



Department
for Education

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Pauline Turner
Director of Children's Services, Hull City Council

Sally Newsome
Head of SEND, Children's Continuing Care and Personalisation
Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board

15 January 2026

Dear Pauline and Sally,

SEND Senior Officials Meeting: 13 November 2025

Thank you for meeting officials and advisers from the Department for Education and NHS England on 13 November to review the progress you have made in delivering your strategic improvement plan, as well as the current priorities and challenges for the local partnership in Hull.

We first discussed your improvement plan. Strategic Leads provided evidence and assurance that significant progress has been made against each priority – with 88% on track (with no concerns), embedded or completed. Of that 88%, 48% of actions are reported to be embedded and sustained.

There are three actions relating to areas for improvement which are considered as on track with some concerns. These are related to preparation for adulthood and a single vision to share information across the system. Partners recognised the need for a continued focus on shaping plans moving forward, and there are clear plans in place to progress this work. Recent collaboration with an industry partner to peer review the improvement plan and support shared learning has offered valuable insights into how to frame your shared vision moving forward.

Strategic leads provided an update on compliance measures. Over the previous year, a 7% reduction in demand for EHCPs was recorded, however in 2025 the rate of demand accelerated back up to levels seen prior to the implementation of Delivering Better Value initiatives. Despite this, 20-week timeliness compliance is improving – with the Local Area Partnership on track for a cumulative figure of 31% in 2025. You noted that the stability of the statutory team has improved significantly, with no dependence on agency staff for over a year. Work has also taken place to strengthen health integration in quality assurance. Weekly clinics have been introduced to allow dedicated time for caseworkers to seek advice from the DCO

with a view to ensuring health needs are accurately captured and reflected in plans. Partners identified that improving timeframes for EP advice will be a key next step.

Strategic Leads identified that at the time of inspection, a workforce development offer was in place; but this wasn't strategic or communicated in a coherent way. Significant work has been undertaken to transform this into a multi-layered, multi-disciplinary strategy with lived experience at the centre. Mandatory Learning has been introduced to promote understanding of responsibilities in relation to legislation. A range of learning is on offer, without limitations on which professionals can access specific learning. KPIs will be used to demonstrate impact as time progresses.

A review of the SEND outreach service has also taken place. This has led to an expansion of the service including the introduction of a new Communication and Language service and a Secondary SEMH service. Following feedback from parents and carers that meeting sensory needs was a significant gap across all age groups, a commissioned sensory service has also been introduced. All Trusts in the Local Area have signed up to a 70/30 cost sharing model for the Outreach Service. This is a significant achievement and demonstrates the strong working relationships, and ambition across the sector to strive towards a more inclusive system.

Health colleagues advised waiting times for wheelchairs has been identified as a new risk. Colleagues did note issues with the quality of the data, and advised work is taking place across both Hull and East Riding of Yorkshire to understand the true waiting list and potential impact. Steps are being taken to provide additional capacity for the provider in the short term. However, partners are keen to also establish an appropriate understanding of the data to ensure the service is sustainable and progress continues to be seen moving forward.

Waiting times for ASD, ADHD and SALT continue to present a challenge due to increasing demand. Increases have also been seen in the number of children, young people and families utilising 'Right to Choose'. Partners reported wanting to ensure children, young people and families are given the tools and appropriate wraparound support whilst waiting for pharmaceutical interventions. Speech and Language Therapists have been included in multi-agency meetings, with extensive work taking place on the SALT ordinarily available offer and targeted interventions.

Throughout the meeting it was clear that the partnership continues to work closely together, demonstrating a shared commitment to children and young people in Hull. Strong progress has been made on delivering your strategic improvement plan since we last met, and partners have a clear understanding of the next steps required.

We look forward to continuing to work with you as this progresses, and throughout the forthcoming delivery of reforms to the SEND system over the coming year.

Yours sincerely



Anthony Maher

Regional Lead for SEND (Yorkshire and the Humber)
Department for Education