



# Local Area Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) Improvement Plan 2025-2028



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<b>Version</b>	<b>Final</b>

## A Children and Young People's Plan – Working Together to Make a Difference for Every Child in Westmorland and Furness

Our ambition is for Westmorland and Furness to be a great place to live, work and thrive; a place where there are opportunities for all children and young people to live happy healthy lives, safeguarded from harm in the place they call home and within their community. Our Local Area Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) plan is a vital part of making this happen for all children and young people including those with identified SEND.

We are ambitious for all our children – we want to provide the right support for them to start well, to both learn and train well in excellent local settings, with the aim of young people becoming confident adults contributing to society as global citizens. Every child is unique and precious; our role is to value and advocate for all our children, working in partnership with their families so that together they play an active part in the decisions that affect their lives.

It is our belief that we are most effective when we work together using a holistic approach across all sectors to make things happen more quickly for the common good.

As leaders and service providers, we recognise the increasing complexity and challenge that we are facing and remain committed to delivering consistently good statutory services. To achieve this, we will make sure we have the capacity to deliver what we say we will do, by aligning resources and working through our collective structures.

This plan includes themes to address key priorities identified through the Ofsted/CQC SEND Partnership inspection (February 2025):

1. That leaders across the partnership improve communication to professionals, parents and carers, and children and young people and that their strategies, actions, and available services should be better understood, further developing trust in the SEND system.
2. That waiting times for neurodevelopmental assessments are reduced.
3. That leaders continue to strengthen the systems and processes to further improve the quality of children and young people's EHC plans, including updates following annual reviews.
4. Area leaders should strengthen multi-agency working across the partnership, between education, health and social care, so that children and young people's needs are identified and assessed in a more efficient and timely manner.

### Principles and Approach

We will continue to be inclusive of the whole system, entrusting others to lead work on our behalf and respecting both our collective responsibility and individual accountability.

We will work with energy and courage, to make a difference for our communities and their children. Through our collective leadership, shared passion, and commitment we will:

- Be proactive, innovative, and collaborative

- Reflect our diversity and uniqueness
- Be inclusive, providing equity and equality
- Learn from each other and share what works best

## Governance and oversight

Progress on the actions in the plan will be monitored regularly by the SEND Partnership Board. Further progress reporting will be provided to DMT, DfE, Cabinet, the Health and Well-being board and subject to the children and young people scrutiny committee.

The Improvement Plan will be managed by the identified lead from the Local Area SEND Partnership to ensure progress and timely delivery of the milestones set out in sections 1 – 4. Where required facilitate focused task groups.

A full annual review of this plan will take place each year to ensure the plan remains focussed, on track and is adapted to address any emerging needs.

Progress reporting:

Status	Progress against timescale
Grey	Action not started
Blue	Action completed and signed off
Green	Action on target
Amber	Action delayed and likely to miss completion deadline
Red	Action significantly delayed and has missed completion deadline (new completion deadline date required)

## Sections

Section	Area for Improvement	Pages
1	<b>Effective Communications</b> Develop effective communication across all partners, so that strategies and actions are understood, building trust across the SEND system and ensuring a relevant and useful Local Offer.	5 - 10
2	<b>Neurodevelopmental Assessment Waiting Times</b> Ensure waiting times for neurodevelopmental assessments are reduced, and that needs led support services are routinely available and accessible to families, including those who may be waiting for an assessment.	11 - 16
3	<b>EHC Plan Quality</b> Strengthen systems and processes to further improve the quality of Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans, including updates and annual reviews, so that EHC plans remain relevant and up to date and includes relevant information from and health and social care partners.	17 - 20
4	<b>Multi-agency Working</b> Strengthen multi-agency working across health, education and social care to ensure the needs of children and young people are identified and assessed in an efficient and timely manner.	21 - 28

# SECTION 1

## Effective Communications

### Area for improvement

Develop effective communication across all partners, so that strategies and actions are understood, building trust across the SEND system and ensuring a relevant and useful Local Offer.

### What good looks like

- An effective communications strategy, and operational plan is in place and understood by all.
- All contact with services receives a timely and appropriate response ensuring families feel valued and listened to.
- A strong partnership with all stakeholders is in place with coproduction embedded across the partnership.
- The partnership will seek to gain the voice of the child or young person at every opportunity, and this will be evident across all areas of work.
- An effective and active Parent Carer Forum is in place.
- There is a comprehensive local offer which provides relevant support and activities to children, young people and their families.
- This offer is clearly articulated on the published Local Offer which provides a dynamic resource that is easy to use and signposts children, young people and their families to services and activities which will support and guide them.

