

Date	27 January 2025
Time	09:00 – 11:00
Venue	Cedar Room, Canalside Conference Centre, Brooks Lane, Middlewich, CW10 0JG
Contact	jenny.underwood@cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk

Cheshire East Health and Care Partnership Board - SEND Workshop

AGENDA Chair: Isla Wilson

Time	Item No	Item	Owner	Format	Page
09:00		Meeting management			
(5)	1	Welcome, introduction & Apologies Paul Bishop, Daniel Harle, Janet Clowes, Ged Murphy.	Chair	Verbal	N/A
(10)	2	Voice of Service User	Parent Carer Forum	Verbal	N/A
(5)	3	Setting the Context	Penny Teale/Keith Martin	Presentation	2
(30)	4	Group Work	All	Verbal	N/A
(50)	5	Feedback from groups - 10 mins each group	All	Verbal	N/A
(20)	6	Action Planning	All		
11:00		Close of meeting			
Next meeting		Friday, 14 March 2025 Time: 14:00 – 16:00 Venue: Academy Suite, Holmes Chapel Community Centre, Station Road, Holmes Chapel, CW4 8AA			

Cheshire East SEND Workshop

January 2025



Purpose of the session

- Explore what we could improve about the current systems, focussing on how we can make an impact and what the priorities are.
- Engage everyone in a solution focussed session.
- Building a consensus and a call to action for change.



SEND in Cheshire East

- 4,854 children and young people (aged 0-25 years) living in Cheshire East have an **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)** (December 2024).
- A higher percentage of children and young people have an EHCP in Cheshire East compared to the England average. However, there are a lower number of children and young people on **SEN support** than the England average rate.
- The most common primary support reasons in EHCPs are **speech language and communication needs, social emotional and mental health and autism.**
- SEND appears frequently amongst our children and young people open to **early help or children's social care.**



SEND in Cheshire East

- **Managing needs and therefore demand** for our SEND services is one of the biggest challenges for whole 0-25 SEND Partnership
- **A Graduated approach** operating across **all agencies** needs to be strengthened as there is not enough resource (funding or staff) within our specialist services to respond to increasing complexity and prevalence of SEND needs.



Risks and Concerns

- Children and Young People's Mental Health.
- Neurodevelopmental Pathway (Autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)).
- Variable waiting times for access to SALT OT and Physiotherapy assessments and some 'hidden' onward waits for subsequent therapy.
- Outcomes for children at SEN support.
- Quality and timeliness of completion of EHCPs.



SEND Themes

- **Collaboration** - including inter and trans-disciplinary working, sharing best practice, single point of access/assessment.
- **Coproduction** - including voice of the child/young person.
- **Early Intervention** - including waiting well, digital offers, universal and targeted services.
- **Preparing for Adulthood** - including from the earliest years, but also clarity on transition between children and adults' services.



