

LOCAL AREA SEND LEARNING FRAMEWORK



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FOREWORD

We are committed to doing our best for all our children and young people in Plymouth, and we know that if we get it right for our children with SEND, we will get it right for all children. We know that to do this we need to continuously reflect on our practice and learn from what we are doing well and what we need to do better. We need to listen to our children and families so that we know whether we are getting it right for them.

Our Plymouth Local Area SEND Partnership commits to using this Learning Framework and will review its impact through our SEND Strategic Engagement Board in the long term, and during our improvement journey, the Local Area SEND Improvement Board.

We will respect the contributions across our partnership and collaborate to achieve wonderful outcomes for our children and young people with SEND.

Claire Paddon, Co-Chair SEND Strategic Engagement Board and Co-Chair Plymouth Parent Carer Voice

Lisa Linscott, Co-Chair SEND Strategic Engagement Board and Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills, Plymouth City Council

Karen Bradshaw, Independent Chair, Local Area SEND Improvement Board.



INTRODUCTION

We wish for all children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to achieve well in their early years setting, school and college, find employment and go on to live happy and fulfilled lives.

Plymouth SEND Strategy (2023 – 2026)

This vision is within the context of Plymouth Children’s and Young People’s plan – A Bright Future 2023-26, which sets out that:

We have a duty to help our children and young people to have a Bright Future. Our vision is that children and young people in Plymouth grow up healthy and happy, safe and able to aspire and achieve; living in resilient families and communities, able to take advantage of a broad range of opportunities.

The Plymouth Plan 2014 – 2034 set the framework for all our strategic planning. Plymouth’s vision is to be one of Europe’s most vibrant waterfront cities where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone. This is being delivered through four strategic outcomes: Healthy City, Growing City, International City and a Spatial Strategy. Our work aligns to the Healthy City Strategic Outcome which aims for people in Plymouth to:

‘Live in happy, healthy, safe and aspiring communities, where social, economic and environmental conditions and services enable choices that add quality years to life and reduce the gap in health and wellbeing between communities’.

We have a Learning Framework for our Local Area work with and for our children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their families so that we can know what good support looks like, review our practice and outcomes to ensure that they are good, and learn from what we find so that we are always focused on making a positive difference to our children and families. Our Local Area SEND Partnership includes:

- Plymouth children, young people and their families
- Plymouth Parent Carer Voice (PPCV)
- One Devon
 - Devon Integrated Care Board
 - Livewell Southwest
 - University Hospitals Plymouth
 - Plymouth Health and Wellbeing Board
- Education Leaders
- Plymouth City Council
- Plymouth Information, Advice and Support for SEND (PIASS)

What are special educational needs?

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) [Code of Practice](#) provides statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities. A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

PURPOSE OF OUR SEND LEARNING FRAMEWORK

This Learning Framework provides an overview of our arrangements for assessing the quality of services that support children and young people with SEND. It is jointly owned by Education, Health,

and Social Care Partners in the SEND Local Area Partnership. Our Learning Framework aims to help us to:

- Be compliant with relevant legislation.
- Listen to feedback from children, young people and families and learn from it.
- Evaluate our performance using data and by looking at our work reflectively.
- Find good practice and share it.
- Identify strategic priorities based on our findings.

OUR VISION AND VALUES

Our aim is that no Plymouth child should be left behind; no Plymouth child should find that their life chances are defined or limited by the circumstances of their birth or early childhood experiences. If problems emerge, we will step in and seek to work effectively alongside families to improve outcomes.

The following principles drive our approach to quality assurance in Plymouth:

We are strengths based:

- Promotion of wellbeing and prevention is a fundamental aspect of provision.
- Early help will be embedded across the system.
- Innovation and evidence inform our interventions with families.
- Systems should be responsive and accessible, not waiting for crisis to happen before help is offered.
- Engagement and empowerment of families and communities is key to what we do, building on individual and collective resilience.

We support the reduction of the impact of disadvantage:

- Improving the quality of education for all will support improved life chances.
- We explore the root causes of disadvantage and improve inclusion and improve opportunities for inclusion.
- Raising attainment is critical to reducing the impact of poverty.
- Services are designed to tackle inequalities.

