



Cannock Chase Clinical Commissioning Group
East Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
North Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
South East Staffordshire and Seisdon Peninsula Clinical Commissioning Group
Stafford and Surrounds Clinical Commissioning Group
Stoke-on-Trent Clinical Commissioning Group

Staffordshire Local Area Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Accelerated Progress Plan

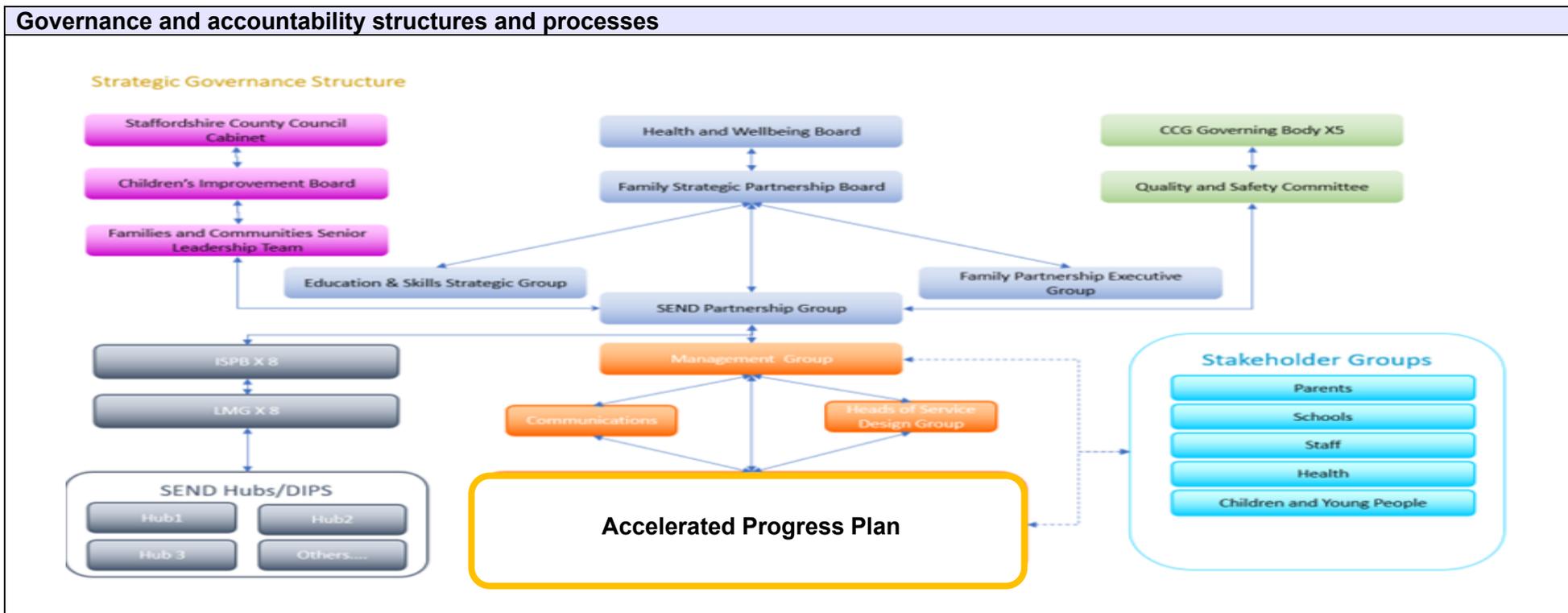
1st April 2022

Annex A: Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) for a Local Area following the judgement by Ofsted/CQC that sufficient progress had not been made against the weaknesses outlined by the Inspection

Name of the Local Area	Staffordshire
Date of Inspection	18 th – 20 th January 2022
Date of Publication of the revisit report	25th February 2022
Accountable Officers from the LA and CCG	Helen Riley & Heather Johnstone
SEND and NHS England Advisers	Pat Tate & Deborah Ward

Governance and Accountability

Please describe here the governance and accountability structures and processes that will be supporting your next phase of improvement. Please make clear which are information/reporting lines and where the challenge accountability sits within both the Local Authority and the CCG.