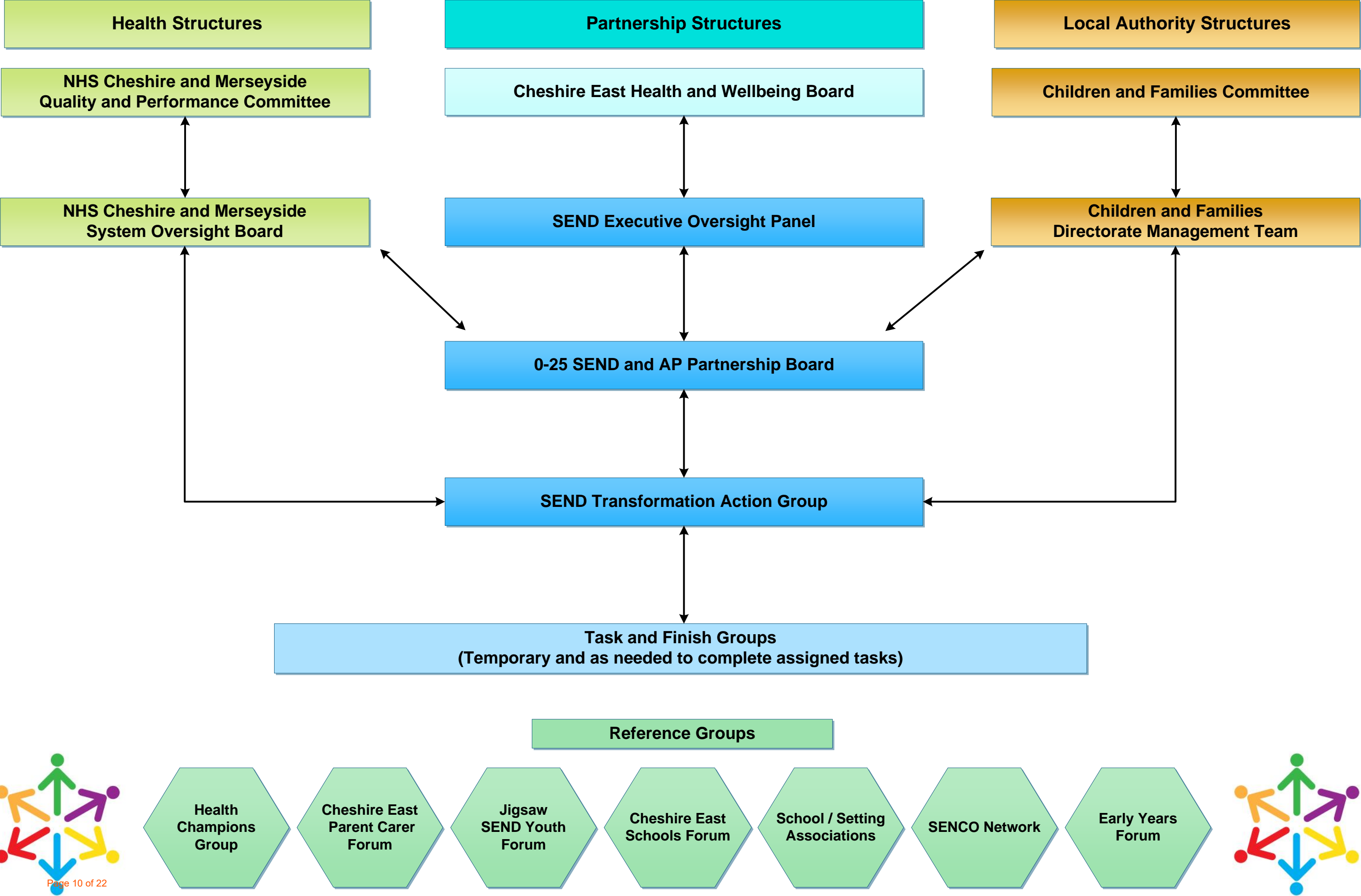
Questions?



A high-angle, top-down photograph of a group of people standing in a circle on a light-colored, textured floor. Their hands are clasped together in the center, forming a star-like pattern. The people are wearing various colored clothing: a bright yellow sweater, a light blue button-down shirt, a pink long-sleeved shirt, and a red sweater. Some individuals are wearing accessories like a brown leather watch, a black beaded bracelet, and a black and orange wristband. The overall mood is positive and collaborative.

Thank you for attending

Cheshire East 0-25 SEND Partnership Governance



Cheshire East Self-Evaluation Summary

January 2025



About Cheshire East

- **Generally affluent, a desirable place to live**, has excellent schools, good employment options, transport networks and services
- **18 small areas (LSOAs) in the most deprived 20% nationally**; Crewe, (13) Macclesfield (2), Wilmslow (1), Alsager (1) and Congleton (1).
- **More children are living in poverty** now than 10 years ago, although significantly lower than the England average.





Cheshire East

TOGETHER for Children and Young People

Together we will make Cheshire East a great place to be young

What we want to achieve

We believe that...

- Children are best supported within their families and their communities.
- All children should enjoy the best education which prepares them to thrive in adulthood.
- Families and communities are strong and resilient, with the right help, by the right people, at the right time.



Inspection and Intervention

Inspection and intervention					
Event/intervention (ILACS)	Outcome/status	Date	Event/intervention (SEND)	Outcome/status	Date
Focused Visit [Children in Need and Child Protection Plans]	No areas for priority action	Nov 2021	Area SEND (Legacy)	WSoA required	March 2018
JTAI [Criminal exploitation]	Areas for Priority Action	July 2022	Area SEND (Current)	Making sufficient progress	May 2021
Improvement Advisor (ILACS)	Yes	July 2022	Improvement advisor (SEND)	Yes	
ILACS	Standard Inadequate	Feb 2024	DSG Project Safety Valve Agreement	No but DfE support in place	Jan 2024
Improvement Notice	Yes	July 2024	Delivering Better Value	No, but previous DBV support was in place	
1st Monitoring Visit	Front Door TBC	Feb 2025			
2nd Monitoring Visit	To be arranged	March 2025 onwards			