We are restorative and reflective:

- We listen to what children, young people and families tell us and use this to drive change.
- We use a range of participation groups, surveys and face-to-face conversations and develop new ways to engage.
- We challenge ourselves to make sure we have the right support available at the right time and in the right place to support families.
- We ask ourselves whether we are working together as well as we can.
- We consider whether we are taking into account all the factors/context in the life of a child, including both resilience and risk.
- In line with our strategic vision and practice approach, we evaluate ourselves through all of quality assurance activity to align our system, services, and practice to ensure we are taking a restorative, strengths based and trauma informed approach.

What Does Good Look Like according To Our Parents and Carers?

Through the co-production of the Plymouth Local Area SEND improvement Plan. Parents and carers told us what a good experience would look like to them, when we successfully addressed the priority action areas and improvement areas for recommendations identified by inspectors during our latest Local Area SEND inspection.

They told us that:

- Children, Young People and families will have confidence that leaders across the city are working better together to ensure their needs are met.
- All children and young people have their needs met through improved quality and timely early intervention for SEND support.
- All children, young people, parents and carers of SEND are given the opportunity to design services they receive.
- Parents and carers of children and young people with SEND are listened and genuinely heard to across all our agencies a “tell it once” approach is adopted.
- The ‘graduated approach’ will be used consistently by schools for supporting children and young people with SEND to enable the identification of needs (the right help) and ensure they receive timely help (at the right time), including at significant transition points.
- All children and young people with SEND experience reasonable adjustments in all settings.
- All children, young people, parents, and carers feel safe and supported whilst they are on a waiting list because they are kept fully informed.
- All children, young people, parents and carers are able to access local provision suitable to their needs.
- Transitions will be successful through earlier planning, strengthened multi-agency information sharing, and supporting continuity for the child, young person, family and involved practitioners.

What Does Good Look Like according to our children and young people?

10 WISHES

Our Plymouth Young Safeguarders have been busy reminding professionals of their Ten Wishes and what they need from all of us to help keep them safe and feel valued. They want us to know that the Ten Wishes are just as relevant for all children and young people, including those with SEND, as they were when they developed them in 2014. So they've produced a booklet called 'The Why and How' which sets out why the wishes are important to children and young people and how we can all as individual professionals and organisations put their wishes into practice. Please take a look at the booklet and see how you can start making a difference and act on the wishes of our children and young people...it's really important to them. They've also done a film to support the booklet so you can hear directly from them in their own voices. You can find the booklet [here](#). You can find the film by following this Vimeo [link](#).



TEN WISHES

What Children and Young People in Plymouth want from you...

PLYMOUTH SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP

- We want professionals to be easier to contact.
- We want professionals to be on time, as they expect us to be.
- We want professionals to be properly trained and for us to be involved in the training.
- We want professionals to ask us what we need and not to assume.
- We want professionals to do what they say they are going to do, to listen and stand up for us.
- We want professionals to use words we understand.
- We want professionals to reassure us something is being done and tell us how long it will take.
- We want professionals to understand when we need to talk to them one-to-one.
- We want professionals to ask us 'do you feel safe?'
- We want professionals to respect us and how we feel.



HOW WE WILL KNOW THAT THE LEARNING FRAMEWORK IS EFFECTIVE

We can evidence improvement in practice and are regularly sharing good and great practice.

Our families tell us that we are getting it right for them and that they feel valued.

Our practitioners understand their role in relation to SEND and feel well supported.

There is a reduction tribunals and complaints and an increase in compliments.

Our EHCP processes are timely.

Transition planning is timely and starts at the right time to be most effective.

Children and young people with SEND attend school well and are less likely to be excluded, suspended or on a part-time timetable.

Young people transition to adulthood and work or training well.

Health and social care pathways are joined up and the community has confidence in them.

OUR GOVERNANCE

There is a strong, visible, political commitment across the council and its partners to improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND. They are at the heart of Plymouth Children's and Young People's plan – A Bright Future 2023-26.

