

SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

LA Name	Date Report Submitted	Signed off by S151 Officer & Director of Children's Services	Name & Email Address of Key Personnel	
Isle of Wight	27/11/2024	Chris Ward Ashley Whittaker	CEO:	Wendy Perera Wendy.Perera@iow.gov.uk
			S151 Officer:	Chris Ward Chris.Ward@iow.gov.uk
Do you need additional support from either of our specialist SEND advisers (early years / inclusion) to support the effective delivery of your Safety Valve plan? If yes, please specify which area (early years / inclusion) you would like extra support in, giving a brief overview of how this support would be beneficial.			DCS:	Ashley Whittaker Ashley.Whittaker@iow.gov.uk
			Other key contacts for Safety Valve:	Naomi Carter Service Director for Education, Inclusion and Access Naomi.Carter@iow.gov.uk
We are already receiving support from Mark McCurrie and would be grateful if this can continue				

Is your LA's Safety Valve plan on track?	Yes/No	Commentary
To achieve the Safety Valve agreement's projected deficit in the current year?	No	Whilst we believe that the strategy and action plan developed over the past nine months contain the correct and optimal system improvements (largely supported by the findings of the recent Local Government Association SEND Peer Challenge), these will take time to translate into significant changes in actual expenditure, and longer than the duration of the agreement. Ensuring robust ordinarily available provision is effectively implemented across the school system will take additional staffing and development of the mainstream school workforce. Also key to this is the restructuring of the primary school system so that schools are better funded and can invest in the resources and workforce development needed. The Island has recently closed a consultation relating to closing six primary schools. The creation of additional SEN places is also linked to the school place planning work we are currently undertaking, and we would welcome the repurposing of capital funds currently earmarked for the new special free school on the Island to instead be used to support these proposals. We believe this would have a quicker and better impact on the transformation needed.
To achieve a £0 DSG deficit by the end of the Safety Valve agreement?	No	

Is your LA's Safety Valve capital project on track?	Yes/No	Commentary
	n/a	

Programme Headlines

This quarter, the biggest drivers of positive change have been (up to 3):

- Opening new SEN places, including the first secondary SEMH provision, additional primary SEN at Medina House and the Resourced Provision at Greenmount.
- Recruitment for school improvement service to help support and challenge school system.

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- Recruitment for educational psychology service to help implementation of OAP and complete statutory work.

This quarter, the biggest barrier(s) to successful implementation of the Safety Valve plan have been (up to 3):

- Implementation of OAP, due to our document not being ready, along with the staffing to deliver the training and support across the school system.
- Educational Psychology advice due to capacity. Commissioning locums and recruitment for new team underway.
- Ongoing high rates of requests for EHC needs assessments

This quarter, the best examples of stakeholder engagement around the Safety Valve plan have been (up to 3):

- Positive engagement session with our Parent Carer Forum (IOW Parent Voice), parents, and carers. However, whilst progress was being made and future events were agreed, the group has now decided to cease operation and so we will need to establish a new PCF
- Engagement of whole education department (all speech and language therapists, primary behaviour staff, outreach staff at the council) in enhancing Safety Valve plan.
- Engagement of school governors to develop their understanding of Safety Valve.

Alongside your Safety Valve financial and narrative monitoring reports, please share with us the latest strategic data dashboard utilised by your governance oversight board for Safety Valve.

NB This should not be something created for the DfE Safety Valve monitoring process; if you do not have a strategic data dashboard, just let us know.

SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Agreement Condition	Assurance Level	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
Condition 1: 3.1. Create greater clarity of 'Ordinarily Available Provision' (OAP) through further dissemination of recently produced Special Educational Needs (SEN) support guidance and offering training to headteachers and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) about what constitutes OAP	Update 1 (May)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of services are still provided by Hampshire. Most of these will stop by 31st January. Until we have our own staff in post, we will not be able to set our own services or services similar to these up. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SENCO networks. These will stop from February. SEN Phone line. Disappointingly, this is not being used by schools. Working group continues to develop the new Ordinarily Available document in draft, by January 2025. This needs to be co-developed with SENCO's, teachers and headteachers in schools. Once we have an EP service, we can use their expertise to enhance the draft version. Transforming Education online platform, hosts all training modules and resources. Early Years SENCO network – are currently delivered virtually, uptake is generally 20% - to improve attendance it is planned during the next academic year to reinstate face to face meetings on a termly basis – the networks will be promoted. IMPOWER's VSEND tool has been rolled out, but it is unclear the impact it has had.
	RAG	
	Update 2 (August)	
	RAG	
Condition 2: 3.2. Improve the quality of annual reviews of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) through training, greater Local Authority (LA) engagement and improved processing to ensure timescales are met, so that children and young people meet the outcomes in their EHCPs, which should lead to a step-down in provision over time	Update 1 (May)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External scrutiny has taken place through a recent LGA peer challenge – the report has been shared at the recent Local Area Partnership Board, 12 recommendations have been identified as part of the review and leaders across the partnership will work to develop a strategy to implement these over an agreed period. There is significant overlap between these recommendations and actions already identified and part of the Safety Valve strategy and action plan. The SEND Manager has taken up post (23/09/24) and is working to review the operational functions of the service to create a plan of work in line with the strategic development. Training has been implemented in relation to statutory processes and functions of the team (new assessments and annual review) – learning and accountability within the statutory team is being developed in relation to complaints/ombudsman and external scrutiny – develop the workforce and stop escalation – the impact of such will be monitored . Attendance at all phase transfer annual reviews for mainland INMSS placements (non LAC) continues to be a focussed area of planned work to ensure appropriate provision is secured for September 2025 and where appropriate secure education on the island (potential 13 cases). The SEND Manager through induction is meeting with key stakeholders to strengthening partnership working – attendance at social care panels (children with disabilities and adult transition team) is creating better planning, access
	RAG	
	Update 2 (August)	
	RAG	
Update 3 (November)	RAG	

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		<p>to pathways and ensuring consistency of resource.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners across education, health and care have reviewed internal processes in place regarding providing advice for statutory assessments, this remains a targeted piece of work to reduce inconsistencies and is part of the agenda linked to partnership working to improve the quality and audit process.
Condition 3: 3.3. Ensure more robust oversight of decision making during the assessment and co-production of EHCPs, so that children are placed in most suitable provision that can meet their needs	Update 1 (May) RAG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A multiagency panel meeting to support the EHC new assessment takes place weekly to support decisions to assess and whether to award an EHCP following statutory assessment. This panel is well attended by partners across schools, EP, EY, inclusion, health, and care The SEND Manager is making the panels more interactive and holding members to account for their individual service areas Training has been completed with the statutory assessment service to underpin fundamental service expectations of the statutory processes in line with legislation. To embed this practice a weekly complex case session has been established and fortnightly case discussions with SEND officers and casework assistants – this is already demonstrating accountability of officers and is providing the appropriate structure to support workforce development of the process, decision making and co-production. Where it is a decision not to assess/award an EHCP telephone contact with families/school to explain how the decision was reached and to provide recommendations is now part of best practice, feedback from parents and schools is positive towards this approach. Discretionary spending is reducing through targeted work with schools and robust decision making when referrals are received. This is developing consistency in allocation of additional resource in line with statutory processes and exceptional circumstances only and is supporting casework officers to positively challenge expectations, schools are no longer able to make direct referrals to the panel The high need placement cost panel has undergone changes to the presentation of cases, officers prepare each case for panel to outline the funding request and how this is linked to the provision in the EHCP – the panel will only make decisions on cases that are in a statutory process, this is enabling more challenge back to schools around implementing a robust graduated approach. The contracted hours within the Service Level Agreement with Hampshire Educational Psychology Service (in place until 31/01/25) have been fully allocated due to volume of EHCNAs and this has created a 'backlog' of assessments waiting to be completed. Recruitment is underway for a principal EP and a 4 EPs (closing date 01/01/25) and as an interim measure a business case has been presented for a 6 month interim offer to support statutory work and training, and quality assurance in schools.
	Update 2 (August) RAG	
	Update 3 (November) RAG	
	RAG	

SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Agreement Condition	Assurance Level	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
Condition 4: 3.4. Increase maintained/academy specialist placements available on the Isle of Wight to minimise the need for more expensive placements	Update 1 (May)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an increase in EOTAS packages as parents'/LA's view is mainstream is not an appropriate placement and this is an alternative to securing mainland placements (in line with parental preference who do not want their child travelling to the mainland). The changes to panels as outlined in condition 3 is supporting robust placements, primary needs requesting EOTAS are SEMH/ASC (high anxiety). Until expansion of SEND provision is established on the island it is likely there will be continued consideration for EOTAS required. The lack of progress with the free school is significant in plans • The expansions of St Georges Studio (SEMH, 15 places), Medina House (25 places) and Greenmount Resourced Provision (12 places) are in place. There is a transition plan for Medina House who have just completed recruitment – all pupils will be placed by January 2025 • Shahana Knight (TPC Therapy), has completed her work with St George's School and Greenmount School to deliver on a 'trauma informed' environment. • Secondary RP expansion work will commence in line with the review of school place provision. Proposals to expand will be published in September 2024. • A deep dive has been completed around young people with Social Emotional Mental Health needs (high anxiety) identifying year groups of young people and how their educational offer is currently being supported through a tailored package. Due to the high volume of work associated with school place planning officers have had to consider the timetable of expansion and how we plan to implement phase 2 of SEND provision expansion. • 45 appeals were lodged with the first-tier tribunal in 2023, 70% of which were requesting a placement in a specialist provision (LA does not oppose placement, at a specialist school on the island, is inappropriate but placement would be incompatible with the education of others due to overcapacity). In the first 6 months of 2024 32 appeals have been lodged with the first-tier tribunal of which 46% are relating to Section I of the plan.
	RAG	
	Update 2 (August)	
	RAG	
	Update 3 (November)	
RAG		
Condition 5: 3.5. Create an early intervention ' Primary Behaviour Service ' to replace the primary provision at the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) on the island, to reduce the number of permanent exclusions and meet needs earlier	Update 1 (May)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now that the Primary Behaviour Service has been established. We need to conduct some quality assurance of the provision and triangulate this against feedback we have received from Parent/Carer voice. This along with an analysis of impact will allow us to identify next steps, effectiveness of operating model and impact across the system. • The entire outreach offer needs to be strategically lead and coordinated into one front door, triaging all support for schools and ensuring we challenge schools on their use of OAP and the use of the graduated approach. • Our outreach offer is currently being reviewed for effectiveness.
	RAG	
	Update 2 (August)	
	RAG	
	Update 3 (November)	
RAG		
Condition 6:	Update 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We successfully recruited into the Post 16 Manager role

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3.6. Improve the Post-16 offer on the island, encouraging take up of supported internships and supported apprenticeships, improving preparation for adulthood outcomes, and reducing demand on High Needs funds	(May)	<p>team leader. This will provide much needed additional capacity. The post holder will be mentored and supported through their induction programme by two experienced Post 16 managers in other local authorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An audit of Post 16 provision across the Island is to be requested from the LGA, to identify areas which need to be improved upon. This will form part of our Post 16 plan. Mapping of post 16 provision is underway and will feed into the overall plan. DFN project is underway. (DFN is the name, not acronym of a national organisation).
	AG	
	Update 2 (August)	
	AG	
	Update 3 (November)	
RAG		
Condition 7: 3.7. Review the governance of the High Needs Performance and Oversight Board with the intention to include a reference group which will include stakeholders, partners, and children and young people, to help inform planning in the local area.	Update 1 (May)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New boards being chaired and led by IOW officers and ICB seniors including well attended multi agency Local Area SEND Partnership Board, including children and young people representative, PCF, DfE and NHSE. This now provides IOW strategic direction and focus on needs of the Island. Local Government Association Peer Review of SEND Strategy, has been undertaken and provides us with a platform to plan ahead (attached with these papers)
	RAG	
	Update 2 (August)	
	RAG	
	Update 3 (November)	
RAG		

