



Yorkshire and Humber Change Programme Partnership

WAKEFIELD • LEEDS • BRADFORD • CALDERDALE

Yorkshire and Humber Change Programme Partnership (CPP) Highlight Report

Date of Report:

08 December 2025

Reporting period:

27 October 2025 – 24 November 2025

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

Wakefield:

- Graduated Approach: Launch held 24 Nov with 300+ attendees across many schools.
- AV1 robots: 27 units now in place: trials started in Family Hub Special Educational Needs and Disabilities youth group.
- Inclusive Settings Grants: Seven schools successful; payments due before Christmas.
- Transitions Team: Six workers in place; reintegration back to mainstream improving.
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) pilot agreed to become part of Team Around the School model.
- Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) Horizons: Strategic meeting planned to boost school uptake.
- Elective Home Education: Initial sessions held without Local Authority reps; future sessions to include advice and support.

Bradford:

- AV1 robots: Increased uptake following Head Teacher meetings: AV1 now monitored and developed under the EP service, with rollout linked to the Attendance Alliance and Medical Needs and Hospital Education Service (MNHES).
- Case studies: Educational Psychologist preparing case studies for early December, to follow up.
- Inclusive Practice / Team Around the School: Rolled out across 4–5 schools with multi-partner participation, initial challenging conversations with 3 schools have become positive after joint sessions.
- Alternative Provision Quality Assurance model: Train-the-trainer approach agreed in principle: development of gold/silver/bronze QA tiers with eight leaders across the partnership.
- Governance & funding: Proposal to take consolidated inclusive practice model to DMT/CMT in early January.
- Voice & transitions: Five core questions developed via parent/carers and CYP engagement: large final CYP event (42 schools represented)

Leeds:

- Inclusive Mainstream Practice website launched with partners, second launch event for schools (late November) with over 200 attendees at each.
- Resource hosted on Leeds Local Offer with routes for families and professionals: SEND audit tool now tied into the materials.
- Assistive Technology lending libraries: Leveraging existing medical-needs contract: survey returns received: procurement underway: evaluation processes in place.
- Cluster-based therapists providing weekly support in five schools; equipment trials started.
- Alternative Provision review produced four work streams; reset meeting held.
- Noticing Movement: Early years trials successful; Key Stage 1 extension planned.

Calderdale:

- AV1 robots: Momentum slowed due to lead absence since September: resource bases continue promoting use: schools reporting strong peer reception.
- Quality Assurance: Recruitment for QA officer closed with interest: remit covers non-school AP and Tier 1/2 in-school provisions.
- Impact data: Tier 2 provision shared internal data indicating a ~20% reduction in suspensions since January.
- Attendance tracking: StudyBugs technical issues delaying AP attendance tracking: aim to resolve by next meeting.
- APST & outreach: Speech & Language post recruited: outreach is the major focus to spread impact beyond the host school.
- Trusted Provider List: Work underway to establish a quality-assured list for AP providers.

West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board

- Meeting held with mental health and neurodisability program colleagues.
- New Neurodisability Board established; ICB representative invited.
- Headcount reduction of ~45% confirmed; formal consultation scheduled for January.

Youth Work Unit:

- SEND Youth Alliance report presented; co-written with young people available at [CYP CP Report](#)
- 82 young people engaged through peer research workshops.
- Report shared widely and scheduled for inclusion in the National Reach Newsletter.
- Partners asked to identify at least five actions per Local Authority in response.

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

Yorkshire and Humber CPP Core Steering Group

Steering Group convened virtually on 24 November 2025 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: 26 January 2026

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

30 October 2025
6 November 2025
13 November 2025
20 November 2025

Programme Planned Activities for Next Month

Wakefield:

- Process grant payments pre-Christmas and commence projects in the seven schools.
- Strategic EBSA meeting next week to target further school adoption.
- Continue AV1 trials in Family Hubs and Youth Hub: develop additional case studies with No Isolation.
- Embed SEMH learning into Team Around the School model across the district: monitor reintegration outcomes at fair access panel.
- Sustainability planning for transitions through July 2026 (ongoing).