Scrutiny and Cabinet take an active role in reviewing and challenging outcomes for children and young people with SEND and championing their interests, and ensuring alignment of priorities across the range of partnerships. They receive regular assurance through a corporate data summary as part of the council's challenge processes.

At the heart of our partnership arrangements is a strong **Plymouth Children's Safeguarding Partnership**, which robustly scrutinises safeguarding practice and shapes key local priorities to improve outcomes and services.

Monthly multi-agency **SEND Strategic Engagement Board meetings** are held to monitor the delivery of the SEND Strategy and have assurance of its impact.

Six weekly multi-agency **SEND Strategic Delivery Group** meetings are held to and chaired by the Director of Children's Services. These provide SEND leaders with the opportunity to report on progress, achievements and challenges between improvement board meetings.

Six weekly multi-agency **Improvement Board meetings** are held and independently chaired. These formally update city leaders on the challenges, achievements and positive changes being made to the delivery of services to children in Plymouth.

INFORMATION SOURCES

Our learning will be informed by a wide variety of sources to be meaningful; these include (but are not limited to):

Audits – Planned audits or formal evaluations including case audits and thematic audits triggered by nationally identified trends, Serious Case Reviews and locally identified issues.

Voice – Feedback from children, young people, parents, carers and delivery colleagues. This will take a variety of forms, such direct work with Plymouth Parent Carer Voice, Youth Ascends, Young Safeguarders and Youth Parliament, analysis of compliments, complaints and investigations.

Data – This Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Framework it to be integrated with Performance Management systems within and across key organisations within the city. All relevant data reported via scorecards. This will include local and national measures, targets if applicable and benchmarking where available.

CO-PRODUCTION AND PARTICIPATION

We recognise that as a partnership that listening to the voices of parents and carers, children and young people will help us to understand their experiences and needs better. It will also ultimately help us to deliver better services and achieve better outcomes.

All reports to Plymouth Local Area Improvement Board will specify how children, young people and their families have been involved. Full implementation of the Plymouth Co-production and Participation Framework will ensure that the experience of children, parents and carers is embedded in all our work.

The views of children and families are sought in a variety of ways:

- Through their key worker or social worker and recorded in formal assessments.
- As part of all review processes.
- As part of the case audit process.
- Via the Independent Children's Rights Service.
- From Children's Advocates.
- From the Young Inspectors Equilibrium project.
- From feedback questionnaires.
- Following completion of the SEN Statement Process and at Annual review.

