



Yorkshire and Humber Change Programme Partnership

WAKEFIELD • LEEDS • BRADFORD • CALDERDALE

Yorkshire and Humber Change Programme Partnership (CPP) Highlight Report

Date of Report:

11 February 2026

Reporting period:

24 November 2025 – 23 January 2026

CPP Context & Background

The Department for Education (DfE) are committed to testing, refining and developing the most significant reforms to ensure they get the changes right and are testing 'whole system' change in 32 local areas, working together as Change Programme Partnerships (CPPs) in each of the 9 regions of England. Wakefield is the lead Local Authority in the Yorkshire and Humber CPP working with Bradford, Calderdale and Leeds.

The programme was originally set up to test reforms set out in the Department for Education's SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan. These have included the development of a CPP Steering Group, completing a Strategic Delivery Plan, testing National and Local Inclusion Dashboards, setting up/revising SEND & Alternative Provision (AP) Local Area Partnerships, developing Local Area Inclusion Plans (LAIP), using a benchmarking tool for strategic planning for SEND and AP, testing of a National EHCP template, multi-agency panels, AP Reform (3-Tier Model), National Standards, Bands and Tariffs, Advisory Tailored Lists and Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC).

A national delivery partner, The Reaching Excellence and Ambition for all Children (REACH) consortium, led by PA Consulting in partnership with the Council for Disabled Children, Olive Academies and IMPOWER are supporting the DfE and our CPP's with delivery of this programme to implement, test and refine these reforms.

At the end of 2024, a new phase of the Change Programme was confirmed with a greater focus on inclusive practice. The work in this phase will help build a shared understanding across the sector and with DfE about what and how provision needs to change to enable inclusion for children and young people, including those with special educational needs or disabilities. Testing will therefore now focus on four key areas, these are:

- Local partnerships with shared priorities and plans for commissioning / delivering the right provision to enable inclusion
- A coherent inclusion offer of universal and targeted services wrapped around mainstream settings
- Support to mainstream settings to drive inclusive practice and leadership
- Use of data & evidence to understand impact on outcomes and experiences for children and young people within cohorts and settings

In May 2025, DfE confirmed an extension to the programme for a further year up until March 2026, continuing to focus on inclusion and inclusive practice, incorporating ongoing testing of the AP 3 Tier model, ELSEC, APST and PINS, along with a number of new areas, including prototyping a 'Local Inclusion Support Offer', a local 'Assistive Technology Lending Libraries' model, and understanding how SEN units and Resourced Provision can promote inclusion and improve outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND within mainstream settings.

Progress Updates Since the Last Highlight Report

Leeds:

- Inclusive Mainstream Practice website launched with partners, second launch event for schools (late November).
- Resource hosted on Leeds Local Offer with routes for families and professionals: SEND audit tool now integrated within the materials.
- Work on the Assistive Technology lending libraries is progressing well, using the existing medical needs contract as a foundation. Survey responses have now been received, procurement is underway, and evaluation processes are already in place to support the next stage of development.
- Cluster-based therapists are now offering weekly support across five schools, and early equipment trials have begun to help identify which tools and resources will best support pupils' needs.
- The Alternative Provision review has identified four key work streams, and a reset meeting has been held to revisit priorities and agree the next steps for taking the work forward.
- The Noticing Movement programme has shown strong success in early years' settings, and plans are now underway to extend the approach to Key Stage 1.

Calderdale:

- In-depth APST evaluation reflects the following outcomes:
 - 0 permanent exclusions for pupils accessing the Tier 2 APST model.
 - 75% reduction in permanent exclusions at Trinity Academy Grammar.
 - 25% reduction overall across Calderdale.
 - 98% reduction in suspensions in Carlton Mill Tier 2 provision.
- Outreach offer - developing, including CPD for 37 staff and wider cross-school engagement.
- Challenges around capacity, geography and balancing preventative vs statutory work.

Wakefield:

- Development day held with Wakefield special school headteachers focused on strengthening mainstream inclusion.
- Emerging proposals include:
 - Immersive days within special schools for mainstream staff.
 - Strengthening curriculum understanding for pupils with complex needs.
 - Exploring SLD (Severe Learning Difficulties) curriculum pathways to support mainstream settings.
 - Potential models for SENCO/senior leader supervision, and specialist outreach.
- Local discussions confirmed continued priorities: APST impact, SEND improvement, EBSA, data dashboards, multidisciplinary working, and young people's participation.

Bradford:

- A **case study on data dashboards** is being developed, including:
 - KPI dashboard, SEND dashboard, sufficiency tools.
 - EHCP template review ongoing (improving CYP voice).
 - AP programme changes being aligned with Change Programme learning.
 - Use of dashboards across attendance, exclusions, SEN funding and sufficiency.