The Accelerated Progress Plan is a key component in the overall SEND Action plan for Staffordshire. As such, the SEND Partnership Group will oversee the implementation of the Accelerated Progress Plan. Following the re-inspection, current practice has been reviewed and a single workstream has been created to focus on the APP which will report to the SEND Partnership Group.

The focus of this plan is each area of weakness from the original inspection where, in the revisit, Ofsted/CQC have judged that sufficient progress has not been made. For each weakness, you should identify:

- *The actions you are taking to achieve improvement.*
- *The timescales for completing actions*
- *The KPIs that you will use to measure the success/impact of the actions.*

Staffordshire Accelerated Progress Plan & Risk Register



Staffordshire APP
Excel.xlsx

Annex B: Supporting statement for the Accelerated Progress Plan

The detail of the factors accounting for insufficient progress and how we are addressing or intend to address these are set out below.

The Local Authority (LA) and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are committed to moving forward at pace to secure the improvements necessary to provide high quality services for our children, young people and families. The overriding objective being to establish and then maintain effective arrangements for meeting the needs of children and young people from birth to age 25 with special educational needs which enable them to achieve their potential. This is evidenced through the latest LA strategic plan which recognises, as one of the five priorities, the delivery of our SEND Strategy as a key priority to:

“Offer every Staffordshire child and young person the best start in life, and the chance to achieve their potential”

The Ofsted/CQC SEND revisit inspection identified two areas in which we have not made sufficient progress: quality of EHCPs and coproduction. Ofsted/CQC recognised that since the initial inspection, whilst there have been improvements at a strategic level, these have not impacted on the lived experience of children, young people, and families. We recognise this and view the Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) as an opportunity to meaningfully address this concern so that improvements are evident in the experience of children, young people and families.

Coproduction

Our journey towards true co-production has been challenging in Staffordshire. Whilst the partnership between SCC and the CCG has been strengthened, the relationship and meaningful communication with our parents and carers has at times been challenging. This has impacted on our ability to effect meaningful change and develop our delivery of coproduction. Significant improvements in the culture of inclusion have been a priority and we have sought to put in place the conditions for meaningful engagement with children, young people, and families. We are working closely with a newly constituted formal Parent Carer Forum (PCF) who are committed to ensuring that parents and carers across Staffordshire have a mechanism for ensuring their voice is heard. Part of this joint activity is the continuation of the work we have started with our PCF to ensure that they are represented at all levels of the governance structure

We have also adopted the coproduction principles shared by 'Contact a Family' and will continue to embed these as we develop the Staffordshire principles (a key action from the APP).

In relation to our work directly with children and young people, we have secured representation from CYPF Voice Steering Group who are now supporting the local area through the consultation and engagement with young people with SEND. This work will ensure the voice of children and young people is heard at a strategic level, and that their views are taken into account in improving/developing services and the wider support offer.

Our work around coproduction is also clearly reflected in the methodology we adopted in the development of the APP. The plan positioned the voice and partnership of all stakeholders, including families at the centre of our work. The APP was formulated using a 'Task and Finish Group' approach. The group included representatives from the PCF, SENDIASS, schools, CCG, Social Care and LA officers. This Task Team worked together to develop the actions that form the basis of our APP. This methodology used a three-level iterative process in which a range of multiple voices were able to be captured, thematically analysed (Braun and Clarke, 2006) and formulated into actions and outcomes. These themes and outcomes were returned to the task group, sense checked and then returned for a final time for APP sign off.

Our efforts to ensure true coproduction features in all our work across both areas of focus in the APP. In addition to being a discrete area for focus, we have ensured that coproduction and the development of holistic outcomes are a core part of our plans to address the second area of improvement, the quality of Education, Health and Care Plans.

Quality of Education, Health and Care Plans

The local area revisit inspection concluded that the quality of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) is poor. We acknowledge that, although actions within the Written Statement of Action (WSOA) were completed, we have not made sufficient progress in this area. These actions had not yet impacted on the lived experience of children, young people and families.

