

Public Questions March Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

1. As you all know I am a long-standing advocate for children with SEND and their families. In December 2021 I asked Isobel to open a SEND Hub for families to help them navigate the complex systems and processes that are widely experienced, with the support of those services that could help. Despite the threats of the former health secretary, which are very concerning to me, can we have a commitment from the leaders of Bury Council that a SEND Hub will be created for the families in our area and when can this be implemented.

Response Councillor Smith advised that we require extra money from Government to be able to deliver this; however, we do have the Parent and Carer Hub which we have supported to open as opposed to a Hub. Alongside this offer we do have sessions where the public can attend and speak to a Council Officer directly regarding your individual cases. Isobel Booter, Director of Education and Skills advised that conversations regarding a Hub did happen around a local offer hub and a SEND hub, and there were two different meanings of what a SEND Hub was. Current offers to parents are the Bury2gether local offer hub, short breaks and SEND. We would be open to exploring and having conversations, but we would need to find funding streams. – Kiera Delaney

2. The question relates to my daughter who attends a SEND School and travels with a Local Authority Escort who also works at the same school. I made a complaint regarding this matter which resulted in a safeguarding investigation and my complaint was upheld. As a result, the staff member was required to do their safeguarding and GDPR training. The staff member was placed back on transport following the investigation. As a result my child has not been to school in over 10 weeks, as a parent working full time I am having to work from home with a six year old. The local authority have not provided any alternative provision during this time and neither have they provided alternative transport to the school. I have started pre-court action and intend to pursue this until I receive acceptable action, whilst this has been ongoing the school have advised they cannot meet my daughters needs and wish to change her EHCP. However, her EHCP should not be changed to meet needs of a School, setting, building or staff. Instead, the child should be placed in a school which is able to deliver the provision set out in section F of her EHCP. I've been advised by the Local Authority to look at alternative specialist placements, but they have then had discussions with the original school and suggest she can return. We are now confused as no proposals have been made to resolve the transport issue either. I want to know how long I should keep waiting, should I quit my job to stay at home with my child like hundreds of parents throughout Bury. I now have a six-year-old who refused to leave the house and is scared of going back to that school yet the Local Authority is pushing her to go back to a place where everyday she is feeling traumatised. My daughter has a right to education and the longer she is left at home the longer she is refusing to leave the house. I feel over the last 18 months I have had nothing but issues with the SEND team and have been subjected to my daughters data being breached and leaked and a whistle-blower that targeted me across social media and now safeguarding issue and what will be done to resolve this.

**Due to safeguarding the names of the mother and child have been removed from the webcast and minutes.

Response – Councillor Smith advised she will speak outside of the meeting with the member of the public regarding the personal matters raised and investigate the matter. Jeanette Richards added that we are in a process and have accepted apologies from Michael Kemp, and as we are in the process it is not appropriate to discuss the matters you have set out, but Jeanette wanted to provide assurances to the member of the public and the Committee is that conversations will take place outside of this meeting.