

Appendix 2

Education Health & Care Plans: Assessment performance & Demand management

A key challenge is to ensure improved performance in relation to EHCP assessments:

- Norfolk is above the national average for the number of EHCP's (currently 5508)
- We have seen a rise in referrals annually for EHCP assessments from previous average referral rates of 650 per year to over 1000 in the last year
- We are responsible for co-ordinating over 5500 annual reviews per year

The DfE expect all Local Authorities to carry out 90% of EHCP assessments within the 20 week timescale

- In 2016 we only achieved 5.8% performance
- In 2017 we increased slightly to 9.3% performance
- Our interim target is 55% (2017 national average) and our stretch target is 90%

We have increased staffing on a temporary basis and improvements have started:

- Educational Psychology reports now on time for 55% of cases
- Our overall performance in 2018 has increased to 14%
- 99% of transfer cases (from old Statements to EHCP's) completed before the DfE deadline of 31 March 2018

Our teams have worked hard to ensure that this major transfer process was carried out within a 'person centred' approach; taking account of parental wishes and presenting individualised plans. The team have received many compliments directly from parents during this time, a key theme of these being the care that they had taken to understand the child and families wishes and to reflect this in the final plan.

This significant achievement and joint endeavour across our services and with health must now lead to improvements to new EHCP assessments within 20 week timescale.

We will continue to prioritise this area of work for local authority improvement, however, we are also looking actively at the reasons for the high referral rates and to see if our revised approach to SEND 'top-up' funding and our plans for increased specialist provision that can be accessed with the need for EHC Plans can assist with demand management also.

We meet regularly with our DfE SEND Adviser and the recent note of visit stated that:

'...The LA had made very good progress to complete all but 69 of the 1700 outstanding transfers in November 2017, by the statutory deadline of 31st March. The current figure was down to 39, with only a handful of cases expected to continue into June. In all cases, drafts were being discussed with parents...'

It has been encouraging to note that the DfE do recognise that we are making progress within SEND overall and that we have identified the required next steps, which were mirrored in the conclusion of their note of visit to us:

'...There is a sense of gathering momentum under the new leadership of the SEND agenda in Norfolk. The successes achieved with the transfer of statements to EHC plans must now be applied to the 20 week production of new EHCs. A sufficiency plan must address the development of the appropriate specialist provision, EHCP threshold guidance must be published, and consultations on a new SEND Strategy must be undertaken....'