
York Schools Forum

4th July 2024

Report of Assistant Director, Education and Skills

Safety Valve Year 3, Quarter 1 monitoring report

Summary

1. This paper provides the members of the School Forum with an update on the progress being made to deliver the Safety Valve High Needs recovery plan. The Year 3, Quarter 1 monitoring report was submitted to the Department for Education on 27th May 2024.

Progress on the Safety Valve Recovery Plan

2. The council remains **on track** to meet the deficit reduction targets set out in the Safety Valve agreement.
3. Since the Safety Valve agreement was signed there have been continuing challenges both nationally and locally which impact on the longer-term sustainability of the plan. York, in common with local authorities nationally, is continuing to see a rise in requests for statutory assessment, with a significant increase in the number of parental requests being a feature of the last 3 years. This continues despite the additional workforce development taking place in schools through the SEND Champion and adaptive teaching programmes, the universal training offer from the Learning Support Hub and the York Neurodiversity Project in 2024.
4. As we enter quarter 2 of Year 3 work will be taking place to review the current SEN bandings used to provide top-up funding to support children and young people with education, health and care plans in mainstream education. The aim is to create a streamlined and more transparent approach to resource allocation in mainstream.
5. Despite the progress York has made delivery of the deficit reduction targets within the Safety Valve agreement will not deliver long-term sustainable change without significant changes to the national legislative framework. This includes changes to school funding to address the current inadequacy of notional SEN funding in mainstream. The increased costs of teaching assistants due to pay awards has created an additional pressure for mainstream and this needs to be considered in any review of SEND funding.
- .6. The table below summarises the operational activity that has taken place in Quarter 1 of Year 3 against each of the priorities in the Safety Valve agreement:

Safety Valve Priority	Activity in Year 3 Quarter 1 (March 2024-June 2024)
<p>Manage demand appropriately by supporting more children and young people in mainstream settings and appropriate and timely ceasing of Education, Health and Care plans.</p>	<p>The demand for EHC assessment continues to grow in line with trends being seen nationally, however, the percentage of children and young people in mainstream settings is above the national average. York has seen a 41% increase in the total number of EHC plans over the last 3 years. This increase poses a continuing challenge and is being factored in the sustainability planning post Safety Valve.</p> <p>Schools Forum will be consulted on proposals to simplify the banding system which will prioritise the equitable use of banding to further support inclusion in mainstream.</p> <p>More than half of the children and young people with EHC plans have a primary need of communication and interaction. A number of these young people also have a layered need of SEMH. Planning for their continued inclusion in mainstream has been a focus of the work taking place through the York Neurodiversity Project.</p>
<p>Reduce the costs of SEND transport and support independence by improving strategic and individual commissioning and contract management. This will include reductions in the costs of out of city placements, a review of banding and SEND transport.</p>	<p>The DSG element of the transport savings have been delivered.</p> <p>The School Transport team has received an additional £100K of funding through the Bus Services Improvement Plan. This will be used to increase independent travel training for young people 16-19. The grant will be used to develop a travel buddy scheme with York College and to increase the size of the York Independent Travel Service. The aim is to reduce the costs of 16-19 SEND transport by developing the independent travel skills of young</p>

	<p>people. This will help them to gain important life and employability skills.</p>
<p>Support the inclusion of children and young people with SEND in mainstream settings to improve outcomes and reduce requests for specialist provision, including the development of pre-and post-diagnosis support pathways.</p>	<p>The teachers and teaching assistants from the specialist teaching team have been allocated to work with the children not allocated a special school place in the Summer 2 and Autumn 1 half terms to ensure a smooth transition to mainstream settings. The priority is for those children transitioning from nursery to reception and this work includes an initial meeting with the family and both settings. Where capacity allows, the team will also work with those transitioning from Reception to Year 1 and Y6 to Y7.</p> <p>Feedback from parents/carers has been used to develop information about the phase transfer process which is being shared through the local offer website to ensure that the process and types of provision available are better understood for September 2025</p>
<p>Create more enhanced resource provision in mainstream schools to support the transition of children with a primary need of autism and associated social, emotional and mental health needs to reduce out of city placements.</p>	<p>Schools are continuing to develop nurture bases as part of their provision. The SEND Sufficiency Plan for the City of York has been drafted and will be published in September 2024. As part of this work consideration is being given to the need to develop SEN units to add to the city's graduated provision map.</p>
<p>Increase the number of young people with SEND in employment in the 19-25 age range by preparing post 16 and post 19 for adulthood, with a focus on routes to employment post 19.</p>	<p>The SEND Employment Forum has been successfully established. Feedback from the NDTI associate indicates that the work being led by the CYC Skills team is having a positive impact this includes the development of the employer toolkit and the use of young peoples' voice.</p> <p>Work on the Supported Internship Plan continues. Work on the introduction of supported internships at Aviva is progressing with a small cohort of young people successfully identified.</p>

	Review of the post 16 local offer will be the focus of work taking place in Quarter 2.
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7. Work continues on mapping and addressing SEND Sufficiency. This is linked to developing the strategic use of data to articulate trajectories for the next 5 -10 years which identify the priorities for the revision of the local area SEND Strategy which will be published in January 2025.

Next Steps

8. To complete the review of SEND Banding to ensure that resources are being used to support reasonable adjustments in mainstream.

Recommendations

10. Note the progress on the Safety Valve recovery plan between the Department for Education and the council which forms the basis of the grant agreement that the council has signed up to.

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