### How do we know? (Success criteria)

#### Quantitatively

- Social media engagement and follower statistics will be in line with that experienced in neighbouring Local Authorities.
- Young People trained as 'Local Offer Ambassadors'.
- Regular attendance of Parent Carer representatives at SEND working groups and strategic meetings.
- Feedback metrics from surveys improved satisfaction.

## **Qualitatively**

- Local Offer Review Board.
- Local Offer Drop Ins – for parents and professionals.
- Young people and parents trained as 'Local Offer Ambassadors'.
- Feedback from EHC plan survey and Family Conversation is positive and provides direction for further improvement.
- Parental survey shows increased satisfaction.
- Professionals survey shows increased satisfaction.
- Targeted feedback from parents and carers demonstrates that they feel listened to and are responded to in a timely manner.
- Relationships are developed with new and existing groups of children and young people in schools and in the community.
- There is equity in numbers between reps on the Management Committee living in Cumberland and living in Westmorland & Furness.

## **Interdependencies with other plans**

- Coproduction charter
- Engagement strategy
- Local Offer Delivery Plan
- Service Level Agreement with Parent Carer Forum
- Children and Young People Participation Plan

**1a.** Develop clear and meaningful communications with parents, carers, young people and professionals so that strategies are better understood, further building trust and faith

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
<p>A. Review current methods of communication and develop an overarching communications strategy to meet the needs of all stakeholders, including children, young people and their families.</p> <p>B. Deliver effective communications that engage and support families and offers a consistent level of service from first contact.</p> <p>C. Develop the coproduced engagement plan, working in tandem with our customer service charter and incorporating the children and young people’s participation plan, to ensure it remains dynamic and agile to further build relationships and meet the needs of parents, carers and Children and Young People.</p>	<p>SEND Partnership &amp; Improvement Manager</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Jul 2025:</b> An agreed and live engagement plan clearly maps out planned engagement activities with opportunities to engage with Elected Home Education (EHE) and Education Otherwise Than at School (EOTAS) included.</li> <li>2. <b>Sep 2025:</b> A coproduced communications approach is agreed with all stakeholders and a communications charter is developed.</li> <li>3. <b>Sep 2025:</b> Review each of our customer journey pathways, to ensure consistent standards are in place.</li> <li>4. <b>Jan 2026:</b> A roll out of the communications approach with all stakeholders, including families.</li> <li>5. <b>Jun 2026</b> (quarterly reviews following this): Programme of review established to ensure that the communications approach remains valued, valid and effective.</li> </ol>	

**1b. Ensure coproduction is central to all we do**

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
<p>A. Continue to develop the engagement of children and young people through a SEND Children and Young People Network.</p> <p>B. Meet with Children and Young People in their already established groups half termly, building relationships and ensuring they have a voice in all services being developed.</p>	<p>SEND Partnership &amp; Improvement Manager</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Sep 2025:</b> Meet with all groups of Children and Young People in education, out of education and within the community every half term.</li> <li>2. <b>Jan 2026:</b> Develop Young People to capture peer voice.</li> <li>3. <b>Dec 2025:</b> Celebration event twice per year (summer/Christmas) to bring these Children and Young People together and show them what and how they're influencing their own services.</li> </ol>	

**1c. To increase the membership and partnership with our parent carer forum, SENDAC**

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
<p>A. Develop our partnership with SENDAC to ensure effective working relationships.</p> <p>B. Increase membership of the Parent Carer Forum, ensuring clear representation from parents and carers across Westmorland &amp; Furness.</p> <p>C. Coproduce an agreement between the LA and the Parent Carer Forum which sets out expectations and goals with a view to developing a Service Level Agreement between the two groups.</p> <p>D. To work with Contact Parent Carer Forum and other parent carer forums to share good practice, and further develop our Parent Carer Forum.</p>	<p>SENDAC Chair</p> <p>SEND Partnership &amp; Improvement Manager</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Jun 2025:</b> Representation in Parent Carer forum from all age groups and across all geographical areas of the authority, with broad categories of SEND need.</li> <li>2. <b>Jul 2025:</b> Advice obtained from Contact and other Parent Carer Forums.</li> <li>3. <b>Sep 2025:</b> An increase in the numbers of parents and carers who are actively involved and engaged in consultation and coproduction.</li> <li>4. <b>Sep 2025:</b> A clear service level agreement is in place identifying key actions and deliverables.</li> <li>5. <b>Sep 2025:</b> Plans in place to replicate successes in other areas to Westmorland and Furness.</li> <li>6. <b>Apr 2026:</b> Effective partnership working with Parent Carers.</li> <li>7. <b>Apr 2026:</b> To work with other Parent Carer Forums to identify good practice and use this in our own work.</li> </ol>	