Bradford:

- Log and start sharing AV1 case studies (first set due early December).
- Develop preferred Alternative Provision supplier list by March next year, aligned to the QA model.
- Centre of Excellence alignment for toolkit: next steps to be agreed within the coming weeks.
- Set first full transitions working group meeting with health/social care and parent representatives.
- Secure leadership decision in January on funding for the inclusive practice approach.

Leeds:

- Add Early Years materials to Inclusive Mainstream Practice site.
- Roll out 'Noticing Movement' Key Stage 1 pilots in the new year.
- Contact No Isolation to support AV1 case studies.
- Update local development plan by early December.

Calderdale:

- Medical needs lead returns in December to restart AV1 onboarding.
- Contact No Isolation for case studies and usage data.
- Primary clusters event scheduled for December.
- Resolve attendance tracking system and start monitoring Alternative Provision participation.
- Mid-year review of task force findings around Christmas.

West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB):

- ICB undergoing large scale organisational change. Review changes to SEND related health roles and impact on partnership working.
- **Youth Work Unit:**
- Develop a short, youth-friendly version of the SEND Youth Alliance report for wider sharing.
- Collate feedback from LA leads and ICB on actions they will implement: Deadline set for early 2026.
- Continue work on digital booklet showcasing good practice.
- Update young people on changes made as a result of their input.

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.
- **Leeds** - Parents tested the new application status check form during the session, and their feedback was incorporated before launch.
- **Leeds** - With support from Contact, work is underway to develop a co-production charter, which has now been agreed.
- **Leeds** - A 'One-minute guide' has been produced for parents/carers.
- **Leeds** - Parent/carers survey launched to measure Inclusive Mainstream Provision (IMP) impact.
- **Bradford** - 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.
- **Bradford** - Surveys collected as part of Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) evaluation.
- **Bradford** - 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.
- **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.
- **Wakefield** - Positive feedback received on Education Support Officers' work, with families reporting improved engagement
- **Regional** - Families and partners value regular updates and want to stay connected with the programme.
- **Regional** - Work on CPP and Early Language, Speech and Communication (ELSEC) has been well received by boards and governance groups.

Impact to date and Feedback

Impact & Outcomes

- **Calderdale** - The Medical Needs Team is seeing positive early impact in early intervention work.
- **Calderdale** - 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.
- **Wakefield** - The Change Programme has delivered significant improvements across Wakefield:
- **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.
- **Wakefield** - The Elective Home Education (EHE) programme engaged parents and the voluntary sector in provider selection, resulting in six new events for EHE/SEND families.
- **Wakefield** - 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.
- **Wakefield** - 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, empowering families and schools, and driving sustainable system change.
- **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** - Education Support Officer (ESO) initiative supporting 7 students: early signs of improved engagement.
- **Regional** - Increased parental confidence observed during drop-in sessions and weekly EHCP phone calls.
- **Regional** - Improved quality of EHCPs.
- **Regional** - AV1 robots deployed - schools show growing interest.
- **Regional** - 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.
- **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

- **Calderdale** - The APST in Calderdale has been well supported by partners, and early engagement is now aiding recruitment efforts.
- **Calderdale** - There is real collaboration and co-production with all partners driving the Mainstream Inclusion Calderdale work. Starting with a blank canvas has helped.
- **Regional** - The mini peer review has highlighted gaps and provided key actions, now incorporated into the SEND & AP Strategy Delivery Plan and Self-Evaluation Framework (SEF).
- **Regional** - 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.
- **Regional** - 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

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.
- Leeds reports continued operational and strategic vacancies despite interim cover. The Principal Educational Psychologist post remains vacant, with leadership duties redistributed. Recruitment of Educational Psychologists remains challenging: two external contracts are in place, and a marketing strategy is being developed to attract candidates, including enhanced pay and role development opportunities.

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