

Minutes

Safety Valve Board Meeting

Tuesday 17th December 2024, 2pm

Microsoft Teams Meeting/Meeting Room 5A

Present:

Naomi Carter (NC) – Service Director, Education, Inclusion and Access
Heather Morris (HM) – Service Manager, SEN and Inclusion
Rachael Williams (RW) – Inclusion Manager
Debbie Williams (DW) – Team Manager, Data and Performance
Irina Rowan (IR) – Senior Finance Business Partner
Jodi Smith (JS) – Senior Accounting Technician
Rosie Lister (RL) – Virtual School Headteacher
Theresa Wall (TW) – Service Manager, Education
Ellie Furmidge (EF) – Business Services Officer

Summary of Actions
Action: Send the LGA Peer Review out with the minutes.
Action: NC to put together a formal template with themes set out and send to the group for comments.
Action: Group to give NC feedback on the new plan documentation.
Action: SandL to move meetings to ½ termly and 2.5 hours.
Action: NC, SL and SandL to sit and look at dates of meetings and circulation of information.

1. Welcome:

NC welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the agenda for today is different to usual, in order to provide an update on current position and the plan moving forward.

NC advised that the IOW service has now been in place for 10 months and with the recommendations from the LGA Peer Review, SEND Partnership Board and Safety Valve, we need to put everything together and adapt our ways of working. NC has created a new template, which she will share.

Action: Send the LGA Peer Review out with the minutes.

NC explained she has put together all of the actions from the Peer Review and the Safety Valve and has come up with 6 themes, to simplify things. She added that the SEND board will continue to be presented in the same way, but highlighted, Safety Valve is particularly

about the high needs overspend. There was discussion around the themes and where particular workstreams should sit.

Action: NC to put together a formal template with themes set out and send to the group for comments.

2. Current financial position and how its grown in the previous 8 months, trends and growth areas:

IR reported a £6.3million overspend with a total spend of £29million of which £20million is high needs budget. IR said the pressure areas and where we are seeing the most increases are, INMSS, EOTAS, Post 16 and the PRU.

Independent placements:

IR stated in April there were 95 placements, 99 in the Summer and 96 now with a current unit cost of £54k. She reported 20 Mainland placements which have a higher cost, with the most being £137k off island and £117k for Post 16. There has also been a rise in unit cost at St Catherine's of around 7%. HM added that some students have a base cost and additional resources, such as 1:1 support.

EOTAS:

IR reported 78 current EOTAS students costing an average figure of £33k. HM reiterated this is an average cost and stated some of the highest costs relate to historic packages over £100k with six or seven providers. She stated new packages are more robust.

PRU:

IR shared from the latest submission, funding for 95 FTE which is an increase from 77 in the previous year. She added this is due to the increase in numbers of children and this is only expecting to increase to around 120 FTE.

Post 16:

IR reported 259 in summer, with current numbers at 302 and is expecting this area to keep increasing. HM said there are bulge Year Groups with large numbers entering in Year 11 and 12. She added teams are reviewing education opportunities and pathways in adulthood, proposals to cease EHCP will take place where young people have moved on to paid employment, adult social care pathways or where specialist provision is no longer required. (42 plans ceased this year)

NC asked for data on where the pressure Year Groups and the numbers in each Year. HM stated she has some related data already so can share this, which will be developed as part of SEND Data dashboard.

3. What is causing the increase in demand and rising costs?

NC mentioned the current Island education system as a whole is not performing and suggested all children including those with SEN will be better catered for once the system improves.

RL suggested deeper analysis into current needs and provision mapping etc. as it is important to understand this and provide alternative offers to better meet need. HM stated that parents of young people who are EOTAS are on the whole happy with their child's

current offer, reporting their offer is appropriate to meet need in the absence of a specialist SEMH provision, many suggest they do not want their child to return to a formal educational offer in a school as they do not feel this is in their child's best interest.

RL questioned the need for some EHCP's for students attending College, with HM reiterating students should be progressing in education and not pivoting at this stage.

IR confirmed there are 633 EHCP's in mainstream schools which is a decrease 2.5%, more children are requiring specialist provision.

HM mentioned the number of EHCP referrals between January and December (354), with 43% coming direct from parents which is an imbalance, however schools are submitting supporting data to panels. HM confirmed there will be a piece of work around understanding whole service statutory requirements. TW reiterated the need for all data.

NC acknowledged the useful conversation and highlighted the need for a collective understanding of inclusivity.

4. What do we need to do to remedy this?

NC mentioned young people are placed on EOTAS packages due to lack of placements, high anxiety mental health needs and ILC expansion.

RW mentioned placing medical through Section 19 at the ILC and NC has planned for high anxiety. NC asked how much would be saved if they had provision as it needs to be addressed. IK confirmed £27,000.

HM said the secondaries shared a strong voice about different pathways and vocational courses at the recent Heads day when collaborating on the developing the vision of the education strategy.

RW confirmed that they are looking at clearer entry and exit points at the ILC, but they have a barrier around the powers to direct under Fair Access.

5. Barriers:

RL raised the level of skill in schools and training not being utilised in the right way. RW said some are resistant to change and mentioned the robots which are cheaper than the cost of the ILC, but there was push back.

HM said there needs to be consistent messages of services/teams, to reinforce expectations and support schools to develop inclusive practice. The LA need to achieve and develop its schools offer to be a 'centre or excellence' working together and present a united front. NC stated we can only have confidence if we have the right offer. DW reiterated we have to be consistent and cohesive.

RL suggested celebrating more of the successes and positive outcomes and those 'brilliant' services. NC said she is always sharing positive news stories.

7. Next steps and new plan:

NC shared her ideas around the new plan and documentation, explaining actions and impacts will need adding. She has added a tracker for RAG ratings each ½ term which can be easily reported to the DfE. NC asked for feedback from the group.

Action: Group to give NC feedback on the new plan documentation.

HM asked that these board meetings are moved to ½ termly. This was agreed and meetings would be 2.5 hours.

Action: SandL to move meetings to ½ termly and 2.5 hours.

RL asked for data input more regularly and information to be sent in advance of meetings. HM confirmed she and DW are looking to produce a dashboard for SEND and NC confirmed information will be circulated prior.

Action: NC, SL and SandL to sit and look at dates of meetings and circulation of information.

8. Any other business:

None.

NC thanked all for their time and hard work.

Meeting closed 3.40pm