		11. <b>Jun 2026:</b> Train Young Inspectors and Youth Council as 'Local Offer Ambassadors' to support Children and Young People in using and accessing the Local Offer.	
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## SECTION 2

### Neurodevelopmental Assessment Waiting Times

#### Area for improvement

Ensure waiting times for neurodevelopmental assessments are reduced, and that needs led support services are routinely available and accessible to families, including those who may be waiting for an assessment.

#### What good looks like

- Neurodevelopmental Pathway Steering Group is in place, providing oversight of the operational plan and which is accountable to the local area SEND Partnership Board and Health and Wellbeing Board. The right services are commissioned; to provide a strong offer for families and young people to ensure they are successfully supported at the earliest opportunity.
- SEMH needs are managed effectively through the use of 'All About Me' guidance and passport materials.
- There is a co-produced, transparent and accessible neurodevelopmental assessment and intervention pathway available, for those families who request a diagnostic approach, which is published on the local offer and is National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) compliant.
- The neurodevelopmental assessment pathway model provides effective system wide support for children and young people and families
- Neurodevelopmental pathway data and waiting times will be routinely scrutinised by the Partnership Board

#### How do we know? (Success criteria)

##### Quantitatively

- Waiting times for an assessment for ADHD and ASD will be in line with, or better than national average
- Survey data demonstrates a high level of satisfaction from families who are waiting for a diagnostic assessment with families reporting that they feel supported and listened to whilst waiting for diagnostic assessment
- Reduction in longest wait across Westmorland & Furness by 20%.
- Reduction in average wait time by 20%.
- Reduced variance across all providers waiting times to no more than 12 weeks.
- 90% of Right to Choose activity is with providers who are accredited.
- 90% of children assessed receive a personalised support plan.

## **Qualitatively**

- Family/professional feedback in multi-agency audits
- Children and Young People and families feel supported and listened to.
- The views and experiences of Children and Young People and families inform the ongoing transformation.
- Parent carers have a clear understanding of what to expect for their child and where to access support.
- Children and Young People and family experiences shared at Neurodevelopmental Pathway Programme Board quarterly.
- Increased uptake of Neurodevelopmental support services.
- Parents report having to share their story less.
- Schools will report improved access to staff training and improved ability to meet the needs of neuro-diverse pupils locally.

## **Interdependencies with other plans**

- Engagement Strategy
- LSC ICB Neurodevelopmental Pathway model
- SEMH mapping and gap analysis document

**2a. Ensure families are well supported whilst waiting for diagnostic services.**

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
<p>A. Develop a local area shared vision for neuro diversity (ND)</p> <p>B. Create a ND pathway to include waiting well initiatives/range of available services and support mechanisms for Children and Young People on ADHD and ASD pathway and SEMH pathway.</p> <p>C. To agree a consistent diagnostic approach and pathway that serves all of Westmorland and Furness.</p> <p>D. Ensure all SEMH and neurodevelopmental services are effectively mapped and gaps are clearly identified</p>	<p>Assistant Director for Education &amp; Inclusion</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Jun 2025:</b> Establish multi agency steering group to develop and oversee the operational plan</li> <li>2. <b>Jan 2026:</b> Services mapped, and gaps identified</li> <li>3. <b>Jun 2026:</b> Launch of ND Pathway</li> <li>4. <b>Jun 2027:</b> Review pathway effectiveness.</li> </ol>	

