



Department  
for Education

Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT

Tom Hunt, Leader of the Council  
Meridith Dixon-Teasdale, Director of Children's Services,  
Gavin Boyle, Chief Officer, South Yorkshire ICB

21 August 2023

### **Area SEND Revisit: Ceasing Formal APP Reviews**

Dear Tom, Meridith and Gavin,

I am writing to you following the most recent review of progress against your Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) which took place on 13th June this year.

I was very pleased to hear that you have made clear and sustained progress against the activity in your APP and that there is evidence that your work is having a positive impact.

In your APP, agreed with the department and NHS England, the key areas of focus, based on the issues highlighted in your Ofsted and Care Quality Commission revisit report, included:

- Weaknesses in securing effective multi-agency transition arrangements for children and young people with SEND.

The documentation you submitted and the evidence you provided for and during the recent progress review, you have now been able to demonstrate:

- Effective progress in all areas, the engagement of parents, and the Parent Carer Forum has been pivotal in maintaining a strong steer for the multiagency group, verifying feedback from parents and carers and ensuring that the pace of progress has been maintained over the last 12 months.
- The transition from an interagency approach to a multiagency culture where all services, agencies are working as a single enterprise with a shared vision for Post 16 transition arrangements. The role of the Parent Carer Forum has been central in allowing practitioners to coalesce around a single unifying factor strategically and operationally: children and young people with SEND and their families.
- Change indicating that the new multiagency ways of working and the new interrelated structures have achieved a culture change that will endure for the foreseeable future.

Based on the evidence provided, it is the view of the Department and NHS England that you have demonstrated clear and sustained progress. This means that we no longer need to continue with formal monitoring.

I know that this positive result comes as the result of a great deal of commitment and hard work on the part of the local authority, the Integrated Care Board, families and front-line staff across education, health and social care. I would like to thank you for all that you are doing to support some of the most vulnerable children and young people in society, and to congratulate you on the progress you have made. Please do continue with these efforts and build on the successes you have already achieved.

As with all local areas that were required to produce an Accelerated Performance Plan, both my team and NHSE will keep in touch with you on an ongoing basis to be assured that you are managing to sustain the progress made. The Department will also keep your situation under review and retains the right to request updates on strands of activity in the APP or to reinstate more regular and formal reviews should the need arise. The Department will now start to take a more business as usual approach to support the Strategic Plan and the new pressures arising in Sheffield.

Please contact your DfE case lead, James Ellis ([James.Ellis@education.gov.uk](mailto:James.Ellis@education.gov.uk)) or me if you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further.

I am copying this email to Chief Executive, Chair of the Parent Carer Forum, and to the MPs in the local area.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Bennett', written in a cursive style.

Jason Bennett  
Head of Yorkshire and Humber Vulnerable Children's Unit  
Department for Education