
To: Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 8th July 2026

Title: SEND Local Reform Plan, System Governance, and Reform Delivery

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 On 23rd February 2026, the government published its Schools White Paper, including the requirement for each local area partnership to develop and submit a local Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Reform Plan signed off by Chief Executives of the City Council and Integrated Care Board (ICB), and the Section 151 Officer (Director of Finance & Resources). The local area partnership submitted the plan on the 19 June 2026 following cabinet approval of the draft plan on the 9 June. The SEND & Alternative Provision (AP) Board holds the local area partnership responsibility for delivery of the plan. The final plan is included at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The SEND & AP Board operates under the governance framework of the Health & Well-being Board. Due to the significance of the SEND reform and accompanying investment, the governance arrangements for the SEND & AP Board and related infrastructure have been refreshed. There is no change in the relationship between Health & Well-being Board and SEND & AP Board, but there is a refreshed terms of reference and membership, and there is additional infrastructure reporting to SEND & AP board. The refreshed governance arrangements are included at Appendix 2.
- 1.3 The Education Service works closely with Public Health and published a SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) in 2020. A 2024 data supplement updated the original data and information and was approved by the Health & Well-being Board and the SEND & AP Board. A further update is underway and will be completed in Autumn 2026.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the Local SEND Reform Plan and the partnership working arrangements required across Education, Health, and Care to deliver the ambitions of the plan.
- 2.2 To endorse the refreshed governance arrangements in place to support the delivery of the Local SEND Reform Plan.
- 2.3 To receive a refreshed SEND data supplement for the JSNA in the 26/27 municipal year.

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 The objective of the white paper is to ensure that every child and young person can achieve and thrive. This ambition is underpinned by a substantial national investment exceeding £7 billion over the next three years, which will promote inclusive practice within mainstream schools, facilitate access to expert support (including Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, and Occupational Therapists) without the necessity of statutory assessments, and provide new school places for children and young people with special educational needs & disability in both mainstream and special settings. Implementation of these reforms will commence from the 2026/27 financial year.
- 3.2 The Local Area Partnership has developed and submitted the Local SEND Reform Plan, underpinned by a Local Partnership Maturity Assessment. These documents outline proposals for improvement and consolidation of the local SEND system, prioritising inclusive practice and early intervention. The plan is the central delivery and accountability framework for transforming SEND provision across local area partnerships. It is expected that the local authority acts as system 'convener', taking the lead in bringing together ICBs, multi-academy trusts, schools, early years settings, health partners, and other stakeholders.
- 3.3 The SEND and AP Partnership Board will have overall responsibility for delivery of the plan. Bringing together senior leaders from across the Local Area Partnership, the Board will provide strategic oversight, challenge, and decision-making to ensure delivery remains on track. The Board meets six times a year and will oversee progress against milestones, risks, and priorities across the full programme.
- 3.4 A Reform Delivery Group will support this structure by maintaining oversight of the programme and actively managing delivery between Board meetings. The group will monitor implementation, track progress against actions and milestones, identify delays or emerging risks, and coordinate corrective action where required. This will ensure a clear line of sight from day-to-day programme management through to strategic oversight by the SEND and AP Partnership Board.

4 How does this work contribute to the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy?

- 4.1 Education is a fundamental building block of healthⁱ. The benefits of good quality, inclusive educational environments reach far beyond learning, positively impacting social and emotional development through childhood and into later lifeⁱⁱ. This provides the foundation for future wellbeing and growth. By strengthening this building block, every child and young person in Coventry with SEND will have the support to achieve, thrive, and feel a genuine sense of belonging.
- 4.2 The prevalence of SEND in the population is a key factor in understanding health needs and shaping joint commissioning between the NHS and the local authority. It also helps determine how the education system should respond to provide appropriate support for children and young people, while informing future adult needs. The Local SEND Reform Plan focuses on earlier intervention and support, as set out below:
 - Children and young people with SEND achieve, belong, and thrive locally;
 - Families have confidence in the SEND system;
 - Mainstream settings are confident and supported to meet need early;
 - Coventry has a sustainable, high-quality local SEND and AP offer; and

- A strong partnership drives continuous improvement.
- 4.3 The plan's targets and metrics apply to children and young people with SEND and are to: increase school attendance; reduce suspensions and exclusions; increase access to local provision and therapy; and improved access to positive destinations. This all contributes to the delivery of the Health and Well-being strategy.

5 How does this work align to Coventry's Marmot approach?

- 5.1 Support for children and young people with SEND is fully aligned with Coventry's Marmot approach. The Local SEND Reform plan ambition can contribute to all the Marmot principles, with close relevance to:
- giving every child the best start in life;
 - enabling CYP and adults to maximise capabilities and have control over their lives;
 - strengthening the role and impact of ill health prevention.
- 5.2 This will be considered further in the refreshed SEND data supplement for the JSNA.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Coventry SEND Local Reform Plan

Appendix 2: Coventry SEND & AP System Governance and Reform Delivery

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ⁱ [What builds good health? | The Health Foundation](#)

ⁱⁱ [Education | The Health Foundation](#)