



Norfolk County Council

Children Social Care reforms and DfE SEND & AP Improvement plan

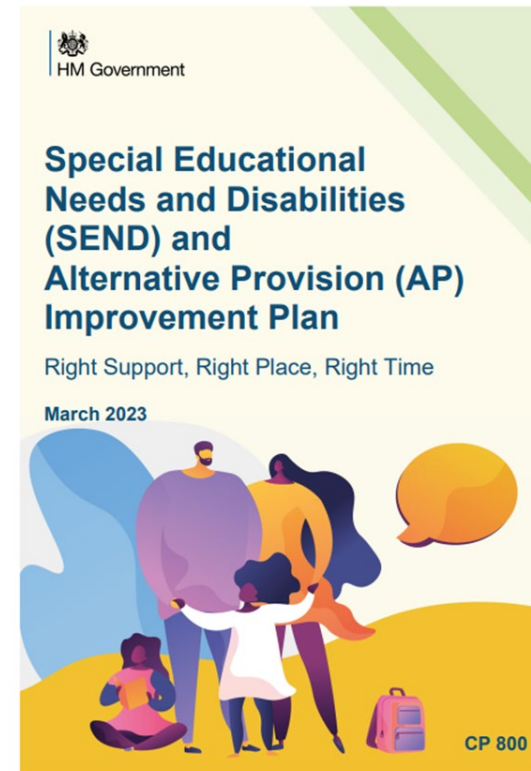
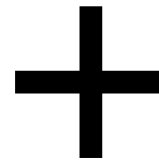
Integrated Care Partnership – 21 June 2023

Sara Tough, Executive Director of Children Services,
Norfolk County Council



Purpose

1. To share with the ICP details regarding national reforms in Children Social Care and Special Education Needs & Disabilities and Alternative Provision



2. Summarise how we are preparing and responding to the proposed reforms

Context



Both locally and nationally organisations working with children and families have seen demand for services increase. Recognised by the reforms, the challenges include:

- Needs are becoming more complex.
- Inflation and the cost-of-living crisis are impacting on family's finances, as well as that of public organisations.
- Funding is not keeping pace and a greater and greater proportion of spending is going on the highest need cohorts rather than early preventative help.
- External markets are not functioning and driving exponentially higher costs.
- Workforce challenges are growing.

Over the past five years, significant transformation activity has been undertaken to help mitigate these challenges.

The reforms offer a further opportunity to enable every child in Norfolk to FLOURISH

On Thursday 2nd Feb, DfE published Stable Home, Built on Love – an implementation strategy and consultation, backed by £200m additional investment

Three reviews were published last year, provided impetus and vision to transform children's social care.



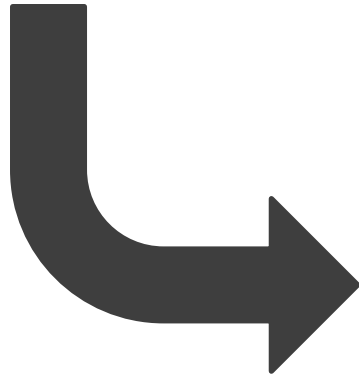
The Independent Review of Children's Social Care



National Review into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson



The Competition and Markets Authority study into Children's Social Care Placements



There are six pillars of reform



Pillar 1: Family Help provides the right support at the right time so that children can thrive with their families



Pillar 2: A decisive multi-agency child protection system



Pillar 3: Unlocking the potential of family networks



Pillar 4: Putting love, relationships and a stable home at the heart of being a child in care



Pillar 5: A valued, supported and highly-skilled social worker for every child who needs one



Pillar 6: A system that continuously learns and improves, and makes better use of evidence and data

Alignment with existing plans



- Our social care model already features a range of different practice disciplines working collaboratively together – **well placed to trial “Family Help” approaches.**
- Our **partnerships in Norfolk were recognised by Ofsted** recently (ILACS 2022) as being exceptionally strong meaning we are well placed to deliver the multi-agency vision in the review – developing multi-disciplinary teams and service models.
- The theme in the review of **unlocking the potential in families** also aligns directly - Family Networking has been at the heart of our agenda from the outset.
- We have **led the way in relation to the re-shaping of the nature of care for children looked after** with a hugely successful implementation of our New Roads Model - delivering an innovative multi-disciplinary approach which is succeeding with young people with most complex needs.
- We are **using information in innovative ways** to shape the placement market, for example we are leading nationally with a small group of other LAs, on the Valuing Care approach – codifying needs to better tailor service that need, improve accountability and Value for Money.

