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A mini peer reviews is expected to take place in Leeds, and the impact of this case study will be updated once completed.

Mini peer reviews have so far been completed in Wakefield, Calderdale and Bradford. Strengths have been identified in detailed, co-produced strategies, collaborative thinking, and good use of data. Good practice identified in schools and settings includes needs-based resource allocation, early personalised transition plans, and a focus on emotional well-being. The role of SENDCO is emphasised, alongside the need for collaboration between schools to improve inclusivity. Children and young people report feeling heard, safe and the importance of having the right support at the right time. Parents and carers identify good practice to build on, with inconsistency in and focus needed on transition support, and improvements needed in relationships and communication.

Local Authorities in the Yorkshire and Humber region were invited to take part in mini peer reviews on ‘How inclusive are our settings’. This virtual process reviewed evidence and gathered views and experiences to identify inclusive practice, effective multi-disciplinary strategic direction, the impact of the Graduated Approach, and areas and actions for improvement and development.

**Impact – Overview**

Strategies, documents and training on the Graduated Approach were reviewed, alongside evidence of Governance arrangements, QA systems, and how families and young people have been involved. Meetings were held with LA, ICB and Social Care officers; families and the Parent Carer Forum; Children and Young People from various settings; and schools, colleges, work-based training providers and settings including Early Years. Settings also completed an anonymous online survey.

**Activities**

The reviews aim to locate where good practice is and what it looks like, highlight effective multi-disciplinary strategic direction across services (Health, Education and Social Care) with evidence of joined up working, governance and clarity of a common vision, explore the impact of the Graduated Approach (training, co-production, involvement of settings and services), and to identify areas and actions for development.

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**Feedback from Wakefield**

In Wakefield, the review found strengths in strategy, plans and support, effectively co-produced with partners including families. There was clear evidence of and commitment to innovative and collaborative thinking around inclusive practice. Key strengths included Youth Justice Provision and highlighted the key roles of the DCO and DSCO in developing multi-disciplinary approaches. Developing an effective transition pathway was identified as a key next step, alongside ensuring vulnerable groups are a key part of the inclusion strategy.

Good practice identified by settings involved effective needs-based resource allocation, early personalised transition planning and inclusion principles including a sense of belonging and adaptive learning environments. The role of SENDCO and the importance of their presence on SLT with a significantly reduced timetable was raised, alongside the need for flexible and responsive funding particularly around transition.

Young people reported feeling heard, making progress through having the right support at the right time, and highlighted the importance of staff knowing them and their needs. Next steps are to utilise young people’s voice to promote inclusion and inclusive ideas.

PCF-developed guidance is excellent, and the PCF groups are well-attended. Parent/carers highlighted inconsistencies in transition experiences. Relationships and communication between families and schools is identified as a key area for improvement.

The following are quotes from two students in Wakefield, one from a student in Alternative Provision, and the other from a secondary school pupil:

*“Feel this is a perfect school for my need. Help me with everything and nothing needs to be changed” – Student in Alternative Provision*

*“Increase in class sizes (35/36) and therefore there is less space and this can make pupils feel overwhelmed and therefore use the timeout pass to leave lessons for some time but this means they are missing out on some of the learning” – Secondary school pupil*

**Impact – Wakefield case study**

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The following are not direct quotes, but a summary from a session held with parents and carers, regarding their experiences following relationships being established.

*Schools can sometimes be frightened of parents, but once the relationship is in place they can see the collaboration*

*Families need support around reasonable adjustments – parents do not always know what the need is and what can be requested*

*Recognised the nurturing approach of primaries*

**Feedback from Calderdale**

In Calderdale, the review found strengths in strategy, with the co-produced, strong and detailed SEF with a clear vision. There is a robust SEND partnership, vision and priorities, with good use of intelligence and data. There is evidence of an inclusive approach, and a high number of CYP with EHCPs are educated in mainstream settings. There is a strong PfA offer and SEND Employment Forum. A next step is to ensure there is a detailed, co-produced Graduated Approach embedded in the practice in settings 0-25.

Schools and settings highlighted structured support systems, and strong transition plans, and a key focus on emotional well-being. Schools suggested more collaboration between institutions, alongside increased funding and training, to make systemic improvements to provision. Next steps identified include consulting with all partners on the SEND Strategy, training on SEND and Inclusion, and a greater clarity of the role of the SEND Inclusion support services and resourced provision.

Children and young people reported their voice being heard, feeling safe in school, and having friends. There were good examples of support, but it was raised that this can come too late.

Parents and carers reported inconsistency in inclusivity, with varied experiences. It was raised that exclusions are the highest in the region. Parents and carers highlighted that there is excellent practice in Calderdale to build on.

**Impact – Calderdale case study**

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The following are direct quotes from a session held with parents and carers, regarding their experiences following relationships being established.

*“I find the Local Offer particularly useful.”*

*“Schools can learn so much from parents as we have to be creative and flexible”.*

**Feedback from Bradford**

Parents and carers reported inconsistency in inclusivity, with varied experiences. It was suggested for knowledge of SEND team and funds of the transitions team to be increased. Although parents also stated lack of support for parents during the EHCP process, Local Offer was found to be useful.

**Impact – Bradford case study**

In Bradford, the review found strengths in SEND Strategic Partnership Board Governance, with a vision for Inclusion of SEND and vulnerable groups in the SEF. There is evidence of young people’s voice and representation in the strategic development. Although there is high number of exclusions and suspensions, there is strong commitment to inclusion in the strategy and the ongoing work on the Schools Inclusion Chartermark. PfA is a key priority in the SEND Strategy with a clear impact on the reduction of NEET figures since 23/24.

Schools and settings reported although there needs to be improvement to EP commissioning pathways, they found the outreach support from special schools to be helpful. Schools felt there is good collaboration with the LA. ICB and LA have found the rise in demand for CAMHS services and the inconsistency of inclusive practices across the borough challenging. However, there have been good practice noted around the developments services particularly for children in care with suspensions rates and the development of the Inclusion Chartermark with the PCF and the Youth Forum.

Young people reported their voice being heard and are supported by teachers, but it gets difficult when classes feel busy and chaotic. The right adjustments have been made, and they reported they feel like they are making progress.