West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board:

- Continued alignment work with mental health support teams, neurodisability pathways and SEND activity.
- Ongoing work to integrate insights from CYP participation and CPP activities into planning.

Youth Work Unit:

- The Youth Work Unit shared a December/January progress update on the Children & Young People Peer Research work.
- They have been networking regionally and arranging visits to share the Change Programme film and the CYP report, including recent visits to Huddersfield and upcoming visits to York, Wakefield, Sheffield, Barnsley, and Shipley.
- Smaller new groups for SEND children and young people are being formed as part of strengthening participation.
- Peer researchers identified two new priority areas:
 - Improving the Young People's Education Rights Pack.
 - Developing creative dissemination (film/podcast/resource) to share findings.
- Universal youth settings are increasingly asking the Youth Work Unit to attend and deliver sessions after the Peer Research publication.

Details of Meetings/Workshops/Task and Finish Groups in this Period

Yorkshire and Humber CPP Core Steering Group

Steering Group convened virtually on 26 January 2026 with established membership representative of areas in scope for the programme. The agenda consisted of:

- Welcome and Introductions
- Minutes from the previous meeting and actions arising
- Business Case Review
- Progress Updates
- Focus On
- What's coming up next / Key Updates
- Finance and Funding
- Communications

Date of Next Meeting: 23 February 2026

Weekly meeting with Wakefield lead contacts, DfE & REACH as required, this period:

- 4 December 2025
- 18 December 2025
- 15 January 2026
- 22 January 2026

Programme Planned Activities for Next Month

Leeds:

- Early Years materials will be added to the Inclusive Mainstream Practice site to make key resources easier for schools and practitioners to access and use when supporting young children with SEND.
- 'Noticing Movement' will be rolled out in Key Stage 1, building on the strong early years results and allowing schools to extend the approach to older pupils.
- The LA will contact No Isolation to support AV1 case studies, helping to capture how the robots are being used and the impact on pupils who cannot attend school in person.
- The local development plan will be updated by early December to reflect current priorities and ensure partners are working to a shared, up-to-date plan.

Calderdale:

- Expanding APST outreach to more schools: Calderdale will continue widening its APST support so that primary schools and more secondary schools can benefit, not just those already linked to the Tier 2 model. This expansion includes helping SENCOs, joining school strategy meetings, and offering behaviour-focused interventions to prevent exclusion earlier in the process.
- Preparing APST performance reporting for April: Work will take place to make sure all services within the APST can provide clear evidence for their April review. This includes showing progress on key indicators such as attendance, suspensions, reintegration success, and referrals. This information will form part of Calderdale's formal programme evaluation.
- Exploring long-term sustainability options: Calderdale will also begin planning how to sustain the APST after Change Programme funding ends. This includes looking at potential funding routes, considering whether schools could contribute, and identifying which roles or functions are essential to maintain in the long term.

Bradford:

- Continue developing their SEND and inclusion dashboards: Bradford will keep improving the different dashboards they already use (KPI, SEND, EHCP audit, Short Breaks, and school dashboards). They are also preparing a case study to show how these dashboards help leaders make good decisions, check quality, and plan for future SEND needs.
- Update and align their Alternative Provision (AP) programme: Bradford will take what they have learned from the Change Programme and apply it to their AP reforms. This includes making sure their tiered AP support model, monitoring systems, and processes link well with wider inclusion and early-help work across the local area.
- Make further improvements to the EHCP template: The LA will continue refining their EHCP template to ensure that children and young people's voices, needs, and outcomes are recorded more clearly and meaningfully. A revised version is expected soon

Wakefield:

- Immersive Days in Special Schools: Wakefield plans to set up days where mainstream staff can visit special schools to *see first-hand* how they teach pupils with more complex needs. Staff will observe how lessons are adapted, how sensory support is used, and how learning is personalised. This will help build mainstream teachers' confidence and skills.
- Subject-Specific Focus Groups: New working groups will be created where teachers from mainstream and special schools come together to look at particular areas of practice, such as communication, sensory needs, or emotional regulation. These groups will help everyone share ideas and understand what good inclusive practice looks like across the district.
- Exploring SLD Curriculum Pathways: Wakefield will look at developing clearer curriculum pathways for pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD). This is to help mainstream schools better support pupils whose needs are *too complex* for the standard curriculum but *not fully suited* to traditional P-scale approaches. This work will help shape future planning and support models in schools.