**2b.** Transform the current system from diagnosis led to needs led model of care.

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
<p>A. Commission an enhanced robust Neurodivergent support offer for Children and Young People and families which can be accessed without diagnosis across Lancashire and South Cumbria and North East North Cumbria ICBS.</p> <p>B. Improved model of delivery and NICE compliant pathways through local providers of neurodevelopmental assessment.</p>	<p>Head of Children’s Services – SEND &amp; Complexities (ICB)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Sep 2025:</b> Develop single data set for all Westmorland and Furness neurodevelopmental pathways within Lancashire and South Cumbria and North East North Cumbria to monitor activity.</li> <li>2. <b>Oct 2025:</b> Use Review and bring together all existing SEN support offers to create a suite of tools for schools, Children and Young People and families.</li> <li>3. <b>Dec 2025:</b> Develop a local profiling tool to support identification of needs and appropriate support.</li> <li>4. <b>Apr 2026:</b> Roll out of digital front door and single point of access in place.</li> <li>5. <b>Apr 2026:</b> Development of service specification in line with NICE standards.</li> <li>6. <b>Apr 2027:</b> Audit of all pathways against NICE standards.</li> <li>7. <b>Apr 2027:</b> Integrated ASD, ADHD and FASD referral pathways.</li> <li>8. <b>Apr 2027:</b> Implementation of screening and high-quality triage at the start of the pathway.</li> <li>9. <b>Apr 2027:</b> Local NHS providers are all offering NICE compliant assessment pathway.</li> </ol>	

**2c. Improved understanding of Neurodivergence and new model of delivery across all professionals.**

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
A. Training strategy agreed and implemented across ICB footprint.	Head of Children’s Services – SEND & Complexities (ICB)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Aug 2026:</b> Targeted Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule training for appropriate diagnostic workforce.</li> <li>2. <b>Oct 2026:</b> Audit of high quality and adaptive teaching effectiveness through the education improvement adviser statutory visits.</li> <li>3. <b>Dec 2026:</b> Review implementation of quality first teaching for neurodiversity across the local area partnership through the Ordinary available Framework and reasonable adjustments.</li> <li>4. <b>Apr 2027:</b> Awareness training delivered to relevant and targeted staff groups within health, social care and education and early years settings.</li> </ol>	

**2d. Ongoing engagement with families and Children and Young People on the neurodivergent transformation.**

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
A. Implement plan with parents and carers	SEND Delivery Manager (ICB)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Sep 2025:</b> Presentation at Parent Carer Forum (SENDAC).</li> <li>2. <b>Dec 2025:</b> Improve visibility and accessibility of support through the local offer and other channels, such as provider websites.</li> <li>3. <b>Apr 2027:</b> Multiple stakeholder events held and quarterly dedicated update sessions with Children and Young People and families.</li> </ol>	

2e. SEMH needs are supported through support services and the use of 'All About Me' one page profile.

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
<p>A. Further develop the co-produced work led by community health to ensure that the About Me approach becomes business as usual in education, health, care and social settings.</p> <p>B. Virtual platform is developed for sharing of 'All About Me' one page profile and supporting documents.</p>	<p>Assistant Director for Education &amp; Inclusion</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Jun 2026:</b> Workforce development in place and rolling programme of 'All About Me'.</li> <li>2. <b>Sep 2026:</b> One page profile will be used to inform Section A of EHC plan.</li> <li>3. <b>Mar 2027:</b> Virtual platform in place.</li> </ol>	

## SECTION 3

### EHC Plan Quality

#### Area for improvement

Strengthen systems and processes to further improve the quality of EHC plans, including updates and annual reviews, so that EHC plans remain relevant and up to date and includes relevant information from and health and social care partners.

#### What good looks like

- There are effective, multi-agency EHC plan decision making panels.
- Advice provided for EHC plans is of high quality and is consistent.
- There are strong annual review systems and processes in place to ensure Annual reviews are of a high quality, are compliant and are completed within statutory timescales, which effectively inform the EHC plans.
- There are strong Quality Assurance processes in place across all agencies, informed by the Quality Assurance Framework.

#### How do we know? (Success criteria)

##### Quantitatively

- EHC plan 20-week timescales
- Annual Review completion timescales
- Quality Assurance dashboard – RAG ratings
- Quality Assurance of EHC plan – RAG rating
- Appeals data
- Mediation and tribunals data
- At least 60% of new Annual Reviews are completed within timescale and is on a consistent upward trajectory.

