

AGENDA FOR

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



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**To: All Members of Children and Young People Scrutiny
Committee**

Councillors: C Boles (Chair), A Booth, S Donnelly,
U Farooq, N Frith, J Lancaster, L McBriar, T Pilkington,
J Rydeheard, M Smith and M Whitby

Dear Member/Colleague

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee which will be held as follows:-

Date:	Thursday, 30 June 2022
Place:	The Learning Hub, Town Hall, Bury, BL9 0SW
Time:	7.00 pm
Briefing Facilities:	If Opposition Members and Co-opted Members require briefing on any particular item on the Agenda, the appropriate Director/Senior Officer originating the related report should be contacted.
Notes:	

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3 MINUTES *(Pages 3 - 18)*

Minutes from the meeting held on 17th March 2022 and 23rd March 2022 are attached.

4 MATTERS ARISING

5 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

A period of 30 minutes has been set aside for members of the public to ask questions on the agenda for tonight's meeting.

6 MEMBER QUESTION

A period of up to 15 minutes will be allocated for questions and supplementary questions from members of the Council who are not members of the committee. This period may be varied at the discretion of the chair.

7 OVERVIEW ON SEND GREEN PAPER *(Pages 19 - 44)*

Presentation attached.

8 PROGRESS UPDATE ON SERVICE DELIVERY FOR EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLANS *(Pages 45 - 60)*

Report from Councillor Lucy Smith, Cabinet member for Children and Education Services attached.

9 CHILDREN SOCIAL CARE IMPROVEMENT PLAN *(Pages 61 - 66)*

Report from Councillor Lucy Smith, Cabinet member for Children and Education Services attached.

10 WORK PROGRAMME *(Pages 67 - 68)*

To discuss the work plan for 2022/2023.

11 URGENT BUSINESS

Minutes of:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting:	17 March 2022
Present:	Councillor S Wright (in the Chair) Councillors C Boles, S Butler, P Cropper, J Lancaster, T Pilkington, D Quinn, K Thomas and M Whitby
Also in attendance:	Councillor Tariq, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Skills Councillor Bernstein, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee Jeanette Richards, Executive Director Children and Young People Isobel Booler, Director of Education and Skills Paul Cooke, Interim Assistant Director of Learning Jane Case, Bury CCG Cath Atherden, Service Manager Youth Cabinet Representative, Georgia Murphy Union Representative, Helen Chadwick Alyson Malach, Chair of Governors, Chesham Primary School
Public Attendance:	Two members of the public was present at the meeting.
Apologies for Absence:	Councillor L McBriar

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies are noted above.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Lancaster declared an interest as she is a member of Buy2gether
Councillor Pilkington declared an interest as he has two children who attend Schools; one who is SEND registered and attends within the Local Authority. He also declared an interest in relation to Greater Manchester level as works for Manchester Foundation Trust, Royal Manchester Children's Hospital.
Councillor Wright declared an interest as his wife works within the Local Authority with a Child who is registered as having SEND.

3 MINUTES

It was agreed:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20th January 2022 be approved subject to Councillor Boles Declaration of Interest being added.

4 MATTERS ARISING

Councillor Wright, Chair took the opportunity to thank all Committee Members for their input over the last year.

Councillor Wright, Chair advised that the updated action log was sent to members prior to the Committee.

Councillor Lancaster asked for a response to her two previous requests regarding the fit and fed scheme and defibrillators be responded to. Paul Cooke Strategic Lead for Education Services advise this update will be ready in the new municipal year and that he will ask Sandra Bruce prepares an update to the Committee on the fit and fed scheme.

5 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Pages 7 - 10)

Notice had been received of 1 public question. The Chair gave an undertaking that the questions and responses would be made available on the Council Web Site, following the meeting.

Questioner	Topic	Responding
Catherine Black	Children with Disabilities Team	Cllr Tariq

In addition there was one member of the public in attendance at the meeting.

Ms Delaney presented the following question to the Committee.

Last week my son was told he would need an amputation of his left foot. This is a direct result of a lack of action and direct failings of this Council. I would like to know what you as Leaders plan to do under your duty of care to address the needs on my Child due to the lack of response I have received from yourselves on this matter so far.

In response Councillor Tariq, advised that the issues raised are new to him and he asked if the issues raised can be taken away and be addressed by the end of tomorrow with Jeanette Richards and Isobel Booler.

In addition, the Chair offered the member of the public the opportunity to ask a further question.

In response Ms Delaney asked the Committee the following question:

What are you going to do to ensure joined up working happens going forward?

In response Councillor Tariq, Cabinet Member for Children Young People and Skills agreed that services do require improvement and not yet delivering for families and young people in the Borough. Some of the changes that need to take place are requiring significant culture changes. There is now additional capacity that has been brought in as there has previously been gaps. In addition, we have recently sent out to ask parents for feedback on our services along with engaging with local schools.

Alyson Malach, Chair of Governors for Chesham School asked the Committee what training happens and what the impact has been how to meet needs of diverse communities within the Borough. In response Isobel Booler, Director of Education and Skills advised that she has been involved in co-production workshops to hear the views of stakeholders, families, and community groups. Councillor Tariq thanked Alyson for the question and confirmed he constantly challenges practices. The confirmed that work is co-produced and confirmed he will take the comments back regarding SEND practices and engagement to improve services going forward when looking at our public sector equality duty.

6 MEMBER QUESTION (Pages 11 - 12)

Notice had been received of 1 question. The Chair gave an undertaking that the questions and responses would be made available on the Council Web Site, following the meeting.

Questioner	Topic	Responding
Cllr Bernstein	Recruitment	Cllr Tariq

7 UPDATE REPORT ON SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND)

Councillor Tariq, Cabinet Member for Children Young People and Skills set out the report which provides an update following the detailed Annual Report on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) submitted at the Children and Young Persons' Scrutiny Committee meeting on the 7th September 2021.

Bury Council and Clinical Commissioning Group are committed to ensuring that all of our children are safe, have the best start in life, fulfil their potential, and are independent; this commitment extends to all, including our children with a disability and/or learning need.

This report sets out a mid-year summary of actions and progress across the SEND provision. A comprehensive SEND annual report will be provided again in the Autumn. A summary of the quarterly update on the Project Safety Valve programme which was submitted to the Department for Education on 1st March 2022 is detailed in Appendix I.

A copy of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Report had been circulated to Members ahead of the meeting and in considering the report and the Cabinet Member's statement the following comments and issues were raised:

Requests were made for an update on timescales; In response Councillor Tariq, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Skills advised systemic change is required surrounding SEND and this is improving the experiences of families within the Borough. As an example, Project Safety Valve is a longer-term goal and is looking at a period of 4/5 years to address challenges. However, the way in which we operate on the group will be more imminent. Discussions about the impact of the new Schools on the sufficiency of Project Safety Valve were asked. In response Paul Cooke, Interim Assistant Director of Learning advised plans are in place to support sufficiency especially around the two additional Special Needs School's which should help needs more effectively and locally. The indicative plan has been devised and will be rolled out over the next 12 months.

Further areas on discussion took place regarding health matters within the report. Questions consisted of the following areas:

Commissioning of services for matters such as ADHD and Autism; in response Jane Case, Bury CCG advised following the pandemic waiting lists have increase, there is a Greater Manchester Group looking at improvements and on a Bury level there is a consideration to reviewing the pathways. Jane Case, Bury CCG also confirmed any changes to outsourcing will be shared with Committee members.

Questions were asked regarding the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). In response members were informed that MASH is the 'front door' so all referrals come through that pathway; however pathways behind the MASH has been reviewed to be more efficient.

Additional questions regarding the CAMHS service review and contract length were requested. In response the Committee were advised that the Pennine contract is a block contract and is not up for consideration of a review.

The Committee sought assurances on the Speech Language and Therapy waiting lists. In response Jane Case, Bury CCG advised the impact of COVID has secured additional resources to assist with waiting lists and the service is being reviewed to look at joint commissioning options.

The representative from the Trade Union wished to note the importance of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) and sees this as useful but the suggested any need for consultants is of concern. In response Isobel Booler, Director of Education and Skills assured the Committee that pulling expertise in and working to root all workforce within Bury.

Jane Case, Bury CCG left the meeting at 19.30.

Cath Atherden, Service Manager gave the Committee assurance that Schools are being supported to be more inclusive.

The Committee questioned how many Social Workers Bury currently has. In response Jeanette Richards advised that across the whole of Children's Services we have 156 Social workers, in relation to the Children with Disability Team we have 7 and 3 Family Support Workers. A priority is joining up the system to meet the needs of Children. Councillor Bernstein, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny was asked if he wished to add to the questions received so far. In response he asked how Bury Council's total of Social Workers benchmark against our statistical neighbour Authorities. The Committee were informed we do require more Social Workers and we are reducing caseloads to recognise that the officers need time to develop relationships to support proactive change. Councillor Tariq, Cabinet Member for Children and Young advised that whilst recruitment is essential so is retention and understanding Social Worker's needs.

Discussions regarding Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) took place. In response Isobel Booler advised we hold many plans which must be reviewed annually, and the shrinking workforce does cause issues. Assessment processes are being revised but following this the review process will take place.

Questions regarding the access to free places for up to two-year-olds took place, in particularly in the Prestwich area as this is relatively low. In response Isobel Booler advised that it is part of some targeted work, and to provide the Committee with information following the meeting regarding the specific work that is being done currently.

Questions took place regarding the SEND report and the third sector contractors. Isobel Booler, Director of Education and Skills requested that this concern be taken outside of this Committee and look at any concerns raised.

It was suggested that the item 'update report on Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) be extended and to defer the following item on the 'Children and Young People Improvement Plan Update'.

The Committee sought assurances on the types of Schools that will be available. In response Paul Cooke Interim Director advised that the new School due for completion in 2023 will specifically look to cater to the needs of Children who are high achievers but find the current school provision difficult due to many varying reasons. Isobel Booler, Director of Education and Skills admitted that language is certainly an area for development. The Committee were assured the Inclusion Ambassador post is being re-recruited to and will sit within the Youth Participation Team with a specific SEND focus.

Alyson from Chesham School posed questions and statements to the Committee regarding reasonable adjustments, accessibility, seeking disclosure, accessibility, and analysis of staffing equality characteristics.

Councillor Tariq thanked the Chair, Councillor Wright for his leadership of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee and to highlight this Committee is relatively new and that he has really valued the Committee input and praised that Committee Members for the work over the last year.

It was agreed:

1. That the following item be deferred to allow for an extension within the current item
2. Isobel Booler to discuss concerns raised by Councillor Lancaster outside of the Committee.

8 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE

As agreed under the previous agenda item this matter will be discussed on Wednesday 23rd March 2022.

9 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

COUNCILLOR S WRIGHT
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 6.30 pm and ended at 9.00 pm)

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Public Questions

Catherine Black:

Given that the Children with Disabilities Team at any given point have a caseload of around 160 children based on their threshold criteria. If we say that there are 5724 disabled children and young people in the borough, based on the 2014 census data in the short breaks statement (link to documents provided in Nov 2021), so roughly only 3% of disabled children in Bury can access this service. What are the policies and procedures, that the LA use for the remaining 97% of disabled children in Bury?