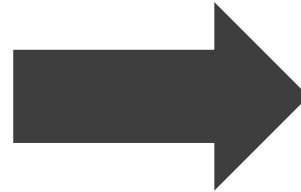
If possible, we are interested in becoming a Families First for Children Pathfinder

DfE SEND & AP Plan

Published by the DfE in March 2023 in response to the SEND Green Paper.

Main issues identified with the current SEND system across the country

1. Outcomes for children and young people with SEND are consistently worse than their peers.
2. Experiences of navigating the SEND system to secure support are poor.
3. There is too much inconsistency across the country – with decisions made based on where a child lives, not on their needs.
4. Despite unprecedented investment, the SEND system is not delivering value for money for children, young people and families.



3 key priorities for improvement

1. Fulfil children's potential
2. Build parents' trust
3. Provide financial sustainability

Provides opportunity to support changes we are making locally.



Norfolk County Council

Local First Inclusion

- next phase of our SEND Strategic improvement
- marks end of SEND & AP Transformation Programme
- marks end of Written Statement of Action
- complements Area SEND Strategy
- complementary to government reforms
- opportunity for investment in mainstream and expanding specialist provision
- will require joint working between LA and school leaders to deliver over 6 year period



Local First Inclusion



Aim:

- Local First Inclusion - system approach.
- Improving and expanding the landscape of SEND provision across Norfolk.
- Achieving a balanced in-year budget for the High Needs Block by 2027/2028.

Objectives:

- Tackling current, and reducing future, demand.
- Re-shaping the landscape of provision – shifting left away from high cost/Independent non-maintained.
- Redirecting pupil flow from high-cost/low quality independent specialist to state-funded special, resource-base and mainstream.
- Intervening earlier, more holistically to prevent escalation of need.
- Improving confidence in mainstream provision to meet need.
- Increasing accountability and incentivising mainstream inclusion.
- Increasing local, maintained specialist provision/ alternative provision within the mainstream.
- Driving down costs through improved focus on commissioning and contract management.

Norfolk's Plan...

delivered through 5 workstreams



Workstream 1

Lead – Andy
Tovell

Mainstream
School
Inclusion,
Culture and
Practice

PM: Katie White

Workstream 2

Lead – Rob Cole

School and
Community
Teams

PM: Ben Aspey

Workstream 3

Lead – Andy
Tovell

Responsibility-
based model of
decision
making,
funding and
commissioning
for Alternative
Provision

PM: Katie White

Workstream 4

Lead – Fiona
Corless

Commission /
Use
Independent
differently

PM: Jack Edwards

Workstream 5

Lead – Michael
Bateman

SEND
Sufficiency
and Capital
Delivery

PM's:
Debra Oldman
Sarah Jennings
Wendy Rudd

Conclusions



- Underlying principle of both sets of reforms is an increased focus on local, inclusive, multidisciplinary working between key agencies working with children and families.
- Intention of the Stable Homes, Built on Love strategy is to rebalance social care away from costly crisis intervention to more meaningful and effective multi-agency early support.
- We are interested in the becoming a pathfinder for the proposed Family Help model – locally testing ideas already, in addition to our developing Health and Care collaboration.
- We are confident that local plans in Norfolk, align fully with the latest national developments and will enable us to demonstrate further improvements against our partnership priorities; prevention and early help, SEND, mental health and emotional wellbeing and addressing gaps in learning.