

West Northamptonshire Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternate Provision Partnership Improvement Board (SAPPiB) Summary

30 April 2026

Item 1: Action plan for 48U (Youth Engagement Group)

Safeguarding Training

- The Board agreed safeguarding training must include lived experiences from children, young people, and families. These experiences will be shared safely using videos, audio, animation, writing, or creative content in different formats.
- Training will be mandatory across schools, early years, colleges, alternative provision, and council-commissioned services. Also, part of staff induction as well.
- The Board agreed the impact of training must be measured accurately.

Design of New Units / Classrooms

- 48U will be involved in shaping the look and feel of the classrooms within the limits of the statutory and architectural specifications.
- There will be further work on post-16 provision (aged 18-25).

Item 2: Minutes and Action Log

- Minutes from the last meeting were approved with no changes. Action log updated.

Item 3: Update from West Northants Voices in Partnership (WNVP)

- Parents shared concerns about communication when caseworkers change. Families often do not know who to contact or how to get updates. This issue will be looked at by EHCP Team immediately.
- Transport remains a major issue, particularly for exams, alternative provision, and college timetables. This issue will be looked at immediately as well.
- Positive feedback was shared about hospital and outreach services.
- The transitions event on 23 March was valued by families, more attendance from schools would be beneficial.

Item 4: Review of Workstreams

Partnership and Leadership Workstream

- **Workforce Planning:** Staff shortages were identified as a significant risk as workforce pressures are affecting timeliness and service quality.
- **Workforce Planning:** More workforce data will be gathered and reviewed before finalising the SEND Strategy.
- **Communication:** Engagement of the Local Offer has increased. Impact on children, young people, and families will be monitored and measured for improvement.
- **Communication:** Unclear and inconsistent messages sent to schools about SEND processes were flagged. Feedback from families and providers will also be collected for improvement.

Transitions and Preparing for Adulthood (PFA) Workstream

- Families responded positively to the transitions event on 23 March with the feedback that better information about options could reduce anxiety and appeals.

'Right Support, Right Place, Right Time' Workstream

- Waiting times of Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) have shown improvements.

- Concern raised about unsafe and unclear communications regarding Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) pathways. The Board agreed for clear and timely communication as a priority.

Timeliness & Quality of Assessment and EHCPs Workstream

- Some performance measures have improved, but delays remain.
- Staff shortages are affecting educational psychology assessments.
- Many EHCP requests are refused due to missing evidence. The Board agreed that clearer guidance for families could reduce refusals and appeals.

Item 6: Other Updates

- The Inclusion Support Fund (ISF) grant was fully used and delivered positive outcomes.
- Work to refresh the SEND Strategy is continuing. Community engagement events are planned as part of co-production.
- Submission of SEND Reform Plan to Department of Education (DfE) and National Health Service England (NHSE) and preparation of SEND inspection are on track.
- The Inclusive Provision Toolkit (previous name is Ordinarily Available Provision, OAP) was agreed by The Board and relevant parts will be accessible to the public.

Item 7: Risk Log

- The biggest risk remains management of long health waiting lists and reviewing effective prioritisation and support whilst waiting.
- Workforce shortages and SEND service pressure increase this risk.

Item 8: Key Messages and Reflection

- Even SEND services remain under high pressure, progress is being made through partnership working and shared commitment.