Can the LA provide to myself and the councillors present here, as representatives of the disabled children and young people in Bury, a copy of the policy for what happens when those families of disabled children request help from Children's Social Care and do not meet the threshold criteria from the Disabled Children's Social Care Team?

I am requesting a blank copy/ies of the document/s used, so as to understand the type of assessment carried out, and the expertise of the person carrying out such an assessment, along with an accompanying set of support notes/checklist used by the social care team.

Response

The Children With Disabilities team currently carry a caseload of 250 children including the caseloads of both Family Support workers and Social Workers. The Local Authority would highlight that the number of children who can access this service is not dependent on the capacity of the team, but dependent on how many children and young people are eligible. The Children With Disabilities Team is a specialist team to assess and potentially provide services to children and young people with very complex and enduring disabilities.

We understand this means that some children who have additional needs or disabilities do not meet threshold for this service. For children, young people and families who fall into this category assessments can be undertaken by the following teams;

- Early Help Locality Teams
- Professionals and agencies already working with / involved with the family
- Initial Response Team

The policies and procedures mean that need is identified through an assessment and this may be the Child and Family assessment should IRT be undertaking the assessment, or the Story so Far assessment which supports the Early Help approach.

WE are committed in the co produced Local Area Action Plan to reviewing the pathways to access universal, targeted and specialist short breaks.

The early help teams are made up of family support workers, early years workers, adolescent support workers and early help social workers and the staff hold a variety of qualifications from degrees/diplomas in social work through to NVQs in youth work. Early Help is not a specific service but an approach across all partners. The Early Help Teams support professionals and families to come together through a team around the family plan, to broker the support required at a lower level of need. The teams do not seek to remain involved with families long term but to pathway to support that is available in the community and through other agencies already involved with the family. Early Help workers would complete Story So Far assessments which identifies the needs of the family and the child and they seek to support access to services. An example might be supporting access to DWP workers to ensure the right benefits are in place. They also carry out a short term interventions for example around parenting support or a specific piece of work with a young person who may have anxieties about school and they may do some 121 activities to build confidence and support. Workers are knowledgeable about services and resources in the community and can advise and support access to those services, this would include for young who are SEND.

Where it is determined that the family require a statutory response they would be referred either to the CWD team or the first response teams where a social worker would lead on completing the assessment and developing the support package

Following the revision of internal processes, where it is determined that the family require a statutory response they would be referred either to the CWD team or the first response teams where a social worker would lead on completing the assessment and developing the support package. As part of the Childrens services improvement journey we are reviewing our model of practice and the supporting documents. We can, outside of the council meeting, arrange for blank documents to be shared EDCS will progress this.

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Members Questions

Question One

Councillor Bernstein:

‘Could Councillor Tariq outline what he thinks the delay in the appointment to the post of Assistant Director of Children’s Social Care will have to the delivery of the Council’s Children’s Services delivery plan’?

Response:

Recruiting to this post is a priority but recruiting the right candidate with the right level of skills and ambition for the children and families of Bury is very important and with this in mind we are working closely with recruitment partners to progress this.

In the interim we continue to seek interim agency capacity and the EDCS has arranged for some interviews for later this week.

The strategic leadership team within Childrens services have worked together to ensure that there is continued focus on priority areas, which has been directly overseen by the EDCS and this activity is reported into the Improvement Board.

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Minutes of: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 23 March 2022

Present: Councillor S Wright (in the Chair)
Councillors C Boles, S Butler, P Cropper, J Lancaster,
L McBriar, T Pilkington, D Quinn, T Tariq and M Whitby

Also in attendance: Jacqui Dennis – Director of Law and Democratic Services,
Jeanette Richards – Executive Director of Children and Young
People, Kelly Barnett – Democratic Services Officer.

Public Attendance: No members of the public were present at the meeting.

Apologies for Absence: Georgia Murphy – Youth Cabinet Chair

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence are noted above.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Lancaster declared a personal interest as she is a member of Bury2gether.

Councillor Wright declared a personal interest as his wife works with SEN Children in a local school.

Councillor Boles declared a personal interest as he works at a school, which also has a site in Bury.

3 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

4 MEMBER QUESTION

There were no member questions.

5 DRAFT BURY CHILDREN SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Before the improvement plan was presented to the Committee, members raised issues around the acronyms used within the plan and questioned the targeted audience. Jeanette Richards explained that the language in the improvement plan was deliberate, as the plan is aimed at the internal workforce, Ofsted and the DfE advisor and case officer. Jeanette Richards agreed to provide an appendix with the plan explaining the abbreviations and acronyms used.

Councillor Tariq presented the improvement plan to the Committee. It was explained that the improvement journey and plan will continually be evolving, and the tight timescales around creating the plan were highlighted. The Council has an obligation to submit the improvement plan to Ofsted before the end of March 2022. It was explained that the plan aims to cover and deal with some of the significant challenges that have been highlighted by Ofsted from the

ILAC inspection that took place in Autumn 2021. Councillor Tariq highlighted specific areas of the plan that included recruitment and retention of social workers, overreliance of agency workers, leadership and management, methods of working, reducing caseloads and multiagency engagement.

Jeanette Richards highlighted that improvement plan is not just about satisfying the ILAC framework but accepting that the community deserves a good quality Children's Services. In the construction of the improvement plan, senior leaders have collaborated with the young people from the Children in Care Council (CiCC) and their voices have impacted the content of the plan. There is a Workforce Board to ensure that the voice of the workforce is being heard, and there will be a Coproduction Group created, who will consult on and influence the process of the improvement plan going forward. Jeanette Richards explained that the plan sets out the aspirations, principles and values and speaks to how Children's Services are going to engage with the community, recognising likely future government agendas, following the Independent Review of Social Care. In order to drive the improvement plan, the conditions for good practice were explained which included strengthening the effectiveness of multiagency governance, establishing a stable and effective leadership and management team, building a skilled, confident and experienced workforce and improving performance management. There will be a lot of external scrutiny, including fortnightly meetings with the DfE, quarterly monitor visits and audit activity.

Members of the committee were invited to ask questions.

In response to Councillor Lancaster's question around agile working within Children's Services, Councillor Tariq explained that during the pandemic the Council moved to remote working. After the Ofsted inspection, it was agreed that 100% remote working for Children's Services staff was not the best way to deliver practice to children and families and a 60/40% split of working from the office and working remotely was agreed. It was explained that the 60/40% split may not be an exact split, but this would be led by team managers to ensure that team members are supported, and that staff are contributing to improving practice. There are weekly drop-in surgeries for social workers at Knowsley Place and staff members have regular supervisions with team managers. Across the workforce, agile working will differ across different teams and is subject to team managers' approval. Access to parking from specific council buildings has been highlighted as an issue for social work teams, working from the office. Councillor Tariq explained that the issues around car parking will be resolved.

In response to members' questions around measuring success and outcomes of the plan, Jeanette Richards explained that monitoring visits are a specific framework which will monitor progress and will be very detailed and focus on component parts of the framework. Measuring success around specific issues were highlighted, such as the quality of court reports, court proceedings and child protection plans.

Jeanette Richards explained that the DfE advisor will report back to the DfE every 6 weeks on the progress made. The DfE advisor will create a 6 monthly report which will directly be fed into the minister, if there are any concerns the DfE advisor can make recommendations to an alternative delivery model in Bury.

Councillor Tariq explained he is confident that the correct processes and procedures are in place to deliver the plan. Councillor Tariq explained that success will be measured by the Improvement Board, which is a significant stakeholder forum that is Chaired by Linda Clegg. There are additional members of the DfE who are present at the meeting who are able to provide challenge around the progress of the improvement journey. Councillor Tariq feels that Bury now has the key foundations to help us improve and hopes that this comes to fruition at the next monitoring visit.

Councillor Pilkington suggested that the Ofsted improvement work should be a standing item for the committee going forward.

In response to Councillor Pilkington's question around having a public version of this report, Jeanette Richards explained that there will be a planned communication strategy, as it is important for people in the community to understand our priorities and present this information to them. There will be a Coproduction Group for the community to inform and influence practice improvement. Councillor Tariq explained that local schools will be a key part of the communication strategy and highlighted the importance of working in co-production with schools.

In response to Councillor Pilkington's question around there being no mention of neurodiversity in the plan, Jeanette Richards agreed to include this within the plan.

In response to Councillor McBriar's question around timescales and establishing improvement KPIs before April 2022, Jeanette Richards explained that a suite of KPIs had been established and shared at the Improvement Board yesterday, therefore the rag rating needed to be updated in the plan.

In response to Councillor McBriar's question around the issues identified that may impact housing for care leavers, Jeanette Richards explained that this is an issue with sufficiency of appropriate accommodation. A meeting was established with colleagues in housing and there is a need to build new provisions and priority afforded to Care Leavers. Jeanette Richards agreed to bring a report back to the committee around the housing issues for care leavers.

In response to members' questions around the improvement plan being consulted on with SEND parents, Bury2gether and Councillors, Jeanette Richards explained that the plan hadn't been shared with community members at this stage, the plan will not be shared further until it has been signed off by Ofsted. The rationale for not sharing the improvement plan, at this stage, was explained. The plan has been consulted on with Councillors through the scrutiny committee and through the Improvement Board. Councillor Tariq highlighted that the communication strategy with wider partners and the community is important.

Helen Chadwick suggested that the rag rating be amended around each action on the plan so the committee can see the small changes that have been made.

In response to Councillor Boles question around the recruitment campaign that started in January, Jeanette Richards explained that there was a one-off cost around the video for the campaign. Since the recruitment campaign was launched in January, there have been 5 ASYE social workers and 1 experienced practitioner recruited. Jeanette Richards explained that Bury needs to consider alternative additional features that can attract candidates, such as car parking. The focus of the next Improvement Board is around the recruitment and retention of staff, growing apprenticeship offers and growing the student cohort. Councillor Tariq explained that it is very important to compete against other Local Authorities in terms of recruitment.

In response to Councillor Butler question around academy schools, Jeanette Richards explained that Bury Council has good relationships with academy schools and Multi Academy Trusts (MATs). Jeanette Richards will be talking to headteachers tomorrow at the headteachers conference about a range of issues including the improvement plan, priorities within children's social care and establishing stronger systems. Councillor Tariq explained that the Local Authority has good connections with all schools.

In response to Councillor Wright's question around the proportion of Children's Services staff that are agency workers, Jeanette Richards explained 43% are agency workers, these figures

are inflated as there are three managed social work teams that were commissioned to reduce caseloads.

Councillor Wright asked members to vote that the final plan is to be sent to all councillors, that the improvement plan, and a 'walk through social services' is a standing item on the agenda.

It was agreed:

1. An appendix explaining the abbreviations and acronyms used within the Improvement Plan to be created.
2. The Ofsted improvement work to be a standing item on the agenda for the Committee going forward.
3. Neurodiversity to be included within the Improvement Plan.
4. A report around the housing issues for care leavers to be brought to a future committee.
5. To look at amending the RAG rating to reflect each action in the Improvement Plan.
6. Jeanette Richards to provide the cost of the recruitment campaign video.
7. Once approved, the Improvement Plan to be sent to all councillors.
8. A 'walk through social services' to be a standing item on the agenda.

6 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business raised at the meeting.

