

# SEND Improvement Board Statutory SEND Stocktake response

29 January 2026

# Summary

- There are currently 885 Children and Young people in assessment.
- 83 families are in the appeal process (9%) and as per the SEND Regulations, new timescales are applied following the conclusion of mediation/tribunal hearing and are monitored as an exception cohort.
- Of the 802 children without tribunal involvement, 83.6% of the total caseload is within 20 weeks, 16.4% of the assessment caseload is over 20 weeks. The longest wait is 78 weeks and 2 days, reducing from 112 weeks in December 2024, as a result of the focussed Recovery Work by the service.
- 0.9% (8 children & young people) of this caseload is over 52 weeks
- 7.5% (61 children & young people) is over 30 weeks
- Requests for new assessments so far in academic year 25/26 is an average of 206 per month compared to an average of 221 per month in academic year 24/25.
- 39% of EHCNA requests are from parents / carers.
- The DfE have been provided assurance that the 20-week timeliness (YTD) will reach national average (46.6%) by the end of March 2026.

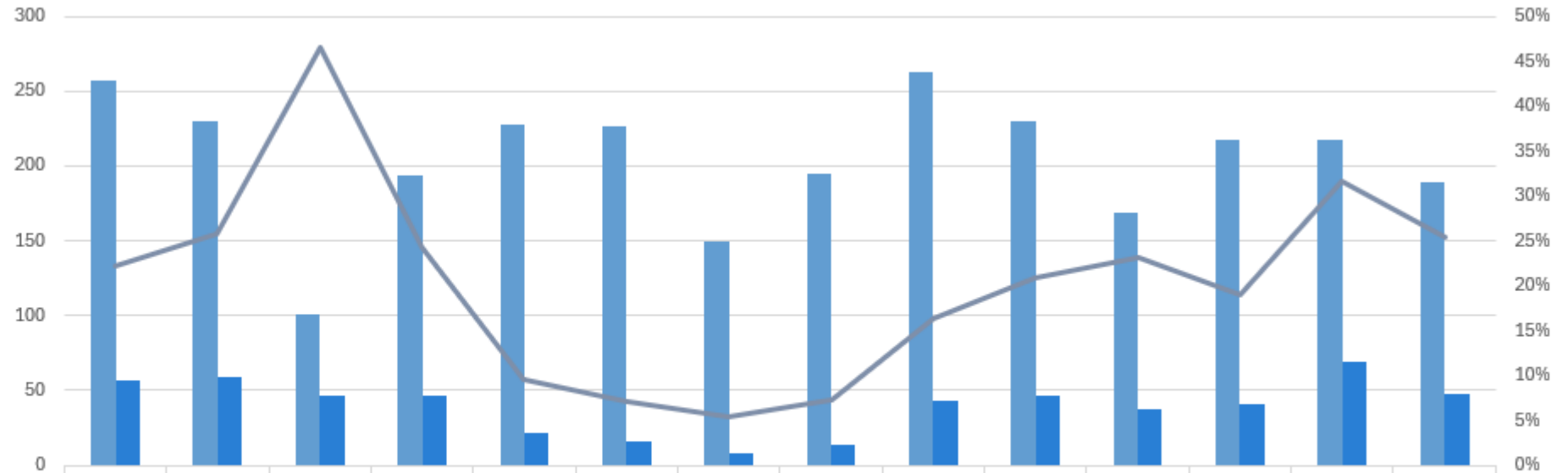


*Data correct as of 14.1.26*

# SEND Improvement Progress

Final Plans due to be issued by month, number and percentage within 20 weeks

