

SEND IMPROVEMENT BOARD UPDATE:

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the May update following the recent SEND Improvement Board, I would like to provide you with a summary of our recent meeting. I appreciate your ongoing support and commitment to improving the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision in Birmingham.

During the meeting, I confirmed that my report to the Department for Education (DfE) is due to be published imminently [this is now published and available on the [link](#) below.] I encourage you to review it for a more detailed understanding of our proposals.

In my introduction, I also shared news about an upcoming event at Edgbaston Cricket Ground on July 10th. This event aims to bring together community members, schools, and other stakeholders to celebrate the launch of the SEND and Inclusion Strategies. It is an occasion of great significance and promises to be an important milestone in our collective efforts to improve SEND provision. Detailed information on how to attend can be found in the "Save the Date" notice attached below. This event will be helpful from my point of view as I have stressed I want the next phase of the intervention to focus more on schools and their work with the LA and partners.

As is customary, we dedicated a portion of the meeting to "The Voice of Experience." During this session, we had the privilege of hearing from Jo Sullivan-Lyons, who shared the story of a young person in Birmingham who had faced significant challenges. The individual attended a mainstream primary school and initially transferred to a mainstream secondary school but later transferred to a specialised SEND school, as it became apparent that it better met their needs. We reflected on the crucial importance of timely Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), and the positive outcomes that can be achieved through effective collaboration and support. The ensuing discussions, questions, and reflections from the group provided valuable insights that will undoubtedly contribute to our ongoing efforts to better serve our children. I am pleased to inform you that we regularly share examples of good practice and innovations with our colleagues at the DfE, enabling wider dissemination of effective strategies. Additionally, we will soon delve into some complex cases to extract the most valuable learnings from our collective expertise.

Helen Ellis and Jo Sullivan-Lyons then presented a comprehensive assessment of the work being carried out by SENAR. They emphasised that SEND is a collective responsibility and reminded us that the support provided by the Local Authority is just one aspect of the broader system. Helen reiterated the interdependence of our partnerships and the need to place the child at the centre of everything we do. While acknowledging that there is still substantial progress to be made, the group concurred that we are moving in the right direction. This sentiment was reinforced by recent positive feedback received from parents, expressing gratitude for the support provided by the service. It is crucial to recognise the significant changes that have taken place within SENAR as it stabilising from what was a long-standing crisis.

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We also received an update on the governance framework surrounding the SEND improvement programme. It was unanimously agreed that the voice of the child and the experiences of parents must be at the forefront of our improvement journey. Therefore, the governance of the programme should fully reflect their perspectives. Helen shared that the new SEND and Inclusion strategies will ensure that this principle is woven as a golden thread throughout the entire transformation and all associated activities. This approach was met with unanimous approval from the board.

I look forward to updating you following our next meeting.

kindest regards, John



[BCC SEND Service Commissioners Report](#)

10th of July SEND and inclusion Strategy Launch Event Invite and Details

[Visit the SEND Local Offer Website](#)

