating key issues was recognised as critical, but members emphasised that future updates should more clearly evidence the difference being made for children, young people and families.</p>
DSIAB2425/130	<p>Local Partnership Updates -</p> <p>A. Parent Carer Forum update Apologies were received from Derbyshire Parent Carer Forum, however a virtual update was received, please see below update received from the Derbyshire Parent Carers.</p> <p>B. Derbyshire County Council The Board received an update relating to Derbyshire County Council leadership and governance changes, with particular focus on recent and forthcoming transitions within the Council. Members were informed that a new Cabinet Member for SEND, has been appointed, replacing the previous statutory lead. The Board welcomed this appointment and expressed confidence in the new Cabinet Member's experience, knowledge of the SEND portfolio, and existing involvement in the work, noting that he has already been engaged in discussions over recent months. Formal acknowledgement was also given to the outgoing Cabinet Member for their contribution and support during the improvement period.</p> <p>In addition, the Board was updated on progress regarding the appointment of a new Director of Children's Services (DCS). A confirmed start date was in place, and initial planning for induction and transition arrangements is underway. It was noted that this is a critical stage within the SEND improvement journey, and careful management of the transition is required to ensure continuity of leadership, maintain oversight of improvement activity, and avoid disruption to delivery. The Board emphasised the importance of putting in place a clear and structured handover, alongside appropriate support arrangements, to ensure sustained progress during this period.</p> <p>C. Derby and Derbyshire Integrated Care Board No update was received from Derby and Derbyshire Integrated Care Board due to apologies from relevant representatives.</p> <p>Action - DSIABA224 - Review and follow up on Board attendance, specifically school / PCF reps. – Due 16/06/2026</p>

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/131	<p data-bbox="300 98 847 136">Minutes of the meeting of 21st of April</p> <p data-bbox="300 181 1433 255">The minutes from the previous meeting on the 21st of April were accepted as an accurate record with an amendment made to a member's name.</p> <p data-bbox="300 304 1315 342">The minutes will be anonymised and placed on the Local Offer website.</p>
DSIAB2425/132	<p data-bbox="300 389 456 427">Action Log</p> <p data-bbox="300 472 852 510">Reviewed in the meeting and updated.</p>
DSIAB2425/133	<p data-bbox="300 517 587 555">Any Other Business</p> <p data-bbox="300 600 1497 920">Under Any Other Business, the Board discussed the level of assurance being provided through Board reporting and whether current arrangements are sufficiently robust. Members reflected that, while there has been strong progress in developing system foundations, strategies and documentation, there remains a need to strengthen how this is translated into clear evidence of impact. The Board emphasised that, as an Improvement and Assurance Board, it must be able to demonstrate not only activity, but the difference that this work is making for children, young people and families.</p> <p data-bbox="300 969 1497 1171">Concerns were raised regarding the timeliness and volume of Board papers, with documentation often circulated late and containing large amounts of information. It was noted that this limits members' ability to review content fully and provide informed challenge. Members suggested that either papers should be issued earlier, or streamlined, to support more effective scrutiny and assurance.</p> <p data-bbox="300 1220 1474 1294">The Board also discussed the need for greater clarity and connectivity in reporting, with a particular focus on ensuring that papers clearly set out:</p> <ul data-bbox="443 1301 922 1417" style="list-style-type: none"> • what actions have been taken • the rationale for those actions • the impact achieved <p data-bbox="300 1467 1465 1624">While a significant amount of information is currently presented, it was acknowledged that it is not always clear how this demonstrates progress or improved outcomes. There was agreement that reporting needs to more explicitly link activity to impact to support stronger assurance.</p> <p data-bbox="300 1673 1481 1874">It was further noted that detailed operational information is more appropriately reviewed through the Operational Delivery Group (ODG), with the Board's role being to provide strategic oversight, challenge and assurance. This includes holding the system to account for delivery against priorities and ensuring that outcomes are clearly evidenced.</p> <p data-bbox="300 1924 1465 2150">Members reflected that some assurance is currently gained through engagement outside of the Board, including discussions with the DfE adviser and partner organisations. However, it was agreed that this assurance should be more clearly reflected within formal Board discussions, particularly as the system moves towards greater independence and internal governance arrangements beyond the monitoring phase.</p>

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DSIAB2425/133 Continued	<p>In response, it was noted that work is underway to strengthen self-evaluation and quality assurance processes, which should support improved reporting and a clearer understanding of progress going forward. The Board agreed that bringing this information together more coherently will be important in strengthening assurance.</p> <p>Finally, the Board considered the timing of the SEND stocktake, and agreed to defer this from July to September. This decision reflected the current pressures associated with delivering the SEND Reform Plan and the impact of the summer period. It was agreed that September would provide a more appropriate point to undertake the stocktake, aligning better with wider system timelines.</p>

DERBYSHIRE PARENT CARER VOICE (DPCV) SEND IMPROVEMENT ASSESSMENT BOARD UPDATE



Purpose of this update

This paper provides an update for the SEND Improvement and Assurance Board on Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice's engagement and activities over the past month and highlights early insights emerging from the Forum's ongoing EBSA survey to inform discussion and shared learning.