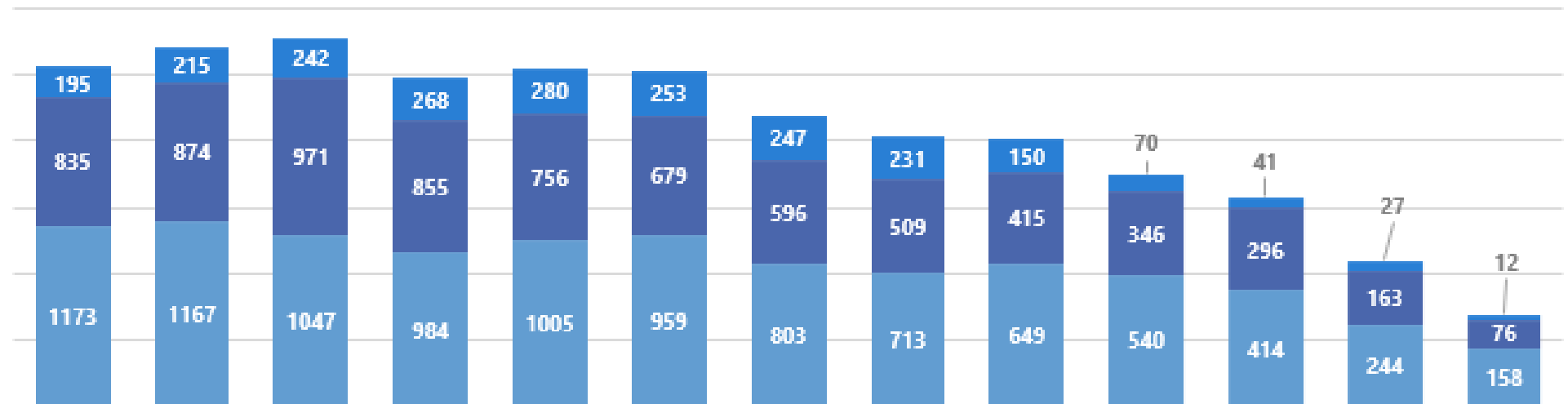
Average time to issue a plan in December 2025: 31 weeks 3 days



The percentage of final plans issued within 20 weeks had been increasing from July 2025. It has dipped in the last 2 months due to the increase in the completion of the legacy plans (over 20 weeks). However, the actual number of in-timescales plans finalised has been on an upward trend since May 2025. This is dependent upon the work in the system in terms of the total number completed.

# SEND Improvement Progress

EHCHA requests proportion by weeks

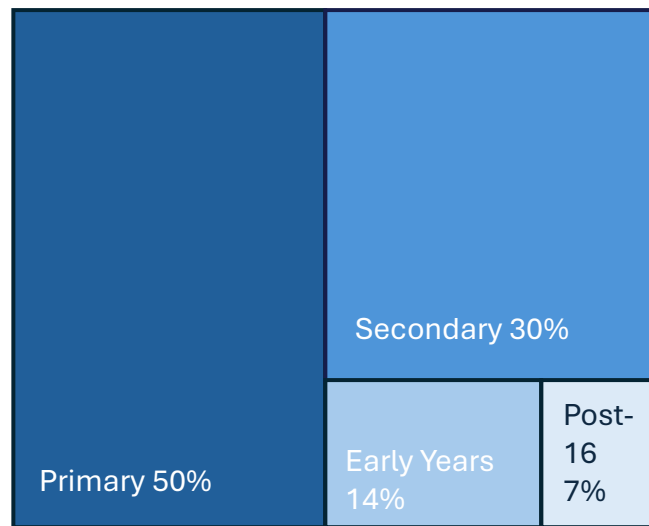


	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25
■ EHCNA requests over 52 weeks % (at date)	9.1%	10.3%	11.9%	12.6%	14.0%	13.6%	13.2%	13.0%	10.0%	5.1%	3.4%	2.7%	1.3%
■ EHCNA requests over 32 weeks % (at date)	38.9%	42.0%	47.8%	40.3%	37.9%	36.5%	31.8%	28.6%	27.7%	25.4%	24.9%	16.5%	8.5%
■ EHCNA requests over 24 weeks % (at date)	54.6%	56.1%	51.5%	46.3%	50.4%	51.5%	42.8%	40.1%	43.3%	39.7%	34.8%	24.6%	17.7%

In Dec 2025, only 1.3% of EHCNAs (12 children) were over 52 weeks. This is impacted by mediation and tribunal involvement and represents sustained work towards completing the legacy cohort.