##### Qualitatively

- Golden thread runs throughout plans
- High quality advice received from all agencies
- Data of Quality Assurance of amended plans shows consistent improvements in alignment with newly issued EHC plans.
- Multi-agency audits show high quality partnership working

##### Interdependencies with other plans

- Quality Assurance Framework
- EHC plan Quality Assurance Framework
- Guidance for advice writing for EHC plans
- Multi-agency audit thematic schedule

**3a.** Refresh and repurpose EHC plan panels to ensure needs are met in a timely and effective way.

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
A. Further develop the co-produced work to develop multi-agency panels that ensure decision making is legally compliant, robust and consistent and delivers best financial value.	SEND Senior Manager	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>May 2025:</b> Terms of Reference and multi-agency attendance for panels developed and shared.</li> <li>2. <b>May 2025:</b> Review current panel structure.</li> <li>3. <b>Sep 2025:</b> Redesign effective, multi-agency panels.</li> </ol>	

**3b.** EHC plans are of high quality and quality assurance processes are well established.

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
A. Using the Westmorland and Furness EHC plan Quality Assurance framework to improve quality of EHC plans.	SEND Senior Manager	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Mar 2026:</b> Needs, provisions and outcomes are clearly identifiable in all advice received as part of an EHC Needs Assessment or Annual Review process.</li> <li>2. <b>Jan 2026:</b> Robust internal Quality Assurance processes for the advice provided are in place, to inform high quality decision making and the content of EHC plans where applicable.</li> <li>3. <b>Jan 2026:</b> Quality Assurance Framework to be consistently applied by all partners to incorporate multi-agency Quality Assurance activity and a cycle of continuous learning and improvement.</li> </ol>	

**3c.** The voice of the child/young person and their families are clear and aspirational in individual planning and outcomes.

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
A. The Family Conversation is further developed and embedded to become a key part of ascertaining parental/children and young person voice throughout the annual review process as well as EHC Needs Assessments.	SEND Senior Manager	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Sep 2025:</b> Child and young person voice is clear and included in every EHC plan.</li> <li>2. <b>Oct 2025:</b> Bi-annual SEND Practice Weeks to develop workforce (including offer to schools).</li> </ol>	

**3d.** Workforce development – quality of advice across the children’s EHCP process resulting in clear high-quality outcomes.

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
A. To develop the workforce skills to ensure the ‘golden thread’ in an EHC plan is clearly high quality, identifiable and aspirational.	SEND Senior Manager	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Sep 2026:</b> The Quality Assurance audit tool data is developed to include an increase in the amount of EHC plans with a clear ‘golden thread’ throughout linking strengths, needs, provision and outcomes to the aspirations of Children and Young People.</li> <li>2. <b>Oct 2025:</b> Training plan developed for EHC plan team and advice givers to ensure high quality advice.</li> <li>3. <b>Oct 2025:</b> To review advice documentation.</li> <li>4. <b>Jan 2026:</b> Training on EHC plan and ‘Golden Thread of Aspirations’ to be delivered through the SENCo Networks.</li> </ol>	

**3e.** Annual reviews are delivered, with amendments made, in a timely manner.

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
<p>A. Utilise the newly appointed Annual Recovery coordinators to support the team and improve the timeliness of annual review processes and the quality of amended EHC plans.</p>	<p>SEND Service Manager</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Jun 2025:</b> Additional co-ordinators employed to address and reduce AR backlog.</li> <li>2. <b>Sep 2025:</b> Develop Quality Assurance of Annual Review processes.</li> <li>3. <b>Sep 2025:</b> Training around Annual Reviews.</li> <li>4. <b>Oct 2025:</b> To ensure timely and effective Transition points.</li> <li>5. <b>Jan 2026:</b> The backlog of annual reviews has been cleared.</li> <li>6. <b>Jan 2026:</b> Review of annual review paperwork and processes to support efficiency.</li> <li>7. <b>Jan 2026:</b> Training provided for schools on AR process through SENDCo Networks.</li> <li>8. <b>Jan 2026:</b> Further training and support for co-ordinators to ensure amendments are made in a timely manner and reflect current need.</li> <li>9. <b>Jun 2026:</b> Further development of AR tracker to ensure correct data is being held/used.</li> </ol>	

## SECTION 4

### Multi-agency Working

#### Area for improvement

Strengthen multi-agency working across health, education and social care to ensure the needs of children and young people are identified and assessed in an efficient and timely manner.