COUNCILLOR S WRIGHT
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 5.30 pm and ended at 6.45 pm)

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES GREEN PAPER

Presentation to Children & Young People's Scrutiny
Committee

30th June 2022

CONTEXT

- In February, the Government published its Levelling Up White Paper, setting out its ambitions for social and economic reform across the regions.
- This was followed on the 28th March by a Schools White Paper, **and on the 29th March by a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Green Paper.**
- Subsequently, the Schools Bill was introduced to Parliament on 12th May 2022. The Schools Bill sets out the proposed changes to the statutory framework impacting on the role of local authorities, on schools, and on Trusts.
- The white papers and green paper need to be seen together, given the inter-relationship between each of them.

Levelling-Up White Paper

February 2022

The **Levelling Up White** paper sets out the broad agenda by which the Government's ambitions for economic and social reform and regeneration across the regions will be met by 2030.

Educational reform is at the heart of that agenda, with an ambition that every child and adult will have the skills to fulfil their potential.

It sets out the key mechanism by which the educational reforms will be addressed, through the establishment of 55 Education Investment Areas (EIA).

These areas have been identified and prioritised based on educational outcomes over time. Bury has been identified as an EIA, largely based on the performance of pupils at Key Stage 4, and Progress 8 2017-19.

Schools White Paper

March 2022

THE CASE FOR CHANGE

The problem: The Government argues that it has made progress since 2016, but too many children are still failing to meet the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, and that this has got worse during the pandemic

The ambition: the White Paper sets out the Government's vision for a **stronger school system** with a focus on **literacy and numeracy** to fulfil **the potential of every child**

The vision: recover outcomes for those hardest hit, raise academic standards in areas left behind, set out a roadmap for reform to build back a stronger, fairer system

The Ambition

We must do more to help every child fulfil their potential

Too many children leave education without key knowledge and skills

Outcomes vary between children and regions with different characteristics

COVID-19 has exacerbated challenges

- Chapter 1: An Excellent Teacher for Every Child
- Chapter 2: Delivering high standards of curriculum, behaviour and attendance
- Chapter 3: Targeted support for every child who needs it
- Chapter 4: A stronger and fairer school system

The White Paper sets out the intention to clarify the relationship between local authorities and the schools/academies that serve the local area; the importance of the relationship between local authorities and Regional Schools Commissioners in the strategic planning of the educational landscape serving a local area; and the role of Ofsted and Department For Education.

The respective role of local authorities and Regional Schools Commissioners will be reviewed, and potentially some of the statutory duties placed on local authorities will be amended, removed or clarified.

The Government has already begun to lay the foundations for these changes with the publication of the Schools Bill.

Special Educational Needs And Disabilities (SEND) Green Paper

March 2022

SEND Green Paper

The Government launched a consultation on its SEND Green paper on the 29th March.

The Green Paper sets out the Government's vision for a single, national SEND and alternative provision (AP) system that will introduce new standards in the quality of support given to children across education, health and care.

The Thrust of the Green Paper is to respond to the challenges and barriers experience by families following the SEND reforms introduced in 2014, and the difficulties experienced by many local authorities and their partners in effectively implementing those reforms.

The challenges

Outcomes for children and young people with SEND or in alternative provision on average are poor

Navigating the SEND system and alternative provision is not a positive experience for children, young people and their families

Despite unprecedented investment, the system is not delivering value for money for children, young people and families

To create a more inclusive education system with excellent local mainstream provision which will improve the experience and outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and those who need alternative provision.

This links to the Schools White Paper

A vision of the school system in which every child or young Person can fulfil their potential, supported by an excellent teacher, high standards of curriculum, behaviour and attendance, backed by high-quality targeted support for those that need it.

“We believe that, with excellent teaching and improved identification of need in inclusive educational settings, fewer children and young people will need additional interventions as they will be getting the support they need as part of high-quality teaching within the classroom.”

Key Features

New national standards across education, health and care

A simplified Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Councils to introduce 'local inclusion plans' that bring together early years, schools and post-16 education with health and care services

Improving oversight and transparency through the publication of new 'local inclusion dashboards'

A new national framework for councils for banding and tariffs of High Needs

Changing the culture and practice in mainstream education to be more inclusive and better at identifying and supporting needs

Improving workforce training

A reformed and integrated role for alternative provision (AP)

What it means

Consistent national standards will facilitate a more inclusive system, with more children and young people able to have their needs met in high-quality mainstream provision with high aspirations, a confident and expert workforce and access to high-quality targeted support as needed.

Establishment of new local SEND partnerships, bringing together education, health and care partners to produce a local inclusion plan setting out how each local area will meet the national standards for provision, processes and systems

What it means...in practice

How needs should be identified and assessed

Appropriate provision to be made available for different types of need

Standardised processes for accessing and reviewing support

Standards for co-producing and communicating with children, young people, parents and carers

Standards for transition

Mandating the use of local multi-agency panels in the EHC needs assessment process

Standardising EHCPs to ensure consistent access to specialist provision

Digitising EHCPs to reduce bureaucracy

Support parents to express an informed preference for a suitable placement by providing a list of settings drawn from the local inclusion plan

Streamline the redress process, aiming to resolve disputes earlier, including through mandatory mediation.

A reformed and integrated role for AP

Local SEND partnerships to deliver an AP service

Focus on early intervention

Local Authorities to create an alternative-provision-specific budget

A bespoke performance framework for AP, focused on progress and re-integration into mainstream

A clear, tiered package of support from AP

- Targeted support for children in mainstream;

- Time-limited placements in AP with a return to original school;

- Transitional placements for children to transition to a different school or to a suitable post-16 destination.

A call for evidence on the use of unregistered provision

Deliver clarity in roles and responsibilities with every partner having a clear role to play, and having the levers to fulfil their responsibilities

DfE's new Regions Group to take responsibility for holding Local Authorities and Multi Academy Trusts to account for delivering for SEND

Provide statutory guidance to Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) to set out clearly how to discharge their SEND statutory responsibilities

Ofsted/CQC to deliver an updated Local Area SEND Inspection Framework

New inclusion dashboards for 0-25 provision, providing a timely, local and national, picture of how the system is performing

New national framework of banding and price tariffs, matched to levels of need and types of education provision set out in the national standards

Delivering change (1)

Increase the total investment in schools budgets by £7b by 2024-25, with an additional £1b in 2022-23 for high needs

Stabilise local SEND systems by investing an additional £300m in the Safety Valve Programme and £85m in programmes, over 3 years, to support LAs with the biggest deficits

DfE to work with system leaders from education, health and care and Department of Health and Social Care to develop the national SEND standards

Support delivery through a £70m SEND and AP Reform change programme to test and refine key proposals and support local SEND systems

Publish a national SEND and AP delivery plan – setting out our response to this Green Paper and how reforms will be implemented

Establish a new National SEND Delivery Board to bring together national delivery partners across education, health and care and hold them to account

Delivering change (2)

Consult on introducing a new Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENCo) National Professional Qualification (NPQ) for school SENCos

Increase the number of staff with an accredited Level 3 SENCo qualification in early years settings

Commission analysis to better understand the support that children and young people with SEND need from the health workforce

Initial Teacher Training (ITT) - framework sets out a minimum mandatory entitlement for all trainee teachers with mentoring in supporting pupils with additional needs

The Early Career Framework includes training on identifying pupils who need new content further broken down

A reformed suite of National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) for teachers and leaders, designed to help the teaching profession ensure they support all pupils to succeed in both mainstream and specialist settings

SEND Green Paper

Single SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) System	Excellent Provision from Early Years to Adulthood	Reformed and Integrated Alternative Provision (AP)	System Roles, Accountability and Finding Reforms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New national SEND and alternative provision system setting nationally consistent standards for how needs are identified and met • Establish new local SEND partnerships (including AP) to produce a Local Inclusion Plan • Standardised and digitised EHCP process and template • Mandatory mediation prior to registering an appeal to the tribunal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased funding • Consult on the introduction of a new SENCo National Professional Qualification (NPQ) for school SENCos • Increase the number of staff with an accredited Level 3 SENCo qualification in early years settings to improve SEND expertise • Strengthen the relationship between the SEND governor and the SENCo in the New Code of Practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AP to be an integral part of local SEND systems • Performance framework for AP-focused on progress, re-integration into mainstream education or sustainable post-16 destinations • AP schools will offer interventions and education across a continuum of support, rather than focusing exclusively on expensive long-term placements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New DfE Regions Group to take responsibility for holding local authorities and MATs to account for delivery for children and young people with SEND locally through new funding agreements between local government and DfE • Introduce a new national framework of banding and price tariffs for funding, matched to levels of need and types of education provision set out in the national standards

Project Safety Valve

Project Safety Valve Agreement

Bury Council has entered into a formal agreement with the DfE on Project Safety Valve which is focused on:

- improving SEND services and the experiences and outcomes for children, young people and their families with identified Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- an agreement to eradicate the High Needs Block Deficit by 2024/25.

PSV – DfE Agreement

Agreement Condition 1:

- Strengthen Special Education Needs assessment and placement process

Agreement Condition 2:

- Ensure robust planning for future provision, including reducing the use of independent school placements by increasing the availability and suitability of local provision within Bury.

Agreement Condition 3:

- Improve quality and timeliness of management information to enable evaluation of impact of central services.

Agreement Condition 4:

- Support and drive schools in Bury to meet a higher level of need in a more cost effective way within mainstream settings, while maintaining the quality of provision. Develop a culture in which demand is more effectively managed throughout the authority.

Agreement Condition 5:

- Remodel financial practice to ensure accurate contributions from appropriate funding sources.

PSV workstreams

Introducing our workstreams

We have separated the work into 6 workstreams. These workstreams include a number of activities that will help us deliver to our outcomes. The workstreams will be supported by co-production, engaging communities and communing the story of transformation to our stakeholders.

Workforce	To build a stable and quality SEND workforce with strong leadership that can meet demand of children and young people in Bury who require SEN support and embed the changes to the service.
Practice & Processes	Create an environment in which people can do their best work and feel valued - where continuous improvement to practice and process are identified, tested and implemented at a sustainable pace, with co-creation at the forefront.
Strategy and Finance	To create a local SEND system which enables needs to be met within Bury's own provisions and services wherever appropriate and which uses its HNF block resources in the most effective way.
Planning for future provision	We aim to identify gaps in provision and use our capital resources to develop appropriate additional specialist capacity. We will also re-design services and provision to ensure that needs are better met within local communities wherever possible.
Technology and Data	Deliver a modern approach to technology systems and culture which supports the SEND service to deliver services effectively, efficiently and sustainably. Creating reliable case management and performance reporting which unlocks the full potential of the wider SEND system.
Graduated Approach	To set the standard for schools and services in Bury in respect of Inclusive, Quality-first Teaching including the systems supporting early identification and early intervention for children and young people with SEN.

What next?

Consultation ends 22nd July.

To continue to update on Project Safety Valve.

To continue to update on the development of Special Education Needs and Disabilities in Bury.