At the point of the initial inspection, data indicated that timeliness of issuing plans within the statutory timeframe was above the national average. This has now significantly declined, and it is acknowledged that the focus on the drive to improve timeliness has

compromised efforts to ensure the quality of plans. The move to a new Locality Operational Model (LOM) has also delayed progress in this area as colleagues grappled with new roles, responsibilities, and ways of working.

The Accelerated Progress Plan sets out a bold, aspirational, and realistic method to both improve the quality and timeliness of statutory advice but to also locate the voice of the child, young person and their family at the centre of this work. A key component of this work will be a redesigned and improved EHCNA pathway that will enable true co-production based on the principle of holistic outcomes. We will work towards ensuring that there is a team around the child approach, as part of the graduated response. This will ensure a pre-statutory focus on holistic outcomes that are meaningful for the individual child, young person, and family. We have also made structural changes as part of the Children's Transformation to ensure that the responsibility for Quality Assurance (QA) for SEND will move to the Performance, QA, and Engagement Team.

Our Plan for Support and Challenge

In Staffordshire we understand that effective support and challenge are both internally and externally located. Internally, we are embedding a culture of learning and improvement across the Children & Families Directorate. As such, the APP will be the key element of delivering wider improvement plans within the SEND service in Staffordshire. In order to support our efforts to maintain our focus, we are requesting the specialist support of the Corporate Change Team to support with critical projects and pieces of work with significant transformational elements which impact a wide range of our services.

A key component in how we seek support and challenge will also be seen in our partnership working approach. Projects and task groups will be expected to be open systems in which there is a restorative culture where progressive challenge is modelled and encouraged. We are also working significantly more closely with the Parent Carer Forum (PCF) and Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Information Advice & Support Service (SENDIASS). These partners feature strongly in the APP and will be key contributors to major actions in the plan. A key task in the APP is to agree with the PCF where, when, and how they will be involved with service design, improvement and governance and implement a plan to deliver this involvement.

At a national and regional level, we are embarking on an ambitious and exciting piece of work with the Child Development Council and regional SEND partnership group on activity specifically focussed on exploring and measuring the impact of our work on outcomes for children and young people. This will provide an additional level of challenge and support for both areas of focus in our APP.

We have valued the support and reflective space provided during the development of the APP by senior officers from the DfE and NHS England. We will continue to require, seek, and value this support as we implement and monitor our APP.

How we will measure our impact (Data Dashboard)

We are aware that the lived experience of our children, young people and families is a key indicator for the impact of our activities. Where epistemologically appropriate, we have quantified an impact against a given action using an interval measure such as a percentage indicator. For some actions, the performance indicator will be framed more appropriately as a nominal measure (i.e., commenced, established, completed).

For each of the pieces of work outlined in the APP, the first activity will be for the working groups to determine the baseline position we are working at currently. This may be based on performance data, feedback from quality assurance or feedback from engaging with our children, young people, families, and stakeholders. As we progress through the plan, we will use intelligence from our SEND Power BI dashboard (see appendix 1 for examples) - which will be further developed as part of this action plan, information from the auditing of EHC plans, annual reviews and professional advice, and feedback from engagement activity to measure our improvement. We plan on adopting a flexible approach and will use the latest intelligence to inform any requirements to modify our plan as we progress.

Reference:

Braun, V., Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3: 77-101

How we will ensure that partners, including families, are fully aware and kept informed of our actions and progress:

In addition to existing methods of sharing information, we have taken further steps to ensure that partners, including families are kept fully aware and informed of our actions and progress. The APP and subsequent activity, updates and progress will be shared at the following:

- Newly launched Termly SEND Newsletter

- Parent Carer Forum
- County Special Needs Coordinator Termly Meeting
- Locality Hubs
- Headteacher briefings (School's Bag)
- Children's Improvement Board
- Prosperous Staffordshire Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Updated on the Local Offer
- Families and Communities Senior Leadership Team
- County Council Senior Leadership Team
- Clinical Commissioning and Executive Committee
- Family Strategic Partnership Board

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