

# Practice guide

## SEND & Alternative Provision

### Quality Assurance- Multi-agency Quality Assurance of EHCPs, Sefton

#### Background, purpose and rationale

The quality assurance process in Sefton was stable for several years but was not leading the improvement that were sought. As a part of its improvement journey, the SEND Partnership in Sefton has embarked on a rigorous programme of moderating, which aims to achieve greater consistency, improved quality and celebration of good practice of Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs). The quality assurance works on four levels:

- Level 1 – compliance
- Level 2 - individual agency QA (Education, Health & Social Care)
- Level 3 – LA SEN Senior case work officer QA
- Level 4 – multi-agency QA, completed initially by each agency on a Microsoft Teams form.

The feedback is then discussed at the monthly meeting which includes representative from Sefton Parent carer Forum, Education, Health and Social care. By writing good quality EHCPs for children, we provide settings and families with a clear picture of what support children and young people need. We want anybody to be able to pick up a Sefton plan and be able to identify the needs and provision easily. Writing clear, co-produced, concise plans will lead to improved outcomes for children and young people

#### What we did to improve children's outcomes

##### Level One: Compliance

- SEND Team collate a range of quantitative data in relation to EHCP activity, which will be further enhanced through the development of Capita during 2025.
- An overview report (The Dashboard) detailing whole service activity and comparative data analysis with national, statistical neighbours and local data is presented to the SEND Partnership Board bi-monthly.

##### Level Two: Individual Agency QA

- Individual partner agencies make arrangements to quality assure advice specific to their area of expertise, prior to submitting their reports to the SEN Team.
- This is to ensure that quality advice is available at the first point of writing or amending an EHCP. Everyone who is part of the SEND workforce has a role to play in improving the quality of EHCPs

##### Level 3: LA SEN Team Senior Casework Officer QA

There are several quality assurance activities that take place on a regular basis within the SEND team:

- Senior Casework Officers moderate a random sample of draft plans.
- When a new officer joins the team, they are provided with training and their plans are moderated by a senior colleague until they are deemed to be consistently good.

- DCO / DSCO – sign off and support for health and SC areas. Agreed wording for specific areas. On a termly basis, the team of CWOs participate in a peer moderation activity.

#### Level 4: Multi-agency QA

- Multi-agency audits focus on newly finalised EHCPs to ensure that the plans, going forward, are of a consistent and high quality.
- Moderators are sent 3 EHCPs and a MS Form for each plan.
- Moderators complete the QA Form, submit it and then meet as a collective to discuss findings.

#### What was the impact?

What does a good plan look like to us?

EHCPs include the views, wishes and feelings of children, young people, their families and carers, and their aspirations for the future. They are of high quality, clear, concise, understandable and accessible. They set out how partners will co-ordinate and work together to support the child, young person, parent and carers along with clearly identify need and include SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely) outcomes. EHC Plans include appropriate health and social care information, and the partnership is compliant with the SEND Code of Practice.

General improvements:

- The quality of plans has improved; they include the views of children and young people
- The quality of information has improved.
- Quality of Health and Social Care advice has improved.
- Plans are written more consistently to a good standard and are easier to read because of the use of plain language and the removal of jargon.
- Outcomes and provisions are more measurable.

#### Resources

Presentation Slides

QA Process Sefton 2025

EHCP QA Toolkit 2024-25

#### Find out more

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