Glossary

AP	Alternative Provision
CYP	Children & Young People
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CQC	Care Quality Commission
DFE	Department for Education
EHCP	Education Health & Care Plan
EIA	Education Investment Areas
ICB	Integrated Care Boards
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
KS4	Key Stage 4
LA	Local Authority
Progress 8	National progress measure across the secondary school phase
PSV	Project Safety Valve
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs & Disabilities
KS4	Key Stage 4

SCRUTINY REPORT

MEETING: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

DATE: June 2022

SUBJECT: Update on Educational Health and Care Plan Performance

REPORT FROM: Councillor Lucy Smith, Cabinet member for Children and Education Services

CONTACT OFFICER: Isobel Booler, Director of Education and Skills
Michael Kemp, Strategic Lead for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Bury Council are committed to improving outcomes for families and help raise the achievement of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in Bury so they can reach their potential and lead fulfilling lives.
- 1.2 The Children's and Young People's Committee has previously received reports on Special Educational needs and Disabilities and on Project Safety Valve. The Council has entered into a formal agreement with the DfE on Project Safety Valve which is focused on:
1. improving SEND services and the experiences and outcomes for children, young people, and their families with identified Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
 2. an agreement to eradicate the High Needs Block Deficit by 2024/25. This agreement includes £20m additional revenue funding to be provided in instalments to 2024/25 plus £3.8m additional capital funding provided in 2021/22.
- 1.3 There are five conditions against which progress and performance are measured in quarterly reports to the DfE:

Agreement Condition 1:

Strengthen Special Education Needs assessment and placement process.

Agreement Condition 2:

Ensure robust planning for future provision, including reducing the use of independent school placements by increasing the availability and suitability of local provision within Bury. This should include developing a model for forecasting future needs.

Agreement Condition 3:

Improve quality and timeliness of management information to enable evaluation of the impact of central services.

Agreement Condition 4:

Support and drive schools in Bury to meet a higher level of need in a more cost-effective way within mainstream settings, while maintaining the quality of provision. Develop a culture in which demand is more effectively managed throughout the authority.

Agreement Condition 5:

Remodel financial practice to ensure accurate contributions from appropriate funding sources.

- 1.4 This report will focus on the progress made in relation to Condition 1 which was to strengthen the Special Education Needs (SEND) assessment and placement process and will also report on performance.

2.0 Context**2.1 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Population Demographics****Overall Picture**

- 2.2.1 Bury's school population is now experiencing falling rolls across the primary phase, although numbers remain strong across the secondary phase, these numbers will also begin to reduce by 2023. Despite this, the SEND population continues to grow.
- 2.2.2 Within the Bury school population, the January 2022 census showed that 17% of pupils have SEND (5,026 pupils). This was made up of 12.7% (3,713 pupils) who have their needs met at SEN Support level, and 4.5% of the school population who have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) (1,313 pupils) compared to 4% nationally.

Number of pupils with SEND in Bury schools (School Census)

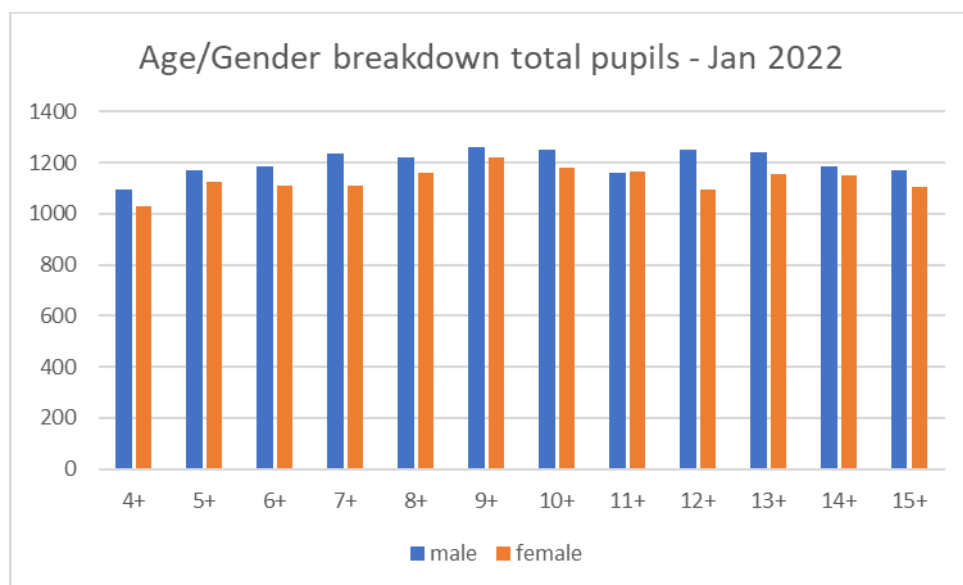
	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018	Jan 2019	Jan 2020	Jan 2021	Jan 2022
EHCP	1165	1088	1029	1000	1050	1131	1222	1313
SEN Support	3577	3711	3830	3649	3910	3957	3757	3713
All SEN	4742	4799	4859	4649	4960	5088	4979	5026
% ALL SEN	16.5%	16.4%	16.4%	15.6%	16.7%	17.1%	16.9%	17%

This table relates to pupils with SEND in Bury schools and does not include under 5's or post 16 or those children educated out of borough.

- 2.2.3 Between the January 2021 and January 2022 Census there was an increase in the number of pupils on Education, Health and Care plans of 91 which equates to 0.4% in line with the increase seen nationally. However, there was a reduction in pupils on 'SEN Support' whereas nationally there was a 0.1% increase.

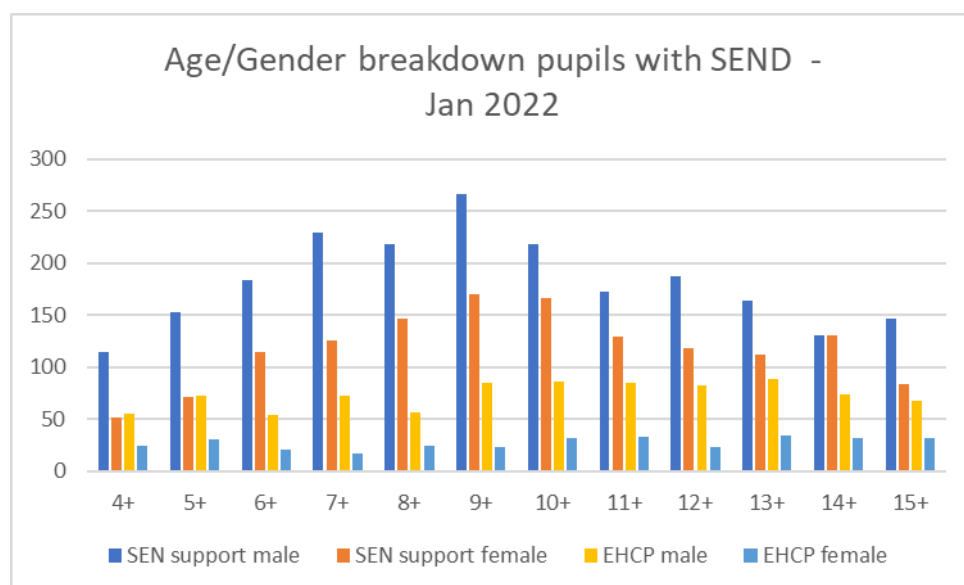
Age/Gender Split

Figure 2a: Age and gender of ALL pupils in Bury schools January 2022 School Census



2.2.4 Across all ages there are slightly more boys than girls in the school population, however as the table below shows this becomes more pronounced in the identification of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities with a greater proportion of boys having identified additional needs than girls. This follows the national trend.

Figure 2b: Age and gender of SEND pupils in Bury schools January 2022 School Census



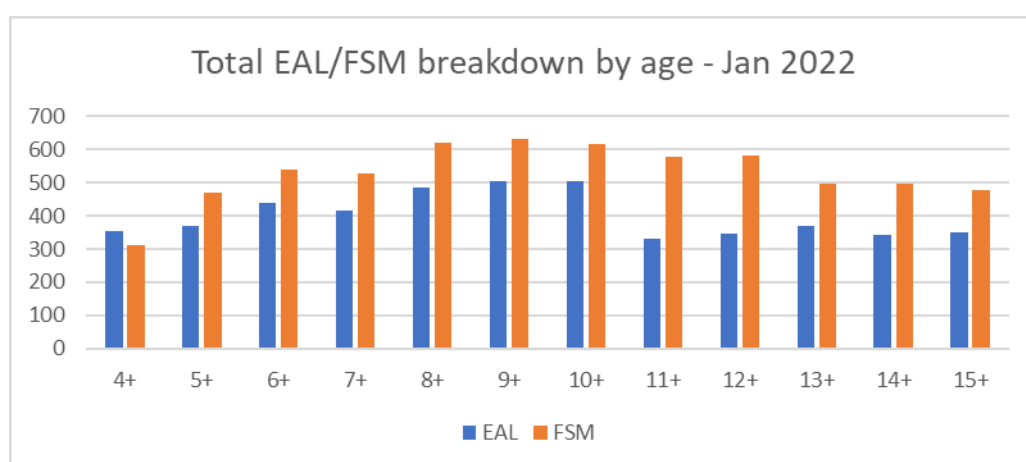
2.2.5 More boys than girls in Bury schools have SEND – 61% of the pupils at SEN Support level are boys and 74% at Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) level are boys. There is a similar picture nationally with 64.2% at SEN support and 73% at EHCP level.

2.2.6 Across all ages there are more boys on SEN support than girls; the highest numbers being at ages 6+, 8+ and 9+. The number of girls on SEN support increases steadily from age 4+ to 10+. Across all ages there are more boys on EHCPs than girls.

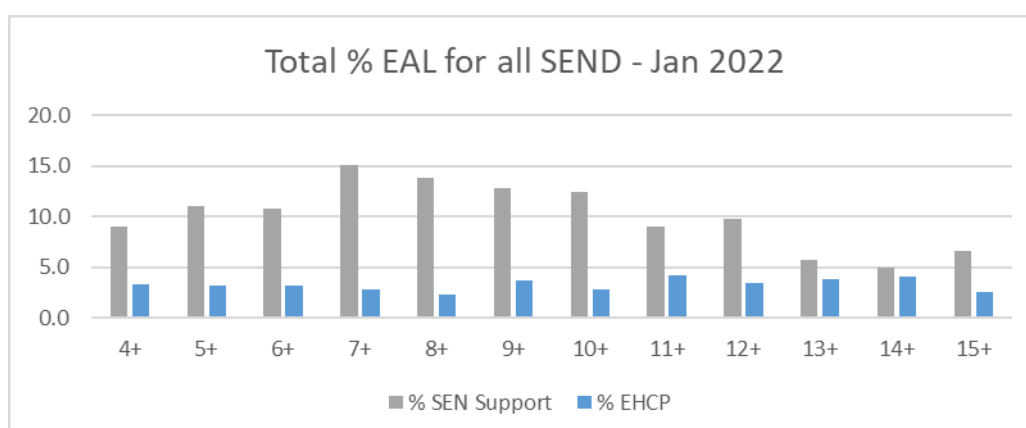
2.2.7 The age distribution of Bury pupils is also similar to the national picture, as higher cohorts of pupils are moving into upper primary and then progressing into secondary schools. All the figures in this section only show numbers in Bury schools, there are additional children and young people with identified SEND in Early Years settings, colleges and training provision and schools outside Bury.