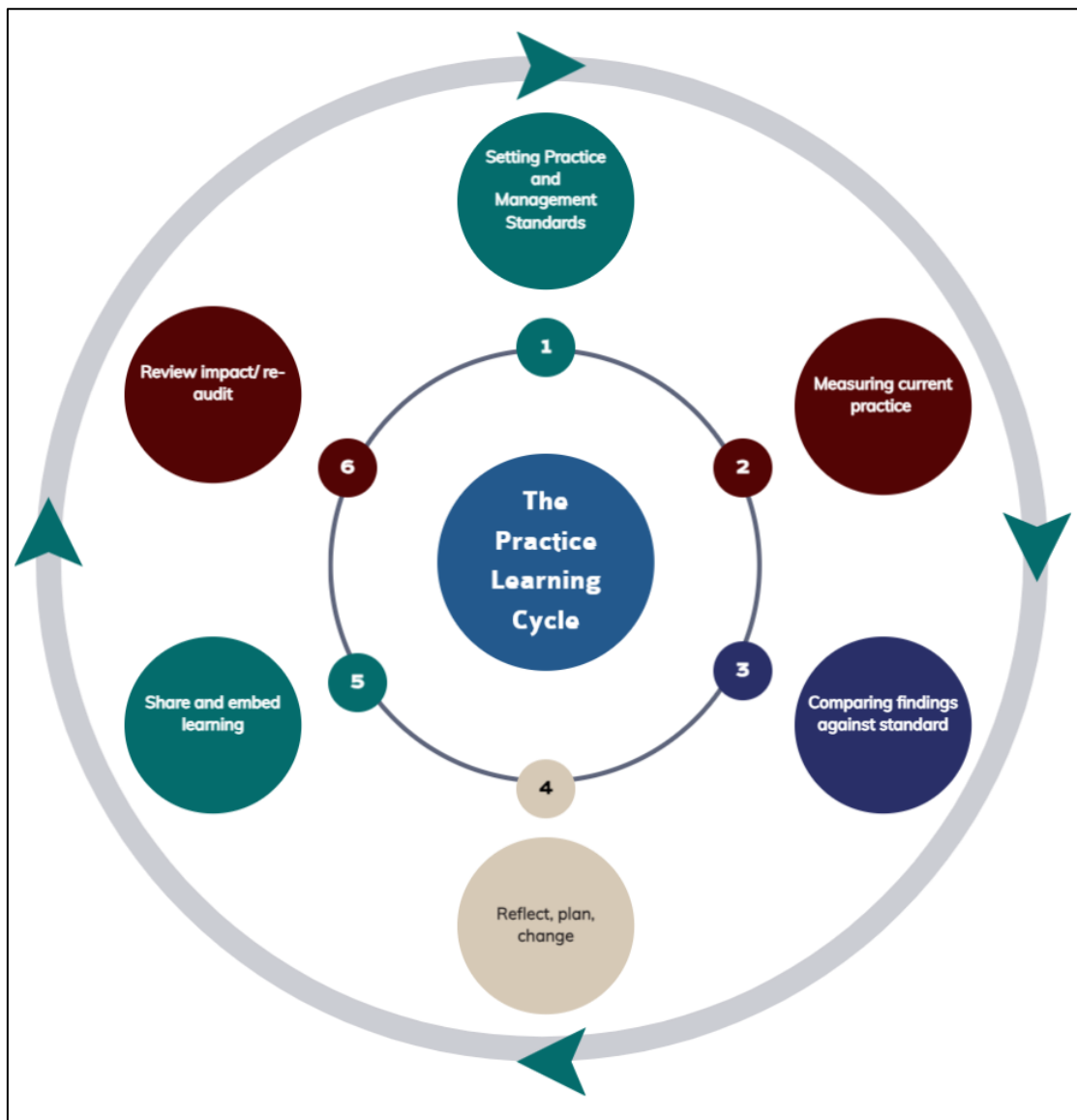
Children, young people and families are involved at all stages of the commissioning cycle, from helping commissioners understand their needs, through to the development of strategies and engagement in tendering processes, enabling commissioners to feel more confident that services are fit for purpose. In its widest sense, creating a culture of listening and participation is essential in safeguarding people and providing services that most benefit our children and families.

DEVELOPING A LEARNING CULTURE AND MONITORING IMPACT

Our Practice Learning Cycle

Quality assurance activity forms part of a continuous cycle of learning and improvement, it only has value if it leads to improvement in services and better outcomes for children, young people, and families therefore the learning loop is key. There are six practical stages in the learning loop, and each is proactive to inform, action and improve outcomes for children and young people:

1. Setting Practice and Management Standards.
2. Measuring current practice.
3. Comparing findings against standards.
4. Reflect, Plan. Change.
5. Share and embed learning.
6. Review impact/re-audit.



Continuous evaluation through our Learning Framework will ensure that learning can be understood on a system wide level where identified themes inform workforce and improvement plans and target improvement resources into the right areas at the right time.

Our Local Area SEND Learning Framework will ensure a whole system ownership of quality assurance and performance monitoring. The overarching concern of the governance surrounding it will be to close the learning loop and ensure impact.

OUR QUALITY ASSURANCE TOOLS AND ACTIVITY

We use a combination of quantitative (performance data) and qualitative (quality assurance) information to measure practice and outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

Performance Management Meetings are held within each organisation to ensure robust monitoring of current performance and trends is shared, understood, and cascaded to all teams and services. This meeting will be chaired by the relevant leader within each organisation and will:

- Review performance and highlight areas for further investigation (Deep Dive activity)
- Monitor progress towards achieving set targets.
- Provide intelligence to the city wide Improvement Scorecards overseen by the Improvement Boards.