#### What good looks like

- The SEND strategy and outcomes framework are coproduced with all stakeholders, children and young people and their families.
- The local area SEND governance structure that is informed by a local area SEND Strategy and which secures equal partnerships across the Local Authority, ICBs and Parent Carer Forum that embrace change; support innovative practice and drive improvement through appropriate and effective challenge based on a thorough understanding of the needs of the SEND community (0 to 25). Multi-agency representation and co-production is embedded within the SEND governance structure and across all workstreams and key decision-making panels that support assessment and identification of need.
- There are robust agreements in place between LSC & NENC ICBs to ensure effective multi-agency working.
- The local area SEND specific JSNA provides accurate data to enable leaders to understand the needs and resources of the SEND community and informs effective joint commissioning for SEND across all agencies. Leaders and elected members in Westmorland and Furness are visible, accessible and supportive of the workforce.
- The workforce of the local area is confident in identifying need and understanding the pathway to access appropriate provision.
- The workforce of the local area is engaged in the continual improvement of the local offer and champions it to families.
- The workforce of the local area is empowered and inspired to improving outcomes of children and young people with SEND.
- Children and young people with SEND will be well prepared for their life as an adult.

#### How do we know? (Success criteria)

##### Quantitatively

- Data from multi-agency and single agency audit activity demonstrates a high level of satisfaction with the SEND system and will show a year-on-year improvement in the proportion of the SEND community 0 to 25 who agree that they are included in decisions regarding the provision that is available across the local area.
- Data demonstrates positive outcomes against the shared outcomes framework including that:
  - A high proportion (at least 60%) of children and young people with SEND will report that they are able to access the services and support that they need in a timely and joined up way.
  - A high proportion of young people (at least 60%) will agree, that housing, employment and leisure opportunities to support the preparation for adulthood (PFA) outcomes, are accessible across the local area.

- A high proportion of families will agree that that they can access the health support that they need.
- The proportion of young adults with a learning disability accessing employment opportunities<sup>1</sup> will increase in comparison with current base line data.
- School self-evaluation will demonstrate an increasing number of lessons observed where adaptive teaching is used effectively to support learners with SEND.

### **Qualitatively**

- There is a clear and transparent governance structure in place.
- Targeted feedback received as part of the Annual Review process.
- There will be an Independent Chair for SEND Partnership Board.
- MoU in place to secure consistency of approach between the two ICB footprints.
- Feedback from family conversations/EHC plan feedback.
- Effective multi-agency working – panel feedback.
- SEND monitoring and school assurance outcomes demonstrate an increasingly effective graduated response that identifies and meets need at the earliest opportunity and identifies that the right support is in place at the earliest opportunity.
- High quality adaptive teaching will be observed.
- Reduced reliance on 1:1 support across our schools.

### **Interdependencies with other plans**

- SEND Strategy
- SEND Governance Structures
- SEND Outcomes Framework
- Local Offer Delivery Plan
- Engagement strategy/plan

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<sup>1</sup> Includes paid employment, volunteering, SI and apprenticeships and work experience

**4a.** To strengthen governance structures across the partnership to ensure robustness and accountability.

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
<p>A. Review current governance and delivery structures across the SEND Partnership,</p> <p>B. To commission and procure an Independent Chair for the SEND Partnership Board.</p> <p>C. Memorandum of Understanding agreed to secure consistent delivery of health priorities across the WaF footprint.</p> <p>D. Roles and responsibilities of DCOs and DSCO agreed and functioning effectively.</p>	<p>Assistant Director for Quality, Resources &amp; Transformation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Sep 2025:</b> Current governance structures are reviewed against other SEND Partnership structures.</li> <li>2. <b>Sep 2025:</b> Newly established SEND Improvement Group, which has oversight of delivery milestones for each workstream.</li> <li>3. <b>Dec 2025:</b> An Independent Chair for the SEND Partnership Board is identified and in place.</li> <li>4. <b>Dec 2025:</b> SEND Partnership Board revised Terms of Reference in place oversight of the SEND Improvement Plan and risks.</li> <li>5. <b>Jan 2026:</b> Monthly meetings take place between health, education and social care partners to strengthen multi-agency working and highlight issues occurring.</li> <li>6. <b>Jan 2026:</b> MOU agreed and in place between Lancashire and North Cumbria and North East and North Cumbria ICB's to include DCO role.</li> <li>7. <b>Mar 2026:</b> DSCO role is in place.</li> </ol>	

**4b.** To agree the direction of SEND across WAF and strengthen accountability through a co-produced SEND Strategy and Outcomes Framework

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
A. To secure effective partnership working so that outcomes for Children and Young People are at the heart of all working and decision making.	SEND Senior Manager	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Sep 2025:</b> Establish a steering group to lead the development of the SEND Strategy and oversee the operational plan.</li> <li>2. <b>Jan 2026:</b> Publication of SEND Strategy and shared outcomes framework.</li> </ol>	

4c. Multi-agency, person centred working ensures the child and family are at the heart of the EHC planning and reviewing process.

