

Report Title: Here

Date of meeting:	28 th January 2025		
Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Children’s Services and Safeguarding		
Report of:	Nadine Carroll - Assistant Director Children’s Services (Education)		
Portfolio:	Children, Schools and Families		
Wards affected:	All		
Is this a key decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt/confidential report:	No		

Summary:

The presentation at Appendix A outlines data on performance in Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities (SEND), in particular, around Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), the achievements around timeliness, with regional and national comparisons. Data also covers the attendance and exclusions of children and young people with SEND in Sefton schools.

Recommendation(s):

That members note the report and seek clarification where necessary.

1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations

The Committee has requested a regular update on SEND performance.

1.1 Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

- 1.2 As of December 2024, in Sefton, there were 3,691 active EHCPs. Nationally, there has been an increase in the numbers of EHCPs issued. In Sefton, there was a 22% increase in the total number of EHCPs in 2024, against a north west increase of 15% and a national increase of 11%.
- 1.3 There is a national target for all local authorities to complete and issue EHCPs within 20 weeks. In Sefton the compliance within the 20-week timeframe in December is currently 55%. The national compliance rate stands at 50.3%.
- 1.4 Compliance within the 20 week target can vary from month to month, depending on a number of factors, including the volume of plans to be issued that month and the timeliness of professional advices being submitted.

- 1.5 There are three sets of professional advice needed for a full EHCP to be issued. These advices from health, social care and educational psychology should be received within six weeks of being requested. Good systems are in place to enable partners to fulfil these requests in a timely manner. Achievements against this six week target for each partner agency are outlined in Appendix A, across a year from October 2023 to October 2024. In October, health submitted 98% of advices on time, social care submitted 64% and educational psychology 89%. Work is on-going with all partners to increase compliance and timeliness.
- 1.6 **Education Absences of Children and Young People with SEND**
- 1.7 The absence rate (that is the % of sessions missed) for children and young people with EHCPs in 2023/4 was 13.5% and for children on SEN Support, this figure was 11.3%. The data gathered to date for 2024/5, as at December 2024, shows the figures for EHCP absence rate as improved, at 9.9% but higher for SEN Support, at 12.4%.
- 1.8 In some cases, the reasons for absence are that children with EHCPs are awaiting placements where parents have withdrawn them, or children are changing schools.
- 1.9 There has also been an increase in Elective Home Educated (EHE) pupils, where the main reasons for absence has been anxiety and Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA).
- 1.10 **What are we doing to improve?**
- 1.11 Increased resources have led to a new model being put in place which supports a culture of good attendance and supports parents and children in identifying and overcoming barriers to good attendance.
- 1.12 We have a dedicated school attendance worker for children with EHCPs, with a fortnightly meeting to monitor the data and have increased the school attendance team to address the SEND cohort, with a dedicated resource to support the 'Team Around the School'
- 1.13 There are increased school attendance panels to ensure support plans are in place to improve the absence of children with SEND, ensuring the needs of the whole family are considered and addressed.
- 1.14 Where necessary and appropriate, targeted support meetings are held with secondary schools and the Service Manager of the School Support Service.
- 1.15 **Exclusions of Children and Young People with SEND**
- 1.16 We recorded permanent exclusions for 2 children with EHCPs and 6 children on SEN Support last term. This is an increase since the previous academic year, where there were no permanent exclusions for children with an EHCP but there were 18 exclusions for children on SEN Support.
- 1.17 The issues relate to SEND is not being identified early enough in the child's education journey, practice being inconsistent across schools, and some schools not utilising early help to support addressing barriers to children behaviour and ensuring they receive the right support at the right time.
- 1.18 **What are we doing to improve?**
- 1.19 Reviewing the managed move process that will be aligned to the Inclusion Strategy, investing in multi-agency Teams around the school' to support preventative work to support pupils at risk of exclusion and building a culture that seeks to minimise exclusion to be incorporated into the governor training programme.

2. Financial Implications

Not applicable

3. Legal Implications

Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015 both set out the legal framework covering children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

4. Corporate Risk Implications

Not applicable

5 Staffing HR Implications

Not applicable

6 Conclusion

Monthly updates on SEND performance are reported to the Sefton Special Educational Needs Continuous Improvement Board (SENDICIB).

Equality Implications:
There are no equality implications.
Impact on Children and Young People:
Working together in the SEND partnership to improve performance across education, health and social care will have a positive impact on the outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
Climate Emergency Implications:
The recommendations within this report will have a neutral impact.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Services & Commercial (FD.7920/25.) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.6020/25) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Not applicable

Implementation Date for the Decision :

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Cabinet decision.

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Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

Appendix A: SEND Update January 2025

Background Papers:

There are no background papers