SEND AND ALTERNATIVE PROVISION



Identification and timely assessment of need

- Children with **SEN support has increased** from 9.4% to 10.9% over the past year. We remain below the national and SN average (12.3%).
- The **Early Years Forum** has provided effective early intervention for our youngest SEND children. A recently appointed **Early Year's Forum lead practitioner** is strengthening links with parents.
- The development of our **Family Hub SEND centre of excellence** is supporting parents through targeted sessions and access to a range of professionals. Our **local collaboratives** have all identified SEND as a priority.
- We received 698 **needs assessment requests** up to October 2024; 11% less than the 787 in same period of 2023. Of these 266 or 38% were parental requests, a slight increase (2%) from last year.
- **Too many children and young people are subject to plans** when compared to our statistical and regional neighbours.
- **Statutory timeliness of Education Psychology reports** for academic year 2023/24 is 84.5%, which puts us in a higher quartile of our neighbouring local authorities.
- We have **significant delays** in the **assessment pathways for Autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**; with **waiting times around 2 years** between referral and diagnosis for children, and up to 6 years for young adults. Initiatives have been put into place to support families during their wait.

Participation in decision making

- **Parent Carers are fully engaged** in the SEND partnership Board and Transformation Action Group. A **memorandum of understanding** with the Parent Carer Forum, the LA and Health is almost complete.
- Our last **Parent Carer survey** had 474 responses. Parents were positive about the impact of their new EHCP, with a low response suggesting that the EHCP does not meet the needs of their child. However, 33% of respondents find it very difficult to communicate with the relevant teams and services.
- To support communication, the Transition Team are **developing a webpage for each key phase of transition**. We are also attending **parent support groups** and encouraging **coffee mornings** within our settings
- Our **TOGETHER principles of co-production** are embedded in our practice; **children and young people with SEND influence the strategic development** of services and support through a range of coproduction activities. A **Shadow SEND Partnership Board** has been recently established.
- **"Jigsaw", the SEND Youth Forum** meets weekly in Crewe and Macclesfield and the team delivers sessions in schools across the borough for young people who do not attend the evening group,
- We had 54 responses to our last **children and young people SEND Survey**; they were positive about the support and help they receive but were not necessarily always aware or understood the meaning of some of the jargon used.
- Our **PATH pilot** is **evidencing positive outcomes** for young people who are leading their own review.

Right help and the right time

- We have a **good range of early intervention, support and information for children with SEND**, their parents and practitioners to provide the right service at the right time.
- There has been a 120% increase in those accessing our **Local Offer for SEND** from 2023 to 2024 (131,633). Parent carers do not easily find what they are looking; we have a new post is dedicated to the development of our Local Offer
- Our **Inclusion and Quality Team** work directly with SENCOs and head teachers across our mainstream provisions to improve inclusion and we have improved our multi-agency training offer.
- Our previous **outreach offer** was not as effective as had been hoped, so we have **moved to a single access point referral system**.
- Our SEN2 census return for 2024 identified a **14% rise in the total number of EHCPs** to 4576, a lower growth than the two preceding years, of 16% (2022) and 18% (2023), which evidences the impact of our SEND Improvement Plan, inclusion within mainstream provision and embedding our SEN Toolkit and graduated approach.
- During 2024, 398 **EHCPs have ceased**, an increase on 250 plans from last year (2023).
- We still **need to improve our timeliness of new EHCPs**; 50% have been completed within 20 weeks, with an overall average completion time of 23.9 weeks for all new EHCPs up to October 2024.
- Whilst significant work is underway to improve our practice and processes, **annual reviews remain an area of focus**, e.g., 86% of EHCP reviews that were due to be completed up to October 2024.