# SEND Improvement Progress

Final EHCP by phase Dec 2025



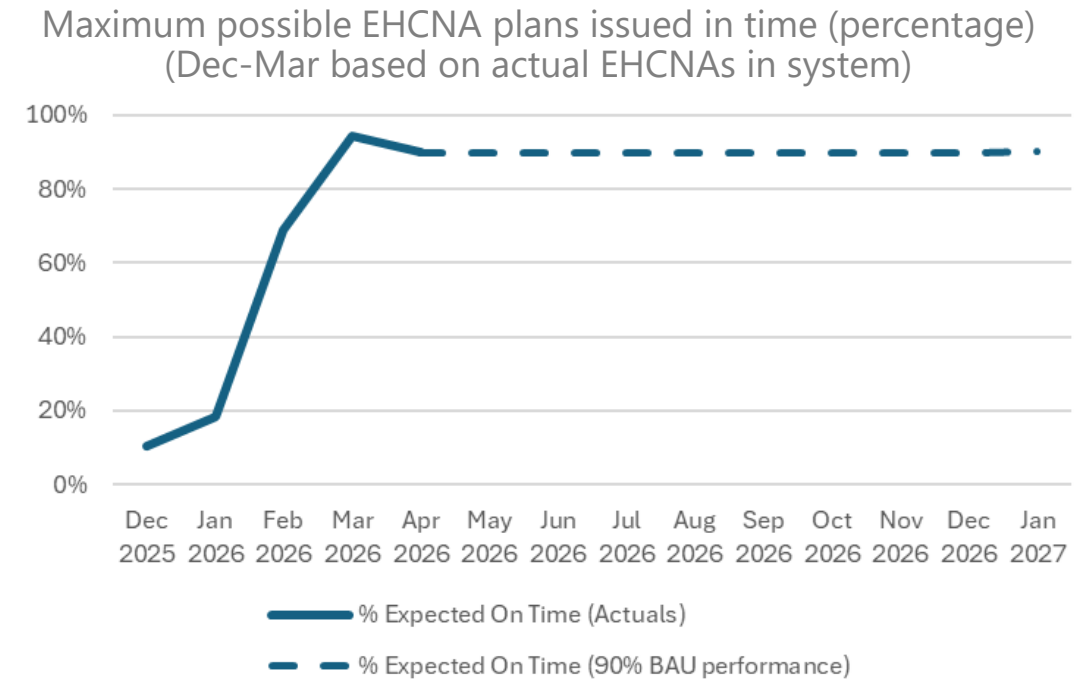
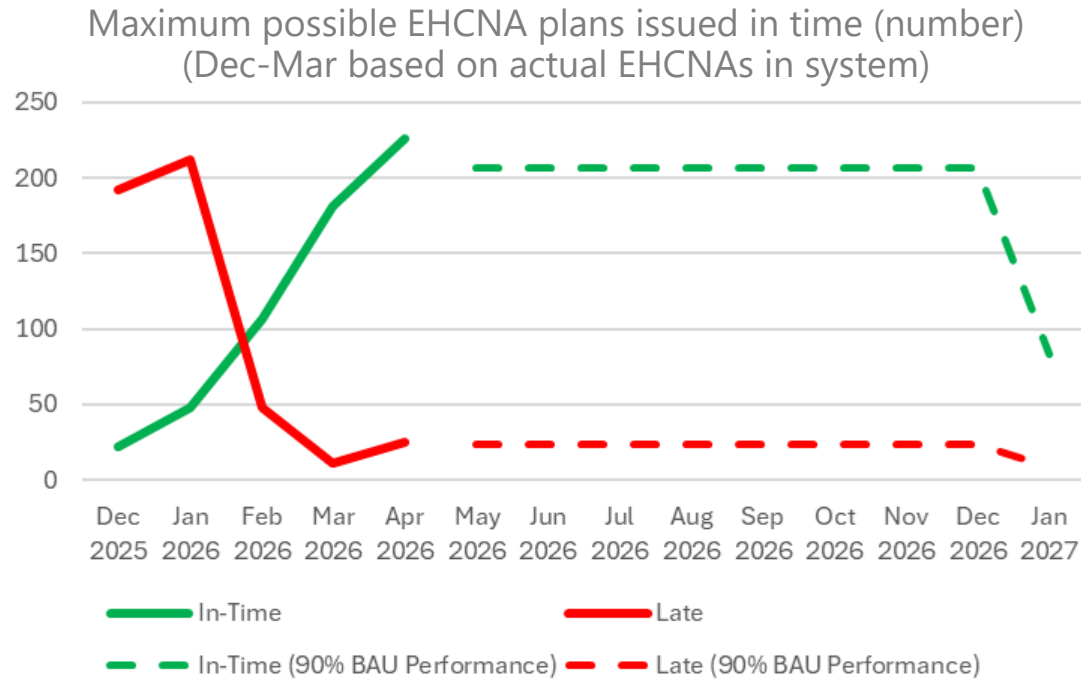
Number of Final EHC Plans Issued



	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25
Number of EHCs issued	149	188	192	183	153	233	294	332	276	273	314	366	262

With most of the work by the recovery team now completed the number of plans issued has dropped in Dec 2025 to 262, the lowest in 6 months, and expected as part of the trajectory modelling for the recovery period. Moving forward, the total number of plans issued should reflect the expected workflow in the system accounting for seasonal fluctuation in requests 20 weeks previously. This means that there will be variation in the total number of plans finalised, shifting the focus to the % of plans in timescale which should increase monthly and alongside YTD timeliness.