Specific Cohort Characteristics

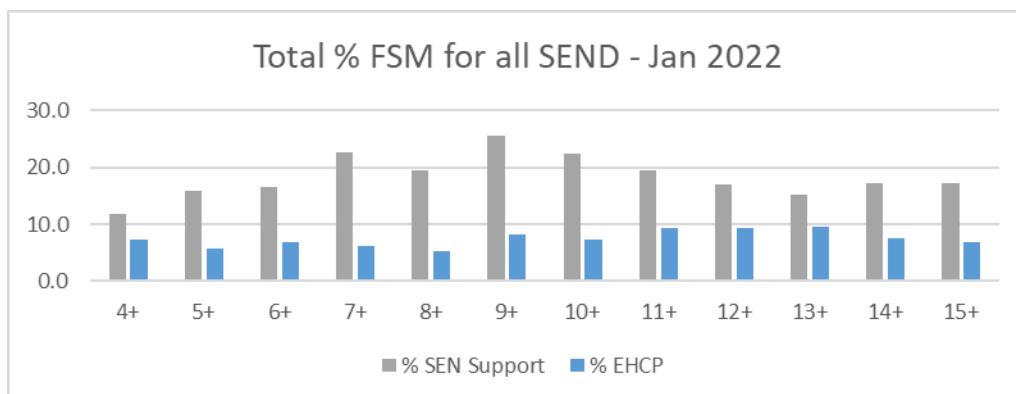
Figure 2c - English as an Additional Language and Free School Meals eligibility (Jan 22 census)



2.2.8 These tables show the percentages of pupils at SEN Support level and those with EHCPs who have English as an additional language (EAL) and who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM).



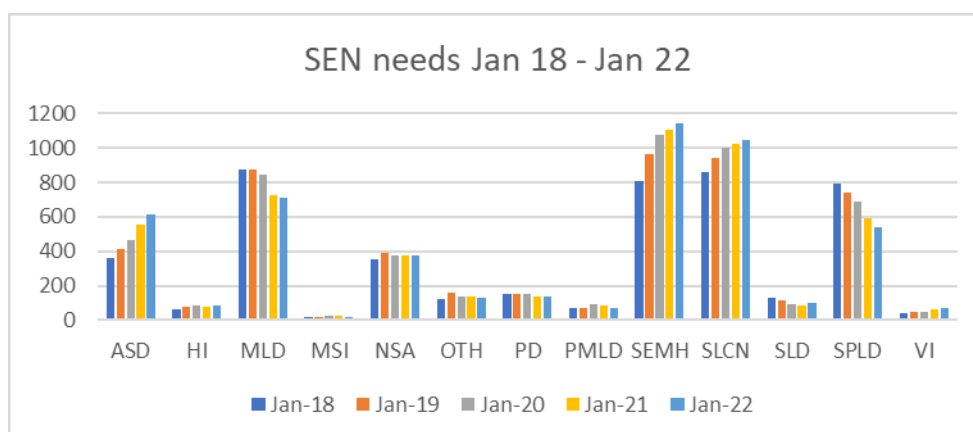
2.2.9 The majority of pupils with identified SEND have English as their first language. Bury pupils with SEND are less likely to have English as an additional language than those with no SEND. Nationally, pupils whose first language is English are also more likely to have SEND than those who have English as an additional language.



2.2.10 Bury pupils with SEND are more likely to be eligible for free school meals than those with no SEND. 32.2% of pupils at SEN Support and 39% at EHCP level are eligible for FSM, compared to 18% of pupils overall. Nationally 34.30% of pupils with SEN Support and 38.0% with EHCPs are eligible for Free School Meals compared with 20.8% of all pupils.

SEND Primary Need

Figure 2d - Number of pupils in Bury schools by SEND Primary Need



ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder; SLCN - Speech Language and Communication Needs

SEMH - Social, Emotional and Mental Health; PMLD - Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty

SLD - Severe Learning Difficulty; MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty; SPLD - Specific Learning Disability

PD - Physical Disability; MSI- Multi-Sensory Impairment; HI-Hearing Impairment; VI- Visual Impairment

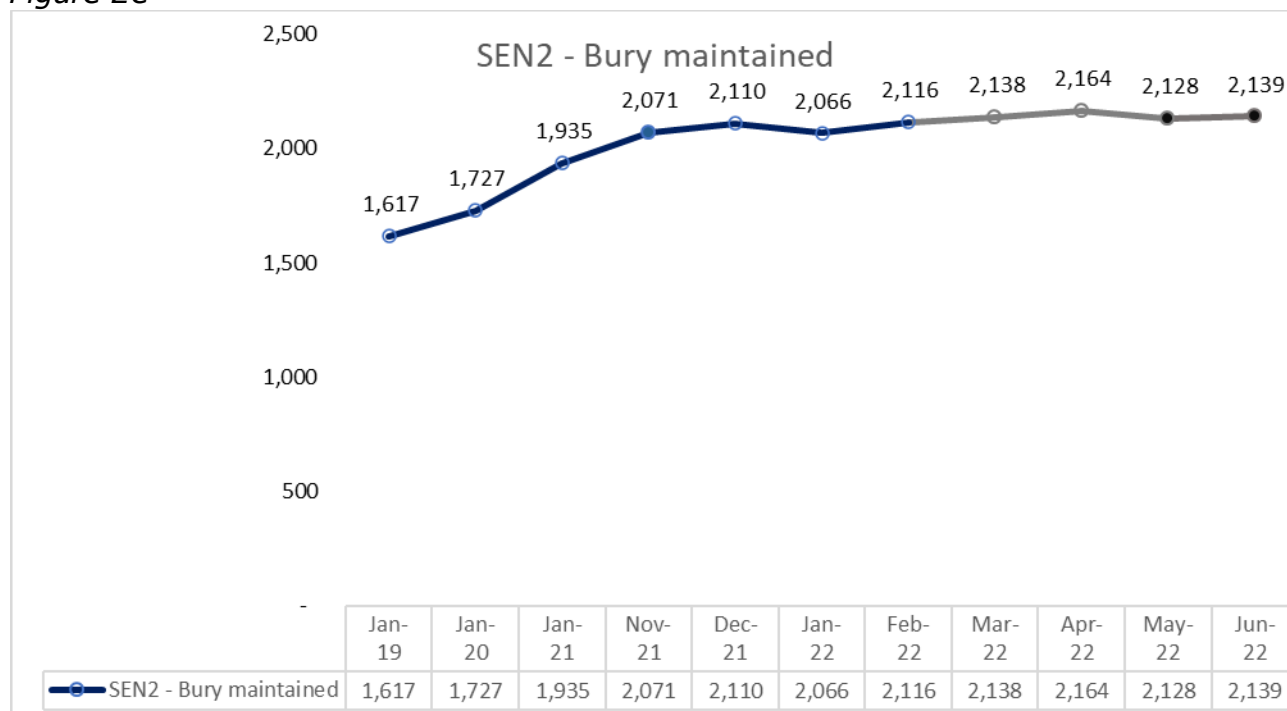
2.2.11 The types of primary need that are most common in Bury are social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) 23%; speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) 21%; moderate learning difficulties (MLD) 14.2%; specific learning difficulties (SPLD) 11% and autism (ASC) 12%. The increase in the number of EHCPs is mainly in the categories of ASC, SEMH and SLCN, which is in line with national trends. Nationally, the most common primary SEND need is ASC.

2.3 EHCP Demographics

Overall EHCPs

2.3.1 There has been a consistently high number and percentage of children in Bury with an EHCP over time and at a level that is higher than national, regional and statistical neighbour benchmarks; and the gap is increasing. Children and Young people with EHCPs attend provision in and outside Bury, in mainstream, special and independent settings, schools, colleges and training. The tables detail the demography of Bury's Children with EHCPs rather than the school population as in 2.2.19 to 2.2.21.

Figure 2e -

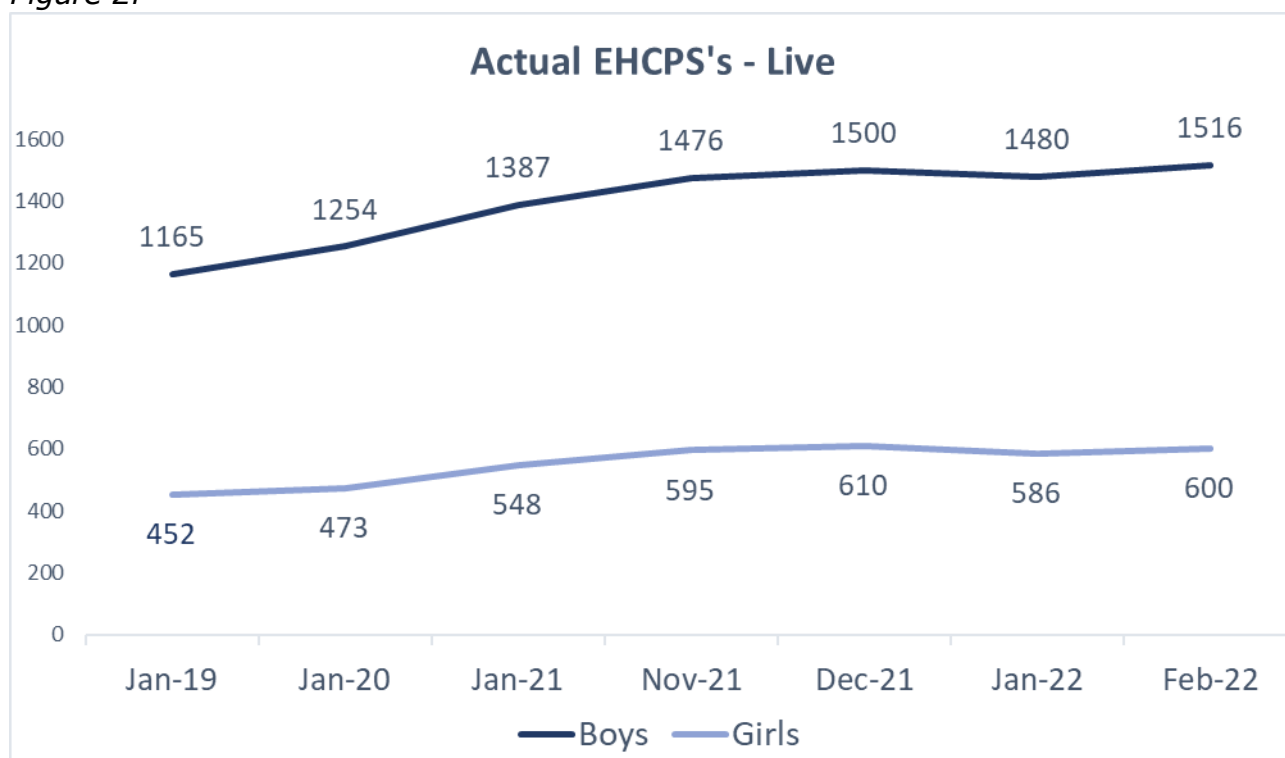


2.3.2 As at February 2022 Bury maintains 2116 EHCPs. This compares to 1617 EHCPs maintained in 2019. Though there has been 43% growth since 2017, for the period Jan 20 to Jan 21 the rate of increase was 12%.

Gender split

2.3.3 Over the last few years there has been a consistent pattern in the split of boys and girls with EHCPs. As at February 2022 approximately 72 % of EHCPs in Bury are for boys (and 28% of EHCPs are for girls). This compares with a national figure for boys of 73.1%.