1. Forum Engagement and System Participation

In recent weeks, Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice has continued active engagement across a wide range of strategic and operational SEND structures. This has included representation at the following meetings and workstreams:

- Sensory Processing Needs meeting
- SEND Strategy discussion
- SEND Reform Plan Task and Finish Group
- ND Early Years Pathway
- Derbyshire SEND Data & Performance Sub-Group
- Derbyshire SEND Operational Delivery Group
- ND Transformation Programme Delivery
- SEND Joint Commissioning Hub
- Derbyshire SEND Improvement and Assurance Board (SIAB)
- Early Years Strategic Board – Early Identification, Funding and Intervention workstream
- Pillar 1, 3 and 7 workshops – Local Partnership Maturity Assessment
- DPCV Area SEND Survey discussion
- PCF / ICB ND Mental Health discussions with CAMHS and THRIVE

This breadth of engagement reflects the Forum's role in both providing lived-experience insight and supporting system learning and improvement across multiple priorities.

2. Parent Carer Engagement and Participation

Alongside system engagement, the Forum delivered five parent carer events aimed at improving access to information, professionals, and peer support:

- SEND Q&A with Gary Saul
- EP, DIASS and Neuro Hub face-to-face drop-in (Melbourne)
- *A Parent's Guide to Self-Harm* (online)
- Derby College PFA session (online)
- *Behaviour as Communication* (online)

Collectively, these activities were attended by over 100 parent carers, highlighting continued demand for both practical advice and direct access to professionals across a range of formats.

3. Early Feedback from EP / DIASS / Neuro Hub Drop-In Sessions

Initial feedback from parent carers attending the EP, DIASS and Neuro Hub drop-in sessions has been largely positive, particularly around access to professionals and feeling heard.

What parent carers valued

Parents consistently described the benefit of being able to access professionals they would otherwise struggle to reach. Many felt listened to, emotionally validated, and supported during their appointments. Several families reported leaving with increased confidence, energy and motivation to take next steps for their child and family, including arranging meetings with school staff or pursuing follow-up actions.

Most parents felt the 30-minute appointment length struck a reasonable balance, allowing meaningful discussion while enabling support to be offered to a greater number of families. Some parents described the sessions as welcoming, reassuring and confidence-building, and said they felt better equipped to advocate for their child.

Overall messages from parents

Parents expressed gratitude for the time, empathy and effort shown by professionals, and valued having their voices heard even where immediate solutions were limited. Feedback suggests that clearer structure, reassurance on arrival, improved signposting, and more explicit pathways through common SEND processes would help ensure sessions are accessible to parents who are feeling overwhelmed, uncertain, or new to the system. Many parents reported that with these improvements they would be more likely to attend again and recommend the sessions to others.

EBSA Survey – Early Indications

Context

Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice is currently running a countywide survey exploring parent carers' experiences of Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA). The survey remains open until the end of June. This briefing does not present final findings but instead offers early indications emerging from responses received so far, to support discussion and shared learning at this stage.

What families are telling us so far

1. EBSA is being experienced as a significant and ongoing issue

Early responses suggest that EBSA is not being experienced by families as a short-term difficulty. Many parents describe their child experiencing ongoing distress linked to school attendance, with situations often continuing over many months or longer. Even where children are still attending, families frequently describe attendance as highly fragile and emotionally exhausting to maintain.

There is a strong sense that EBSA is not resolving quickly for most families, and that many are living with prolonged uncertainty rather than seeing a clear path forward.

2. Families often enter EBSA without knowing what to do

A consistent early theme is that parent carers often do not feel confident about what to do when difficulties first begin. Many describe feeling thrown into crisis without clear guidance, shared language, or an understanding of what support might be available.

Related to this, a large proportion of parents' report that the term *Emotionally Based School Avoidance* was not explained to them by school, and in many cases was something they discovered themselves. This suggests that families may be navigating EBSA without a shared framework or clear explanation from the system.

3. Support from schools is variable and often feels limited

Parents describe a wide range of responses from schools. Some schools are offering pastoral approaches, safe spaces, or elements of flexibility, which families value. However, many families report that support feels limited in scope, inconsistent, or not clearly linked to an overall plan.

Importantly, where initial strategies do not lead to improvement, parents frequently describe a lack of clarity about what happens next. A notable early pattern is that families feel support can simply stall, rather than being actively reviewed or escalated.

4. EBSA strategies are not consistently experienced as effective

Even where support strategies are offered, parents' early responses suggest mixed views on effectiveness. Many families describe strategies as only partly helpful, or not effective for their child, particularly where underlying needs remain unmet.

This reinforces the sense that EBSA is complex and individual, and that one-size-fits-all approaches are unlikely to be sufficient without deeper understanding of each child's needs.

5. Awareness and use of the EBSA Toolkit appears limited

At this stage, awareness of the Derbyshire EBSA Toolkit among responding families appears low. Very few parents report that schools have explicitly told them the toolkit is being used to support their child.

This raises early questions about how visible the toolkit is to families, how consistently it is being implemented, and whether it is being discussed as part of shared planning with parents.

6. Access to external support is often experienced as difficult

Families describe significant challenges in accessing external support for EBSA. Many report that support has not been offered, that they are waiting, or that navigating services feels difficult and unclear.

This contributes to the sense of families feeling “stuck” — with limited school-based progress and uncertain access to wider help.

7. Attendance recording and enforcement are areas of anxiety

A key area of concern emerging early on relates to attendance recording. Many families report that they were not clearly informed about how their child's attendance would be recorded, and that attendance coding was not discussed with them.

While fines are not commonly reported, a notable minority of families describe receiving letters of concern. For some, this appears to compound stress at a time when families are already struggling.

8. The impact on families is profound

Perhaps the clearest early indication is the level of impact EBSA is having — not only on children, but also on parent carers and family life as a whole. Parents describe high emotional, practical, and mental health impacts, affecting the entire household.

This reinforces that EBSA should be understood not just as an attendance issue, but as a whole-family wellbeing issue.