RAG	Definition
	Savings/cost avoidance and/or workstream(s) complete
	Savings/cost avoidance and/or workstream(s) remains on target
	Savings/cost avoidance and/or workstream(s) are currently off target, with plans to mitigate
	Savings/cost avoidance and/or workstream(s) are off target

SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME RISK REGISTER

Risk	Assurance Level	Mitigation	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
Risk 1: Capacity of LA officers to deliver on the PfA workstream	Update 1 (May)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A temporary role will be created to add capacity and pull workstream together. A review of the overall staffing structure is taking place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service manager recruitment has been successful – person is in post <p>Action complete</p>
	AG		
	Update 2 (August)		
	AG		
	Update 3 (November)		
	RAG		
Risk 2: Capacity of LA officers to deliver on expansion work, whilst undertaking a school place planning work across the Island	Update 1 (May)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A temporary role may be needed to add capacity and pull workstream together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two senior leaders have left post, meaning other senior leaders have had to temporary take on additional responsibilities. Additional support from the council has been provided for project support, comms, HR and other areas.
	AG		
	Update 2 (August)		
	AG		
	Update 3 (November)		
	AG		
Risk 3: Need to build confidence in the education system to ensure children and young people have access to the right provision (address EOTAS)	Update 1 (May)	<p>Need to exploit all channels to engage with parents/carers</p> <p>Build confidence in the system and make decisions in line with statutory duties</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A group of senior LA officers have met with IOW Parent Voice, to build a new relationship with supporting a face to face event with the agenda item of safety valve (high level of dissatisfaction on the island). Interactive session Parents voice, have notified the LA that they have taken the decision to de-commission the committee (follow up meetings are planned and discussions have taken place within the local area partnership Board to identify a plan for engagement with parents across the island) Senior LA Officers have met with another influential parent group, to share LA's plans Need to scope out parents to start confidence building with.
	AG		
	Update 2 (August)		
	AG		
	Update 3 (November)		
	AG		
Risk 4: External partners do not contribute cost towards their statutory duties in line with	Update 1 (May)	Partners do not contribute.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular meetings now being held with senior NHS colleagues to ensure the review of therapy services across the island is reflective of the statutory duties Strategic Manager SEN & Inclusion working alongside NHS to identify contributory costs.
	RAG		
	Update 2 (August)		
	RAG		
	Update 3		

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Risk	Assurance Level	Mitigation	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
EHCP's	(November) RAG		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring appropriate contributions are secured and commitment to costs are implemented in relation to provision and assessments across stakeholders
Risk 5: Recruitment of Educational Psychology Service	Update 1,2 and 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigation – an interim EP service will need to be established whilst recruitment of a IOW EP service is established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress: a business case is currently being considered for 6 months interim arrangements whilst recruitment is underway
Risk 6: Restructure of primary school system to allow financial sustainability and investment in quality of ordinarily available provision and high quality provision at SEN Support	New for Update 3 (November)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<p>The council has recently finished (1st November) consulting on the closure of six primary schools. Closures are needed because the decrease in the number of children on the Island has resulted in a significant excess of primary school places and a primary school system that is forecast to lose £2.6m this financial year. A significant number of schools are in debt and these and others do not have capacity to fund investment in improved SEND provision. A primary school system realigned to the number of children will allow an improved financial situation and better investment in improved ordinarily provision and a graduated response. Cabinet will decide how to progress with this on 12th December.</p>