Figure 2f -



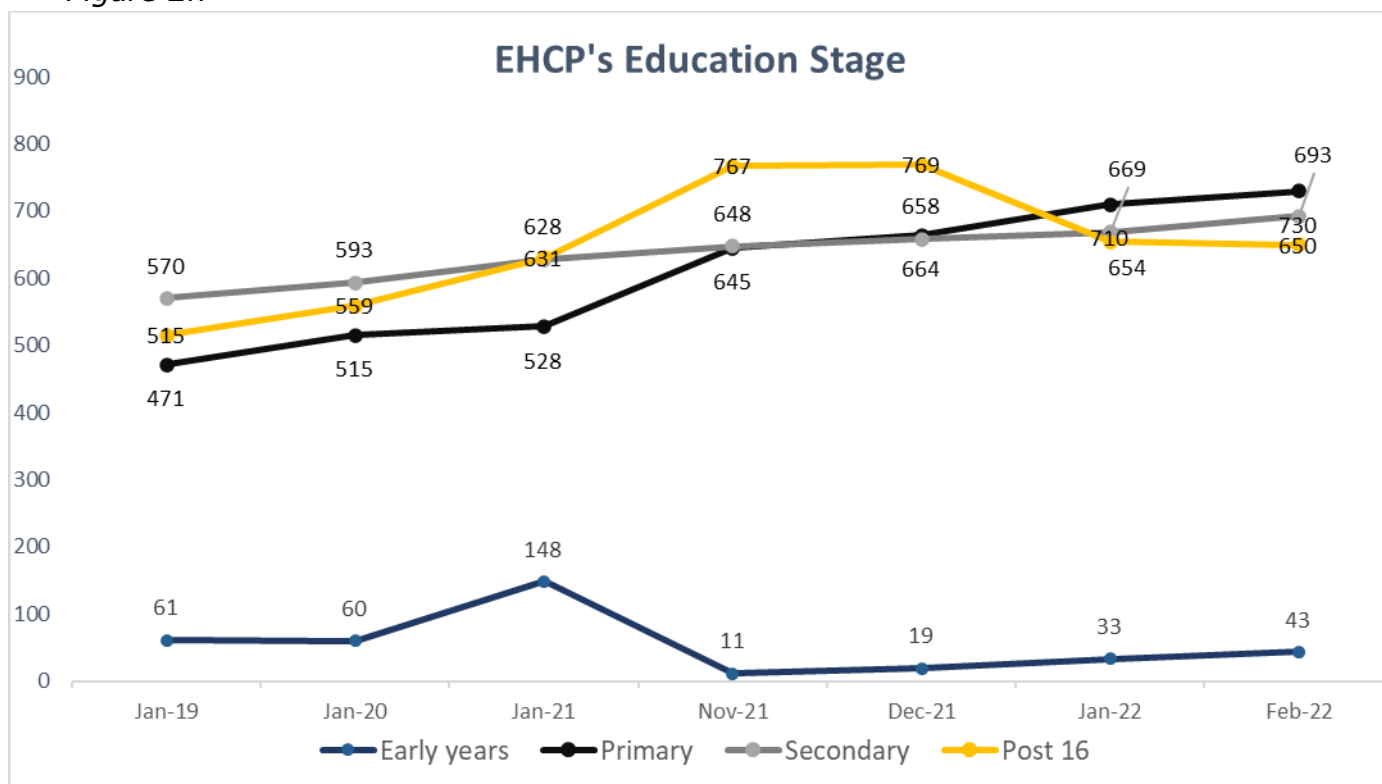
Educational stages

2.3.4 All education stages are showing an increase in the number of EHCPs. The exception is the EHCPs in post 16 (February 22), which has seen a reduction due to the number of ceased plans in the 16-25 age range.

Figure 2g : Age of Bury children and young people with EHCPs.

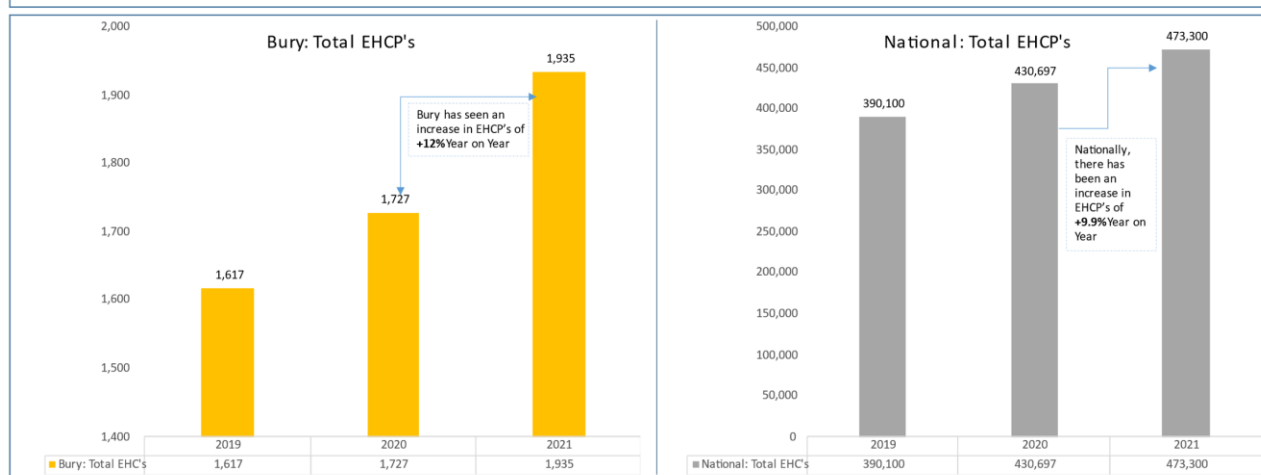
	Jan 19	Jan 20	Jan 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22
Under Age 5	61	60	148	11	19	33	43
Aged 5 – 10	471	515	528	645	664	669	693
Aged 11-15	570	593	628	648	658	710	730
Aged 16 – 25	515	559	631	767	769	654	650
Total	1617	1727	1935	2071	2110	2066	2116

Figure 2h -



2.3.5 The numbers of young people with EHCPs aged 20-25 have been increasing steadily. The number of children in the early years being assessed is also increasing and there has been a significant increase in the number of EHCPs required for under 5s.

5. Actual EHCPs: Breakdown | Bury Compared to National Data Total EHCP's



- Bury has seen an increase in EHC plans year on year at 12% in 2021, an increase in EHC plans is also seen nationally of 12%, thus indicating that Bury has had a higher rate of increase compared to national figures.

[Education, health and care plans. Reporting Year 2021](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/education-health-and-care-plans-reporting-year-2021) [More education statistics](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/education-health-and-care-plans-reporting-year-2021) [GOV.UK \(explore education statistics\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/education-health-and-care-plans-reporting-year-2021)

2.3.6 Bury has seen an increase in EHC plans year on year at 12% in 2021. This trend is consistent with a national increase of 9.9%, however Bury has had a higher rate of increase compared to national figures.

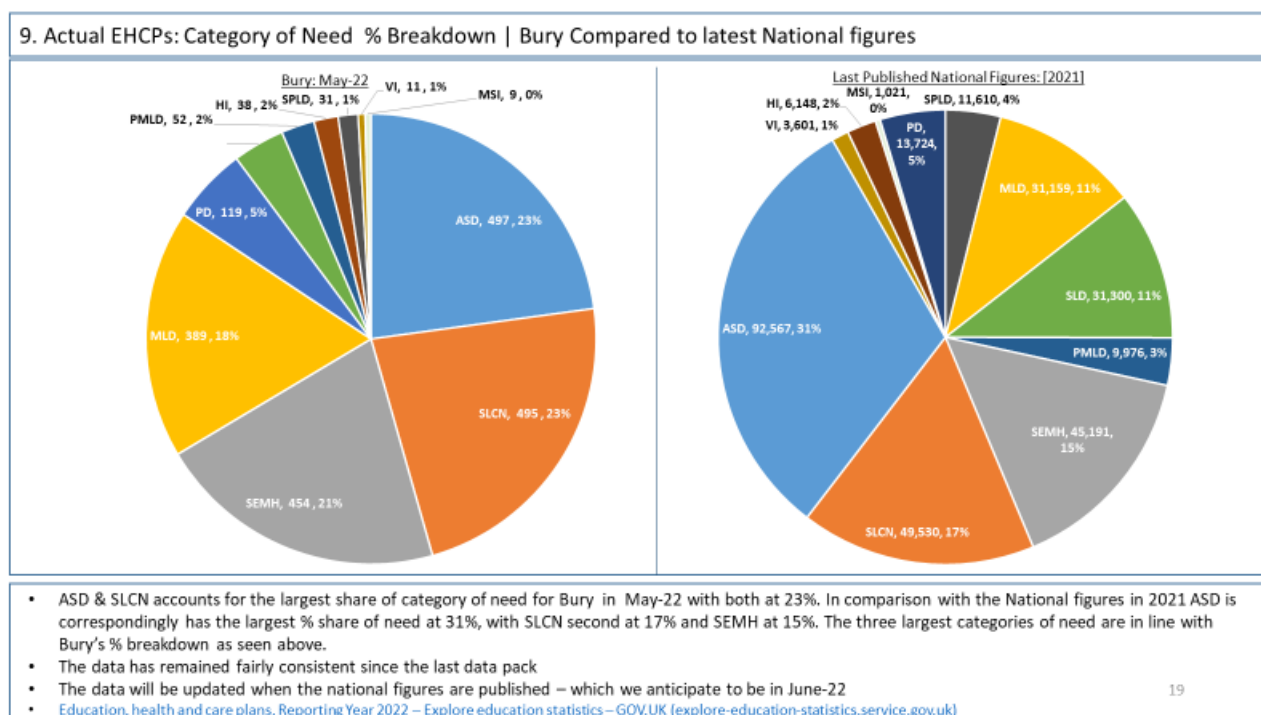
Category of Need

2.3.7 The three largest categories of need for Bury children and young people with an EHCP (Jan 22) are:

- Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC); Speech Language and Communication (SLCN); and Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH).
- ASC, SEMH and SLCN have shown an increasing pattern year on year whilst most other primary needs cohorts are relatively stable or declining.

2.3.8 The breakdown of primary need is shown in the chart below.

- ASC & SLCN accounts for the largest share of category of need for Bury in 2021 with both at 22%. Nationally ASC is 31% and SLCN at 17%
- SEMH and MLD are the next largest with both at 20%. There is a different picture nationally with SEMH at 15% and MLD 11%.