West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB):

- Continuing work on aligning SEND and health pathways: The ICB will keep working with local authorities to make sure health services - such as mental health support, neurodisability pathways, and wider health involvement - link smoothly with SEND activity. This will help ensure families receive more joined-up support across education, health, and care.
- Contributing to actions from the CYP Peer Research Report: The ICB, alongside local authorities, will provide updates on the actions they are taking in response to the Children and Young People's Peer Research Report. These actions will be fed back at upcoming CPP Core Group meetings.
- Maintaining involvement in CPP meetings and planning cycles: Despite organisational pressures, the ICB will continue attending regional programme meetings, youth engagement discussions, and planning sessions to ensure health partners remain involved in SEND reforms.
- Monitoring capacity during ongoing ICB restructuring: The ICB is also preparing for, and monitoring the impact of, ongoing staffing reductions. This includes considering how to maintain key SEND-related roles and support while restructuring continues.

Youth Work Unit (YWU):

- Continuing regional visits to engage more young people: The Youth Work Unit will keep visiting different areas across Yorkshire and Humber, including York, Wakefield, Sheffield, Barnsley and Shipley. These visits will be used to share the Change Programme film and the CYP Peer Research Report, and to gather more feedback directly from children and young people.
- Updating the young people's involvement page in the digital brochure: The Unit will review and refresh the section of the CPP digital brochure that explains how children and young people have contributed to the programme. Peer researchers will help redesign this page to ensure their voices are represented accurately.
- Continuing work with peer researchers on key youth-led priorities: They will keep working with peer researchers to improve the Education Rights Pack, making it clearer and more accessible for young people. They will also co-create new ways of sharing findings - such as a film, podcast or other creative digital resource - so that schools and youth groups can better understand CYP experiences.
- Following up with youth workers to arrange new sessions: Several youth workers asked for meetings after the holiday period. The Unit will now contact them to confirm dates for further engagement sessions and peer-research discussions.

Parent and Carer Feedback

Leeds

- Project leads from the Inclusive Mainstream Provision (IMP) team in Leeds facilitated a parent carer workshop at the Leeds Local Offer event, sharing expectations for collaborative working. A summary report was compiled and shared with the Parent Carer Forum (PCF) Chair and Vice Chair, followed by a feedback meeting on 30 June to agree next steps.
- Parents tested the new application status check form during the session, and their feedback was incorporated before launch.
- With support from Contact, work is underway to develop a co-production charter, which has now been agreed.
- A 'One-minute guide' has been produced for parents/carers.
- Parent/carers survey launched to measure Inclusive Mainstream Provision (IMP) impact.

Calderdale:

- Regional PCF feedback continues to guide local priorities, highlighting the value of strong EHCP processes, clear communication during change, and support for emotional wellbeing.

- Parent Carer Forum (PCF) acknowledgement from the Informing Transitions project: “We would like to extend our gratitude to all parent carers who gave up their time and were open and honest about their experiences of transition. A big thank you to the children who allowed us to share their stories to help improve future experiences for families. We also appreciate the schools that identified participants and responded to the SENDCo transition survey, and the West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership for supporting this project.”

Bradford:

- Parent confidence scores improved significantly (from 2.59 to 3.88) following interventions by Transitions Teams.
- Surveys collected as part of Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) evaluation.
- Families involved in the Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) pilot remain engaged with Targeted Early Help, showing trust and value in the support provided.
- Feedback gathered through Parent Carer Forums continues to shape local priorities, with families emphasising the importance of high-quality EHCPs, strong annual review processes, effective support for EBSA, and a continued focus on parent and carer wellbeing. This insight is helping to guide ongoing improvement work across the district.

Wakefield:

- The Elective Home Education (EHE) approach reflects responsiveness to family feedback by removing professionals from initial sessions and using community providers to build trust.
- Positive feedback received on Education Support Officers' work, with families reporting improved engagement.
- Parents attending Pinders Primary workshops reported feeling more relaxed, well-supported, and confident in understanding their child's needs, leading to increased engagement in reviews and better use of local services (e.g., Family Hubs, OT, SALT).

Regional:

- Families and partners value regular updates and want to stay connected with the programme.
- Work on CPP and Early Language, Speech and Communication (ELSEC) has been well received by boards and governance groups.
- Regional parent feedback continues to guide priorities, emphasising support for EBSA, emotional wellbeing, and high-quality EHCPs and annual reviews.

Impact to date and Feedback

Impact & Outcomes

Leeds:

- Automation development continues, focusing on identified 'pain' points, with initial feedback on the parent application status check form being positive and shared for Leeds Council feedback.

Calderdale:

- The Medical Needs Team is seeing positive impact in early intervention work.
- Mainstream Inclusion Calderdale audit completed and well-received, driving improvements in inclusive practice.
- Increased awareness of available support through the Inclusion Support offer, linked across the 7 levels.
- Education Support Officer (ESO) initiative supporting 7 students: early signs of improved engagement.