Leaders will be assured of progress through regular quality assurance and performance management reports. Leaders will then provide guidance on future Quality Assurance and Performance monitoring activity to ensure future intelligence is developed.

Practice Standards: each service has its own practice standards which underpin this Learning Framework.

Practice Learning Conversations: we will develop the use of collaborative practice learning conversations. These provide managers and other reviewers with the opportunity to assure themselves regarding the quality and consistency of our work with children, young people and families. It promotes reflection, professional curiosity and debate and is an opportunity to triangulate information from other sources, for example supervision, and decision making at panels. Feedback is sought from children, young people and families and other involved professionals.

The focus of practice learning conversations is on improving the work we do with children, young people and families and developing a consistent understanding of what good practice looks like. Therefore, improvement actions need to be considered in the light of what positive difference will they make on practice and outcomes for the child. Outstanding examples of practice will be collated and quality assured, and shared widely to highlight practice excellence.

Audits: Auditing our work with children and young people is a vital strand of service improvement activity. There is a schedule for monthly collaborative audits, and these are moderated collaboratively with the auditor so that we can be confident about the grades given. Actions are set for practice that requires improvement, and these are tracked to ensure their progress.

For Vulnerable Learners regular auditing is undertaken of Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs) as well as schedules of thematic auditing of learners who are Electively Home Educated and those receiving Inclusions Services. The SEND EHCP Audit and Monitoring Group operate on a half termly model to quality assure finalised plans using a different focus each time and the EHCP auditor reviews EHCPs for children with Special Educational Needs and the placements of children who have EHCPs.

The 0-25 SEND Officers hold internal team moderating meetings to review EHCPs they have been writing. They work together to ensure consistency and continuity in approach and terminology.

Local area leaders for SEND are a key partner within the Plymouth Safeguarding Children Partnership and lead and participate in multi-agency audit activity, Practice Learning Reviews, and local and national Safeguarding Practice Reviews to assure and improve practice.

Annual 175/157 schools' audits are completed to evidence safeguarding in schools, with action plans following each audit.

Thematic reviews and dip samples focus on specific issues, informed by what we know from performance, quality assurance and other sources of information and insight.

Dip sampling enables a quick sample and analysis of the quality of a specific practice area or process. When undertaking dip sampling it is therefore not expected that a whole case will be audited unless the dip sampling indicates concerns about the practice in relation to that case. A larger number of cases can be dip sampled given the quicker nature of this process, allowing us to recognise possible themes. It is expected that managers will routinely dip sample the quality of practice in their service (at a minimum bi-monthly) and report the findings through their internal management processes.

Thematic reviews are 'deeper dives' into a sample of cases, the sample is chosen in the same way as dip sampling, however there is a smaller cohort allowing for a much deeper analysis of the cases. Thematic reviews are usually undertaken as a result of a dip sample exercise finding possible themes and/or patterns which need further analysis and assurance. Learning and feedback is provided in an overview report to be used by managers to share with their teams and considered in the context of wider policy/ practice development.

Action plans are developed with and implemented by services, and progress of improvement is monitored through the SEND Strategic Engagement and SEND Improvement Boards.

Thematic Reviews, Dip Samples and PLCs will be graded using Ofsted Gradings: Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement and Inadequate.

The grading enables us to develop a consistent understanding of what 'Good' looks like based on evaluation criteria, and provides assurance of our current practice standards, in line with our improvement journey. Grading also provides a universal language which all practitioners can understand and work towards.

Quantitative Data: Our local area has a wide range of data that informs the tracking and reporting of performance using key performance indicators. The SEND Improvement performance Scorecards provide system leaders with detailed and timely information. This enables monitoring and the identification of good practice, and, when necessary, to take corrective action directly for individual children as well as target improvements in service design and practice guidance.

The service continues to use national, statistical neighbour and regional benchmarking analysis to support our understanding as we aspire to achieve consistently good or better performance. We also benchmark against Local Authorities rated by Ofsted as good or outstanding.