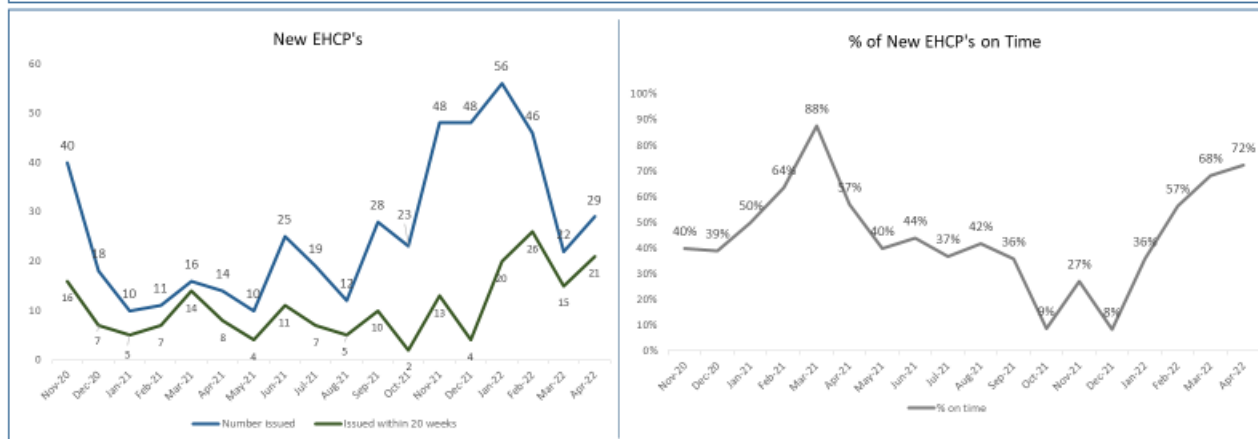
3.0 Progress Summary On Education Health and Care Plan:

3.1 Improving timelines

3.1.1 New EHCPs at 20 Weeks

Performance is improving, as evidenced by the progress which can be seen since Jan 2022 (see data pack slide 37). 72% of EHCPs were issued in time in April 2022. We expect this figure to go down while we train new staff. The cumulative figure remains at 54%.

33. New EHCP's & Timeliness at 20 Weeks



- Performance is improving, as evidenced by the positive uptick which can be seen in Jan-22 onwards at 36% to 72% of EHCP's issued in time in April-22. There have been points in the last 12 months where demand has been higher, but our timeliness has also been better.
- In 2021, Bury achieved 34% in timeliness with regards to EHCP's being issued within 20 weeks, this is a slight improvement from 27% in 2020. However there are already improvements being shown in this area in the last 4 months – we expect to see a much higher figure in the 2022 calendar year. In comparison to the national figures, the national timeliness for EHCP's being issued within 20 weeks is 58% in 2021 and 65% in the North-West.

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3.1.2 Positively, in the last three months we have seen a significant decrease in the number of plans issued beyond the 20-week timeframe and we can see a marked improvement in the waiting times for those that are late.

3.1.3 A significant backlog was cleared by March 2022. There is a risk that it may build again in the short term as we induct and train new staff. We are sourcing extra temporary staff to work alongside the team, for example a data entry clerk, to ease pressure points in the workstream and seek to mitigate the risk.

3.2 Capacity

3.2.1 Since March, we have appointed 13 members of staff to the EHC team. Three are currently onboarding, including the new Team Manager, who is expected to take up post July 2022. Michael Kemp, Strategic Lead for Inclusion and SEND joined Bury from Rochdale on 16th May 2022. A real strength within our recruitment has been that we have been able to employ some staff who have lived experience.

3.2.2 A comprehensive induction programme has been devised and is available for future joiners. Further onboarding training is being set up in response to feedback from the team. There is an induction folder on the shared drive for reference, which is also undergoing development.

3.2.3 We are now conducting a learning and development analysis that will shape our professional and personal development programme. Phase one of the plan writing training, supported by the DfE, took place in June. It is important to note that this training was undertaken with parents with live experience.

3.3 Improvements to the EHCP service

3.3.1 In addition to the performance improvements set out in 3.1.1, we have seen an increase in the number of requests for assessment, with an associated impact on the number of plans in progress. (There was a 29% increase in requests from 2020

(370) to 2021 (477)) This has been identified as a risk to performance and will continue to be monitored.

- 3.3.2 Bury has a higher-than-average level of parental requests. The new role of the assistant caseworker will be key to ensuring that schools and families are well served, and the impact can already be seen with positive anecdotal feedback. However, it is not yet reflected in the data as it is too early to measure the improvement.
- 3.3.3 There is a slight improvement in the number of draft plans issued over timescales but there is a drop in the overall number of draft plans issued in April 2022. We expect to improve this position over the next three months as our staffing levels recover.
- 3.3.4 The onboarding of new caseworkers and assistant caseworkers over the previous month has involved a focus on a quality induction, to build a positive team ethos, and to establish high expectations. Team members understand the importance of building constructive relationships and furthermore they recognise the need for a swift and seamless process, including what a good plan looks like and how Parent and Carers Preference should inform every decision.
- 3.3.5 During the next quarter, we will be co-producing the panel process, with particular emphasis on streamlining the arrangements to make sure they benefit families. We will be clarifying roles and responsibilities of partners. A revised EHCP template will be agreed. We are also working on developing the Bury EHC Plan model and associated processes and procedures. This will involve a re-examination of the pathway from the graduated approach and request for a statutory assessment, right through to the cessation of plans. This will ensure consistency across EHC planning and writing and will underpin the high standards we expect of the service. We will check the language and descriptors we use to make sure the right messages are conveyed. For example, a draft plan will be known as a summary of assessment. The process of quality assurance will also be reviewed, and roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined, including the role of key partners outside the team.

3.4 Transition arrangements

- 3.4.1 Almost all the transition reviews have been successfully completed on time. A few places are still to be arranged in partnership with parents/carers. There are approximately 20 outstanding post 16 transition plans. The outstanding plans are around the matching of provision with the young person and doing that in a person-centred way.
- 3.4.2 We are gathering feedback from families, schools, and settings to further improve this aspect of the service.

3.5 Children, young people, and families: experience and engagement

- 3.5.1 The recently established parent/carers surgeries with senior leaders and officers have been welcomed by parent representatives from Bury2gether and participants themselves. The surgeries provide opportunities to capture and act on issues at an early stage. Engagement with education providers is gaining traction through informal interaction. Formal meetings with SENCOs, Head Teacher networks, inclusion leads from regional colleges, school governors, key AP providers are planned to take place before the end of the summer term.

Lessons from these meetings will inform future adjustments to process and practice.

3.6 Review process

The ECHP process has been reviewed under the direction of the new strategic lead. Roles and responsibilities are now clearer with greater specificity. One senior caseworker will be responsible for assessment and the other for review.

3.7 Quality Assurance

Under the new arrangements, the EHC Manager post takes responsibility for overseeing QA. Quality Assurance is being built into the new process and overseen by the senior team.

The QA process is linked to tribunals and mediation, which will also be the responsibility of the EHC Manager.

3.8 Complaints and compliments

- 3.8.1 Although still too high, the number of complaints is reducing, and the nature of the concerns has changed. We no longer receive complaints about the attitude, tone or behaviour of team members. Most current complaints are about decisions or process.
- 3.8.2 We are focusing on improving the quality and timeliness of communication in response from families, schools and partners. The team is now ensuring that the SEN email account is monitored and responded to within 24 hours and phone calls are returned likewise. As a result, we have seen a reduction in communication-related complaints.
- 3.8.3 We have started to record compliments to help monitor progress and enable learning from good practice. Increasingly, parents are passing on compliments to team members about their experiences. We are recording these to help with learning and build resilience.
- 3.8.4 Bury2Togther are providing a number of real-life case studies to be used to support training and service development. Our approach is that we seek to undertake all training jointly with people with lived experience to support that learning.

3.9 Graduated Approach

- 3.9.1 Co-production activity for the content of the Graduated Approach document continues to be on track with the concluding section to be completed in the next half term. Web design is underway and a CPD package to support the autumn term launch is in the early stages of development. Early plans for launch are through an October Market Place event involving all partners along with further partner events across the academic year. Final drafting of the document is scheduled for August 2022.
This workstream links with developments to Future Provision in terms of its impact in reducing the demand on the need for local specialist placements. As the Graduated Approach and the supporting CPD programme are launched in

the autumn term, there will be a better co-ordinated and structured approach across all services to meet need earlier in mainstream schools, therefore reducing the demand on specialist services and specialist placements.

4.0 Priorities

4.1 Over the next three-six months the following priorities will be addressed. These are reflected in the PSV tracker and risk log.

1. Review and map the EHCP process from SEN support expectations and the graduated response through to cessation of plans. Include:
 - a. The role and purpose of panels
 - b. Commissioning of services
 - c. Roles and responsibilities within the team and with key partners in Health, Social Care, schools and settings, agencies and service providers in voluntary and private sectors.
 - d. All modes of communication with children and young people and their families.
2. Develop the workforce to:
 - a. Improve recruitment and retention
 - b. Embed multidisciplinary approaches and collaborative working practices across Health and Social Care
 - c. Develop a joint professional development programme across Children's Services
3. Develop coproduction with families and professionals to:
 - a. Embed person centred planning
 - b. Work as equal partners to design, plan deliver and review support and services
 - c. Improve outcomes for children and young people

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Bury is committed to a programme of transformation and is determined to continue its work on co-production with parents to improve both outcomes and the experiences of children, young people with SEND and their families. This includes a commitment to improve both the Education Health and Care Plan Assessment Process and the Review Process and to ensure that services work in a person centred way.
- 5.2 Although recent progress has been made in regard to statutory compliance there is still much to do to improve the EHCP process starting with advice, though parental experience to the plan process and the review process.
- 5.3 Workforce priorities include continuing recruitment, up skilling and stabilisation of the EHCP team to reduce reliance on agency staff. We remain committed to workforce development in regard to SEND around the whole workforce within the LA and partners.

- 5.4 The newly appointed leadership team needs time to impact and establish a multi-disciplinary approach.
- 5.5 We are committed to developing a 0-25 SEND offer which supports children and young people to access provision within borough wherever possible and to do this in partnership with parents, carers and stakeholders.

Glossary of terms

AP	Alternative Provision
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Condition
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CYP	Children & Young People
DfE	Department for Education
EHCP	Education Health & Care Plan
FSM	Free School Meals
HI	Hearing Impairment
HYM	Healthy Young Minds
INMSS	Independent and Non Maintained Special School
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulty
MSI	Multi-Sensory Impairment
OOB	Out of Borough places
PD	Physical Disability
PMLD	Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty
PSV	Project Safety Valve
QA	Quality Assurance
SEMH	Social Emotional and Mental Health
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs & Disabilities
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SLCN	Speech, Language & Communication Needs
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulty
SPLD	Specific Learning Disability
VI	Visual Impairment

List of Background Papers:

September 2021: Bury Council Annual Report on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. <https://councildecisions.bury.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=328&MIId=2958&Ver=4>

School Forum Reports on Project Safety Valve.

Summary slide deck: [PowerPoint Presentation \(bury.gov.uk\)](https://www.bury.gov.uk/)

Report: [Item 6 - Project Safety Valve - Schools' Forum report - January 2022 \(bury.gov.uk\)](https://www.bury.gov.uk/)

March 2022: Update Report on Special Educational Needs and Disability –
<https://councildecisions.bury.gov.uk/documents/s30541/Final%20Report%20on%20SEND%20March%202022%20V6.pdf>

Appendix 1:

<https://councildecisions.bury.gov.uk/documents/s30521/Appendix%20I.%20Project%20Safety%20Valve%20Update%20Report.%20March%202022.pdf>

Appendix 2:

<https://councildecisions.bury.gov.uk/documents/s30522/Appendix%20II%20.%20SEND%20Data%20February%202022.pdf>

Appendix 3:

<https://councildecisions.bury.gov.uk/documents/s30523/Appendix%20III.%20SEND%20Local%20Offer%20Newsletter%20March.pdf>

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Executive Director sign off Date:

JET Meeting Date:

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SCRUTINY REPORT

MEETING: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

DATE: June 2022

SUBJECT: Update on the Let's Do It for Children Improvement Plan

REPORT FROM: Councillor Lucy Smith, Cabinet member for Children and Young People

CONTACT OFFICER: Jeanette Richards, Executive Director, Children's Services

1.0 BACKGROUND

As agreed previously the aim of this paper is to update members of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee on the progress of the Let's Do It for Children Improvement Plan.