Right help and the right time

- **171** children and young people are currently receiving **personal budgets**, the vast majority of these (145) are used to access social care support.
- We currently have **39 children** and young people who are **EHE**, none of whom are children in need, subject to child protection plans or cared for.
- **50 children** and young people are educated other than at school (**EOTAS**); 2 of whom are children in need, none are subject to child protection plans or cared for.
- As part of our commitment to improve **mental health and wellbeing** of children and young people, we have **adopted iThrive**. We have mapped key mental health services to the THRIVE model and produced the **Cheshire East iThrive Service Directory**. We are organising a series of workshops focused on leading a system-wide response.
- Work on **preparation for adulthood** (PFA) is also currently under review. We are **trialling PATH** (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope), with a target to complete 10 by the end of 2024. Part of this work is to develop effective pupil voice in plans, capturing the views and wishes of our children and young people right from the start.
- Our **Transition Team** work across all transition points for children and young people and are adapting their services in response to feedback and good practice. This includes piloting targeted work within settings and co-producing **Transition Guides** for each key phase of transition.
- Our current **quality assurance processes are not robust enough**; we are implementing a new quality assurance and audit framework to support our improvements.

Right help and the right time

- **Health advice** for EHC needs assessments **continues to be timely** and over 80% compliance most months in 2024 (December 2024 was 94.5%). This is overseen by the DCO who picks up any issues with health providers.
- **Waiting times** for **Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy** and **Physiotherapy** are typically **positive** with overall 87% of appointments provided within 18 weeks, using initiatives such as weekend clinics to ensure this is maintained.
- **Waiting times** for child and young people **mental health services** are increasing and the numbers waiting have **increased significantly** since October 2023. The iThrive model aims to reduce the numbers and time waiting and ensure that services work cohesively to address needs.
- **Community Paediatrician services** are due to be reviewed due to a **discrepancy between the north and south localities** of the borough in terms of how this service is accessed.
- There are **significant waiting times** for **neurodevelopmental assessment pathways** and initiatives are being put into place to support families who are waiting.
- The **Learning Disability annual health check** figures have shown a **slight downward trend**. The ICB transformation team are picking this up.
- Our **effective DCSO** is part of the CWD service, with dual management from the SEND Transformation lead. **Social care advice has improved** to 75% or higher, compared to the NW, with a range of 30% - 75%.

Right help and the right time

- We have a programme of **capital schemes to provide additional special school places**, increase **local SEND provisions** and enhance SEND support services to ensure needs are met in the most effective way across mainstream schools, creating additional places in existing special schools and the provision of new special schools.
- In May 2024, the DfE confirmed that the majority of the council's application for **Safety Valve Capital Funding** had been approved, and we have been allocated an additional £16.5 million of grant funding to support these proposals.
- We **continue to focus on our practice in relation to mediations and tribunals**. Up to December 2024 there have been 294 mediations, 239 (81%) were overturned and 55 (19%) were upheld. Those overturned are often due to additional information provided by professionals during the mediation process.
- Up to December 2024, we have had 135 cases appealed through the **1st Tier Tribunal Service**. We have recruited a **Tribunal Development Officer**, who has been working across the service to improve practice. A **new tribunal process** has been developed. **Tribunal training** has been delivered across the service. Local authority timeliness has significantly improved with no late responses since we introduced the new process and training.
- The focus now is on **working directly with families to resolve issues** without recourse to the Tribunal in the first place.

Prepared for next steps & achieve strong outcomes

- Generally, SEND children and young people experience good **educational outcomes**. Those with an EHCP continue to do much better than SEN support and this continues to be a priority area.
- Our Youth Support Service (YSS) support **those at risk of NEET** (RON) from Y11 onwards.
- Young people accessing **supported internships** (SIs) continues to increase; in the academic year 2024/25 we have 48 SIs, with 5 providers.
- We are working with registered providers and housing developers to build **innovative models of supported housing**. In 2024 we commissioned 22 new units of accommodation for those with learning disabilities; 6 supported accommodation units for young people and will open in early 2025. Less than 5% (24) of people in supported living are out of area. Of these, 80% (19) are in our neighbouring borough.
- The PFA team has co-produced a **skills for life booklet** which shares a wealth of information to support those with an EHCP or SEN support plan
- Families have access to **individualised support and advocacy** around SEND and mental health, including drop-ins, delivered by the 0-19+ teams.
- **NHS Cheshire and Wirral Partnership Trust** have developed an **18-25 service to support transition**, including working with young people who have mental health needs or learning disabilities, on their own identified goals.
- Currently 79% of young people referred to the PFA team are under 18, and the average age of referral to the team is just over 18.
- **SEND Marketplace events**, organised by Family Hubs to support parents, bring together professionals monthly in the north and south.