



4 March 2020

PROGRAMME UPDATE

Keeping stakeholders, parents and carers informed about Dudley's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Improvement Programme

1. Message from Helen Ellis, Assistant Director for SEND, Education and Family Solutions, Dudley Council

I am delighted that the SEND improvement programme continues to move at pace. We are dealing with challenges but work is ongoing to ensure we make informed decisions around provision across the borough in line with our future vision for *all SEND Children to have access to the right support, at the right time, in their own communities.*

I am also pleased to confirm the Department of Education visit on the 18th February 2020 went well. Pat Tate, who was a member of the Joint Inspection Team in 2019, is our new DFE Advisor replacing Charlie Palmer. Pat has a breadth of knowledge around SEND and Inclusion, and equally as passionate about children with SEND and supporting families and schools.

I would like to welcome Toni Dawodu to the team. Toni is interim Head of SEND and will support me with the responsibility of the strategic elements of day to day SEND operations as well as oversee the delivery of the operational improvements to the SEND Team with Sue Powell, SEND Manager. Toni brings with her many years' experience in transforming and delivering SEND Services for local authorities.

On Friday 28th February I attended the *EHCP - A Good Plan Joint Workshop* and I was overwhelmed by the support that we received from parents, carers and partners across the entire SEND system.

With over 60 people attending the workshop, it was wonderful to feel and see the passion in the room. We are all working together to make the SEND System and personalised EHC plans what they need to be to deliver the right outcomes for Dudley children.

Over the past few months we have been operating the SEND Implementation Group. The group has focused on working out the details of the work to be done, by who, where, when, etc. to deliver the improvements that we need across the SEND System. To be able to focus on two very different aspects Strategic/Delivery, we undertook a review of the governance to make sure it was right, efficient and suitably focused on driving the changes across the system.

To that end, the SEND implementation group has been closed. The delivery activity will now be divided across the 3 projects and each project will meet on a monthly basis. There will be a new group formed that will take the strategic role across the SEND System for Dudley known as the SEND Oversight Group (SOG)

and will meet every 2 months. The aim for the SOG is to continue beyond the improvement programme as the system and partner wide oversight group to maintain focus and quality across the SEND System.

The 3 key projects being delivered are:

Operations, Training & Quality

This will focus on what we do, how we do it and how we make sure it's right.

Demand Management

We will explore what we need, where, when and how.

Communications & Culture

This will focus on co-productions, how we can work together, share information and communicate effectively.

These key areas will help ensure the improvement programme continues to move from strength to strength.

Finally, I would just like to thank everyone that has been working with us to drive change across Dudley for our children and young people with SEND. It is a very frustrating time still, as making changes on the scale that we want to takes time. Although we are not seeing the impact for the children just yet, we are working tirelessly with all of our partners, parents and carers to make sure what we do is a long term, sustainable change for the best for all our children and young people.

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