2.0 EXTERNAL SCRUTINY

- 2.1 Bury's Improvement plan received formal approval from Ofsted on 4 June 2022. There has since been further discussion in respect of the plan and progress during our Annual Conversation with Ofsted. The feedback from Ofsted was that we know the issues we need to progress, and Ofsted are assured that we have a plan to progress that is appropriately focused.
- 2.2 Bury Council Children's Services has been served with an improvement notice, by the Department for Education; because of this we receive 6 weekly reports written by our DfE (Department for Education) improvement lead and more detailed reviews every 6 months. This process provides a balance of support and challenge. The first 6-month review (undertaken by the Department for Education) took place on 25 and 26 May 2022. The team was comprised of our improvement advisor Linda Clegg, our DfE case officer Charlotte Harker and the regional DfE improvement Lead Kellie Knott.
- 2.3 The methodology included: meetings with stakeholders including partners, staff members, the leader of the council, the cabinet member for Children's Services and the CEO. They also observed social work practice.
- 2.4 The DfE reported back:
- that they had observed good quality of practice.
 - we have a highly engaged, motivated, loyal and committed workforce.
 - they could see improved morale and culture within the department.
 - there was a strengthened and visible leadership team, with staff reporting that they felt well supported.

- Work is ongoing to strengthen our communication with staff.
- There is still an over reliance on agency staff which is impacting on the quality of practice and the progression of plans for children and young people. The DfE acknowledged that we need to continue our focus on the recruitment and retention of staff
- There is further work to do to strengthen partnership working.

2.5 Ofsted are carrying out the first of their monitoring visits on 21 & 22 June 2022. The focus of this initial visit will focus on the front door of social care:

- The Multi agency Safeguarding Hub and the Initial Response Team and referrals to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer who deals with allegations professional abuse) and the response
- Workforce
- Supervision and management oversight and decision making
- Quality Assurance

2.4 Inspectors will also triangulate and consider:

- Performance management
- Supervision
- Quality Assurance
- The Impact of Leaders upon outcomes for children

3.0 LET'S DO IT FOR CHILDREN – CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR GOOD PRACTICE

3.1 The details of the report below outline our progress in creating the conditions for Good Practice

4.0 STRENGTHEN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MULTI-AGENCY GOVERNANCE, PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS AND THE SUPPORT PROVIDED TO CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

4.1 The Improvement Board continues to meet monthly.

4.2 The Independent Review of the BISP and our Governance arrangements by Jane Shuttleworth is progressing:

- A project plan has been established to achieve improved effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- With 7 workstreams – **The overall architecture**, the newly constituted executive has been established including key partners and this is meeting fortnightly.
 - BISP current existence to continue, with the new partnership to be meeting from September.
 - **Multi-agency strategies/policies and procedures** – including links to the community safety partnership and the impact of the Integrated Care System, we have the first draft of the revised threshold document for review by the executive.
 - **Knowing how well we are doing** – strengthening the Quality Assurance Framework, establishing a data set, drawing learning from case reviews, and establishing a learning plan. Following which this activity will be used to agree practice priorities.

- **Quality Assurance** – we continue to monitor the quality and impact of multi-agency teams such as MASH and the Complex Safeguarding team.
- **Training, learning and development**; we have incorporated a training review, and review of the website, establishing a communication plan.
- **Review of the Business management of the BISP**
- **Case Review activity** (Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, local reviews)

5.0 ESTABLISHING A STABLE AND EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT TEAM.

- 5.1 A priority has been covering the role of Assistant Director of Social Work Practice whilst engaging the right individual as a priority. To this end several CVs have been considered and on Monday 23 May 2022, Linda Evans joined the team as interim whilst recruitment to the substantive post was progressed.
- 5.2 Following a strong field of applicants, the recruitment process has been concluded with Sean Walsh being appointed to the role, Sean brings with him a proven track record in both leadership and transformation and will join the team in September 2022.
- 5.3 The newly appointed Strategic Lead for SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), Michael Kemp, joined us on 9 May 2022. Michael joins us with a proven record of accomplishment of effective service delivery across SEND.
- 5.4 The role of Principal Social Worker (PSW) is currently advertised, with dates arranged for interviews to take place on 5 July 2022.
- 5.5 The role of Principal Social Worker (PSW) is key to driving practice improvement and embedding a culture of learning and development. They will oversee the practice development team to support learning and development activity to further progress the development of the quality of practice.
- 5.6 Linda Clegg, our Independent Chair has met with Executive Directors and LGA (Local Government Association) Corporate Parenting Training is planned for Executive Directors and Elected Members in order that we ensure children are at the heart of the Council's Corporate planning.
- 5.7 A LGA peer review with a focus upon corporate parenting is to be commissioned for October 2022.
- 5.8 The Corporate Programme Management Team have been working with Strategic Leads to develop Service Plans which will direct the operational activity within services that follows from the Improvement plan.

6.0 BUILD A SKILLED, CONFIDENT AND EXPERIENCED WORKFORCE

- 6.1 Recruitment and retention - The proportion of agency staff has reduced from 40% to 34.5%.
- 6.2 We remain challenged by escalating pay rates for agency staff across the Northwest up to £60 per hour and this is a threat to recruitment and retention.

- 6.3 Baseline activity in relation to the financial remuneration of social work roles including team manager roles bases us as competitive, which is pleasing.
- 6.4 Following feedback from the workforce and baseline activity we have agreed and implemented the following incentives:
- Retention payments – a total of £2000 (£1000 payable at 12 months service & a further £1000 payable at 24 months service)
 - Free carparking
 - Payment of professional fees
- 6.5 We have established a rolling recruitment campaign which is now live with shortlisting and interview dates already set. This includes attendance at recruitment fairs and drop-in sessions.
- 6.6 We have achieved some success in attracting permanent members of staff
- 5 new employees in post since April 2022
 - 10 new employees currently progressing through pre-employment checks (including agency conversions):
 - 6 social workers
 - 2 Safeguarding Team Managers
 - 1 IRO
 - 1 EDT Practitioner
 - Recruitment for Social Workers, Principal Social Worker and Strategic Lead are ongoing at various stages.
- 6.7 We are working with colleagues in HR and finance to scope out a restructure of services that will provide sufficient capacity, improve spans of management control and develop areas of expertise.

7.0 STAFF ENGAGEMENT

- 7.1 A series of communications have been held with the Workforce, sharing the Improvement Plan following the approval from Ofsted. These have been positively received.
- 7.2 Our Voice of the Workforce Board is meeting regularly and fortnightly updates to staff from the EDCS (Executive Director of Children's Services) have commenced to ensure all staff are kept up to date with priorities and progress within the Department.
- 7.3 **Exit Interviews** have been completed with permanent staff leaving the service between April and June 2022 to understand the reasons for staff leaving:
- 2 staff have retired after over 30 years of practice in Bury
 - 3 staff left for their work life balance / personal development
 - 1 member of staff left to move to agency as the payments are more attractive
 - 1 member of staff left for a change in career
 - 6 staff felt well supported by staff and colleagues and 4 would return to Bury if their personal circumstances changed

8.0 IMPROVE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT, QUALITY ASSURANCE & MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS TO DEVELOP AND SUPPORT GOOD SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE / IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF PRACTICE

- 8.1 There is ongoing quality assurance activity focusing on the core components of practice. A sample of our audits are currently being moderated by an independent auditor.
- 8.2 Audits show some improvements in practice; risks are identified, and thresholds overall are appropriately applied. There are improvements in the timeliness of referrals and initial assessment of risk. There is evidence of improved practice in terms of capturing the voice of the child. Assessments contain the views of children. Similarly, there are improvements in building relationships with family and in ensuring that parents and carers views are captured in assessments and plans. There have been improvements in supervision and management oversight. 30% of audits are judged to be good or better, 50% of audits are judged to be Requires Improvement, 20% are judged to be Inadequate, this is demonstrating an improved practice. Moderation of audits has resulted in changes to 12% of the cohort which indicates that managers are developing audit skills and overall, we understand what good looks like.
- 8.3 The audit moderation process includes individual one to one feedback to auditors and the learning from audits is discussed with individual staff and wider learning is disseminated across the service to drive forward improvements
- 8.4 Regular dip sampling of case records is also completed across the service and regular multi-agency sampling of contacts into the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) has been established.
- 8.5 MASH and the Contextual Safeguarding Team (CST) have now co-located back to the police station.
- 8.6 We have agreement from the DfE (Department for Education) to progress sector led improvement support through Essex Council to progress our plans for an Edge of Care Team.
- 8.7 Establishing an effective and evidenced based model of practice is key to providing the framework for social work practice that enables change. Following consultation with key partners, discussion between the Executive Director of Childrens Services and the DfE, a business case has presented to the executive and recommendations supported to seek approval from Cabinet to implement the Hertfordshire Family Safeguarding Model of Practice.
- 8.8 This model of practice has been identified because of its strong evidence base around effective interventions with families who experience the trio of complexities – parental mental health, parental substance misuse, and where domestic abuse is a feature of family life.
- 8.9 The model has been independently evaluated in terms of positive outcomes achieved for children and families and a strong evidence base around cost avoidance.

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Draft Agenda Plan 2022/23 – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting	Deadline for submission of advance questions from Members	Agenda Publication Date	Deadline for reports to DS	Agenda Set Meeting (TBC)	Items for the Meeting/Theme	Officers/Cabinet Member
30.06.2022	28.06.2022 (10AM)	22.06.2022	17.06.2022 (12 NOON)	14.06.2022	Overview on SEND Green Paper Progress update on Service Delivery for Education, Health and Care Plans Children Social Care Improvement Plan	
22.09.2022	20.09.2022 (10AM)	14.09.2022	12.09.2022 (12 NOON)	06.09.2022	Improvement Plan	
24.11.2022	22.11.2022 (10AM)	16.11.2022	11.11.2022 (12 NOON)	08.09.2022	Improvement Plan	
02.02.2023	31.01.2023 (10AM)	25.01.2023	20.01.2023 (12 NOON)	17.01.2023	Improvement Plan	
07.03.2023	03.03.2023 (10AM)	27.02.2023	23.02.2022 (12 NOON)	20.02.2023	Improvement Plan	

To be added:

Update on Foster Carers

Education White Paper and Next Steps

Note:

*The Committee have agreed to look at holding themed meetings to concentrate on particular subject areas. Items for future meetings will be discussed with Chair and Exec Director and confirmed by the Committee at each meeting.

*Implement an Improvement Plan with progress of implementation to be monitored by the Council's Children's Scrutiny Committee as a standing agenda item until the completion of all actions.