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
<p>A. To continually review all activities and engagement that support the planning and review process and embed the family conversation so that families are central to the assessment and review process.</p>	<p>SEND Senior Manager</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Weekly:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Attendance and Quality Assurance within provision panels of new EHC plans.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. <b>6 Monthly:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 6 monthly reviews of, and learning from, Family Conversation feedback</li> <li>○ Undertake 6 monthly reviews of the customer journey.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. <b>Annual:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Update Annual Review documentation to include Guidance to settings and support for parents.</li> <li>○ Induction training programmes for SEND Case officers and new SENCOs.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	

**4d.** To ensure appropriate training, support and documents are in place for schools, settings and multi-agency partners to implement an effective graduated response.

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
<p>A. Review SEND handbook.</p> <p>B. Review and redesign Ordinarily available provision toolkit and matching provision to need toolkit.</p> <p>C. To embed the Early Years Ordinarily Available Provision to support the graduated response.</p> <p>D. Develop appropriate CPD for all staff working with children and young people with SEND including multi-agency partners.</p>	<p>SEND Senior Manager</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Apr 2026:</b> Revised SEND handbook will be published.</li> <li>2. <b>Jan 2026:</b> Ordinarily Available Toolkit launched.</li> <li>3. <b>Apr 2026:</b> Ordinarily Available Toolkit reviewed.</li> </ol>	

4e. To ensure schools, setting and multi-agency partners are supported to identify and meet need at the earliest stage.

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
<p>A. There is a whole school SEND monitoring programme in place to review effectiveness of support for SEN across all schools providing support and challenge where needed.</p> <p>B. Support programme for new SENCOs.</p> <p>C. SEND specific CPD programme published.</p> <p>D. There is a focus on high quality adapted teaching which will reduce the need for 1:1 support to develop and deliver a package of training materials to support schools in meeting needs earlier.</p> <p>E. To further embed and implement the redesign of the Specialist Advisory Teaching Service to support schools.</p>	<p>Learning improvement Service</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Apr 2025:</b> Revised SEND SENCO networks in place.</li> <li>2. <b>Apr 2026:</b> Graduated approach toolkit in place.</li> <li>3. <b>Apr 2026:</b> Training for ICBs and PCN to understand the SEND graduated approach.</li> <li>4. <b>Apr 2026:</b> Revised delivery model for specialist advisory teaching service in place.</li> <li>5. <b>Apr 2026:</b> Support and training for schools to deliver high quality adapted teaching.</li> </ol>	

4f. Develop shared understanding following revised guidance on the different levels of support schools should provide to support a child or young person’s additional needs – the Graduated Approach.

Action	Lead	Delivery Milestones	Update / Impact
<p>A. undertake a review of all centralised SEND Support Services and commissioned outreach support.</p> <p>B. Revision of the Matching Provision to Need Tools.</p>	<p>SEND Senior Manager</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Sep 2025:</b> Ordinarily Available toolkit and matching provision to need toolkits updated to support schools Revised SEND SENCO networks in place.</li> <li>2. <b>Sep 2025:</b> Implement operational plan to support effective communication and interaction.</li> <li>3. <b>Sept 2026:</b> Relaunch of specialist advisory teaching service and any required outreach to be commissioned externally.</li> </ol>	

## Glossary

Term	Full Form
ACE	Adverse Childhood Experience
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
CQC	Care Quality Commission
DfE	Department for Education
DMT	Directorate Management Team
DSCO	Designated Social Care Officer
EHC plans	Education, Health and Care plans
EHE	Elective Home Education
EOTAS	Education Otherwise Than at School
FASD	Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
IAS	independent advice and support
ICB	Integrated Care Board
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
LA	Local Authority
NENC	North East and North Cumbria
NPQ	National Professional Qualification
PCN	Primary Care Networks
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
PfA	Preparation for Adulthood
SEMH	Social Emotional and Mental Health
SENCo	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SEND	Local Area Special Educational Needs and/or Disability
SENDAC	Special Educational Needs and Disability Alliance Cumbria



**making a difference for every child in Westmorland and Furness**