Wakefield:

- The Change Programme has delivered significant improvements across Wakefield:
- The Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce (APST) has expanded its remit, introducing roles such as Education Welfare Mentor and Youth Engagement Worker, with staff based in AP settings for at least 80% of their time.
- The Elective Home Education (EHE) programme engaged parents and the voluntary sector in provider selection, resulting in six new events for EHE/SEND families.
- The Multi-Agency Panel (MAPS) is now well established, enabling timely decisions for complex cases, while the transition to Liquid Logic has strengthened data capture and reporting.

- Over 1,000 delegates have accessed CPD through the Inclusion Offer, and 17 AV1 robots are supporting pupils' reintegration into school.

Regional:

- These achievements demonstrate progress in embedding inclusive practice and empowering families and schools and driving sustainable system change.
- Increased parental confidence observed during drop-in sessions and weekly EHCP phone calls.
- Improved quality of EHCPs.
- AV1 robots deployed - schools show growing interest.
- Schools engaging well with cluster-based therapists, strengthening inclusive practice.

Strategic Alignment & Development

Calderdale:

- Work on Mainstream Inclusion Calderdale aligns high-quality teaching with statutory requirements by incorporating teacher standards.
- The APST in Calderdale has been well supported by partners, and early engagement is now aiding recruitment efforts.
- There is real collaboration and co-production with all partners driving the Mainstream Inclusion Calderdale work. Starting with a blank canvas has helped.

Wakefield:

- SEND Delivery Group strengthened operational grip on transformation work.
- Continuing to improve automation, parents have given positive feedback on the new online tool that lets them easily check the status of their application.
- Partnership Engagement & Collaboration

Regional:

- The mini peer reviews highlighted gaps and provided key actions, now incorporated into the SEND & AP Strategy Delivery Plan and Self-Evaluation Framework (SEF).
- Various groups across the West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (WY ICB) are keen to continue receiving regular updates from the Delivering Better Value in SEND Change Programme (CPP) and to maintain alignment with existing work across the health and care system.
- Updates on the CPP and the Early Language, Speech and Communication (ELSEC) programme have been well received by the WY ICB Children and Young People (CYP) Board and other governance groups.

Youth Voice and Change (Regional):

- There has been a big rise in young people getting involved in shaping inclusion strategies and resources. Their voices are making a real difference.
- New tools are giving children and young people the chance to share constructive feedback on school practices. This is helping schools stay accountable and improve.
- Young people are really enthusiastic about Phase 3 activities. They are sharing ideas and testing resources that will shape whole-school approaches.
- Insights from the CYP report and peer review process are now influencing local authority strategies and SEND improvement plans - embedding youth voice at the heart of decision-making.
- Supportive environments are offering independence opportunities and strong relationships
- Young people are now directly influencing local and regional priorities, with their Peer Research findings shaping actions across all four LAs.
- Participation has grown significantly, with more CYP involved in shaping SEND improvements, contributing ideas, and leading discussions about their lived experiences.
- Young people have identified two major priorities - Education Rights and Creative Dissemination which are now being built into programme work, ensuring their voice shapes resources designed for other CYP.
- Their insights are prompting stronger collaboration between LAs, health partners, schools, and youth settings, reinforcing the value of involving CYP early in planning.
- Demand for Youth Voice activity has increased, with more youth groups and universal settings requesting sessions, showing that CYP feel more confident and engaged in influencing change.
- CYP feedback has become a standing part of regional planning, ensuring young people's experiences drive continuous improvement in SEND systems and support.

Risks, Barriers and Challenges

- Ongoing challenge to balance priorities and commitments across the CPP, mitigated through task and finish groups.
- Persistent vacancies and recruitment challenges in some local areas, creating resourcing pressures.
- Wider SEND system issues and changes to key posts continue to hinder progress and affect timescales.
- Limited capacity within Parent Carer Forums (PCFs) to support reform testing and maintain programme engagement.
- Minor delays in some funded projects due to unforeseen circumstances or logistical issues.
- Organisational changes within Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) under the national cost reduction programme may impact CPP capacity: impact remains unclear.
- There is a reliance on short-term or project-based funding for several initiatives - such as APST, inclusive settings work, and parent engagement models - creating uncertainty about how these activities will be sustained once Change Programme funding ends.
- Parent Carer Forums highlighted the importance of supporting parental wellbeing and emotional health, noting that families particularly value clear communication and stability during periods of system change.

For further information please contact: changeprogramme@wakefield.gov.uk