SEND system leaders review and interrogate the data in the six weekly SEND Strategic Delivery Group. Actions are set to improve practice where outcomes require improvement to be good for children.

Provider Sources: All commissioned services are tendered using established processes and there are contracts in place to ensure services are delivered as specified. There is regular contract monitoring. If a provider receives an inadequate Ofsted or Care Quality Commission (CQC) rating, they are required to develop an action plan which shows how they will address concerns within a

given timescale. Educational placements are quality assured through contract management, school improvement activity and, for children with Education, Health, and Care Plans, via their Annual Review.

Ofsted inspection reports and enquiries, LADO information relating to individual educational schools/settings are also routinely scrutinised and support and intervention processes followed using our Schools Causing Concern Framework which includes a Team Around the School model for intensive support, and a Multi Academy Trust review process, which currently focuses on inclusion.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) provides routine data about the local area's current and future health, wellbeing and social care needs, and helps to identify any key issues.

Children and Family Feedback: The Participation team facilitate children and young people groups, and these groups regularly give feedback on service provision and development, and they provide challenge to ensure that their views facilitate change.

The individual views of children, young people, and their families are sought during assessments, planning, and reviews. The allocated practitioner, their manager and relevant chairs of meetings are responsible for capturing these views and taking them into account.

Twice yearly Practice Weeks provide valuable feedback about areas of practice strength and areas to strengthen. The evidence is gathered via the shadowing of practitioners' visits to children, observations of children's planning meetings and through conversations with children and families. The Chief Executive, Councillors, Directors, senior managers, and practitioners complete the observations.

Routinely monitored performance indicators include children and families participating in their child protection conference or looked after children reviews, and children and family engagement in early help and Education, Health, and Care Plans.

Children and families are heard through the Council's monitoring of compliments and the resolution of complaints. The Customer Service team create regular reports that detail timeliness of responses and emerging themes. Political oversight of performance is achieved through regular Member briefings and scrutiny through Council Committees and the Corporate Parenting Board.

Performance data and the progress of the Quality Assurance Framework is discussed during Quarterly Safeguarding Assurance meetings between the Director, the Lead Member, and the Chief Executive. This meeting is designed to ensure that there is full transparency on the health of the service and its future improvement needs.

Engagement with Plymouth Parent Carer Voice is gathered through cyclical surveys and social media polls. This is a key source of intelligence which is reflected upon.

Appreciative Inquiry: Appreciative inquiry case reviews offer an opportunity to reflect on what has gone well and how to build on strengths by asking questions that focus on what works and ideas on what can be improved. Outcomes are recorded and fed back through the system looking at what has gone well and sharing good practice, developing case studies and creating opportunities for positive feedback.

Complaints and Compliments: analysis of complaints and compliments received by the services is considered as part of the analysis of performance and quality assurance. Themes identified in the analysis of complaints are taken into account when reviewing performance data and quality assurance information. Regular reports about performance are presented to the senior leadership of all services.

Self-Evaluation (SEF): Annually we undertake a full self-evaluation of practice and services to support Plymouth's continuous improvement and delivery of high-quality services for children with SEND. As part of the Local Area SEND inspection framework each local area is expected to share a copy of their self-evaluation (SEF) with Ofsted. The SEF is shared with Ofsted to inform future inspection activity and their timing.

Report written by:

Lisa Linscott

Service Director, Education, Participation and Skills
Plymouth City Council

APPENDIX I – LINKS TO KEY NATIONAL AND LOCAL STRATEGIES AND DOCUMENTS

Local

- [Plymouth SEND Strategy](#)
- [Plymouth Inclusion Charter](#)
- [Plymouth Local Area SEND Improvement Plan](#)
- [JSNA](#) - links to be provided to SEND JSNA
- Practice Standards - links to be provided
- [Teachers' standards - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Plymouth Co-Production and Participation Framework – Link to be provided to Local Offer when published.

National

- [SEND Code of Practice](#)
- [Send-guide-for-parents-and-carers](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023](#)
- [Safeguarding Adults – Care and Support Statutory Guidance](#)