# SEND Modelling



The above charts show the possible increase in issue times based on the current trajectory - number of plans being issued per month and the EHCNA requests due to be completed in these months. The DfE have been provided assurance that the **20 week timeliness (YTD) will reach national average by the end of March 2026. Based on this this trajectory the service would reach a business-as-usual level of work from April 2026.** The number of plans issued each month from April will depend on requests received 20 weeks earlier, as overdue cases should be cleared. If February and March drafts fall short of expectations, reaching business-as-usual may take additional time. The service will continue to closely monitor output.

# Children with EHCPs without school placement

	April 23		Dec 24		Dec 25	
	No.	% of total plans	No.	% of total plans	No.	% of total plans
<b>Total number of plans</b>	7,200	-	9,618	-	11,589	-
<b>Not in Education – notice to cease issued</b>	1	0.1%	17	0.2%	20	0.2%
<b>Not in education – other</b>	359	4.99%	353	3.67%	143	1.23% ↓
<b>Not in education, training or employment (age 16-18 only)</b>	105	1.46%	179	1.86%	122	1.05% ↓
<b>Other – arrangements by parents</b>	8	0.11%	20	0.21%	27	0.23% ↑
<b>Other – arrangements made by the LA</b>	404	5.61%	660	6.86%	490	4.23% ↓
<b>Other arrangements made by the LA; S19</b>	11	0.15%	60	0.62%	217	1.87% ↑
<b>Other arrangements made by the LA; S42</b>	3	0.04%	20	0.21%	54	0.47% ↑
<b>Other arrangements made by the LA; section 61 EOTAS agreed</b>	11	0.15%	29	0.30%	63	0.54% ↑
<b>Total</b>	902	12.5%	1,338	13.9%	1,136	9.8% ↓

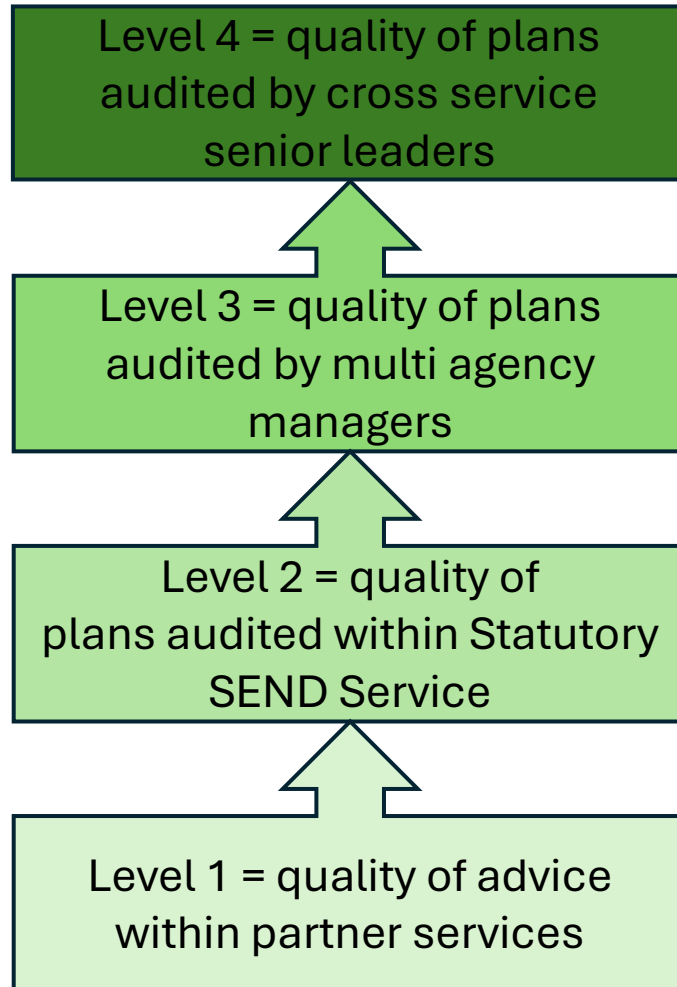
# Children with EHCPs without school placement



The data shows us that the situation of children with an EHCP without a school placement is improving.

- Number of **plans has increased by 61%** since April 2023.
- Number of **children without a placement has decreased by 27.6% since April 2023**, even with the increase in number of plans as above.
- The service has focused on ensuring that children's placement status is recorded with greater precision. Broad placement categories are now being specified and linked directly to how provision is being met for the child/young person. For example, it is important that we know the children and young people who have Section 19 provision made (Alternative provision, whilst the team consult with an appropriate placement).
- This action has been important to reduce the risk of children and young people not having needs met through the absence of provision.
- This also means that the service and wider partnership can better understand this cohort of children and young people with greater precision, which in turn informs sufficiency planning.

# Quality Assurance



We have strengthened our approach to quality assurance for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) by co-producing a comprehensive EHCP Quality Assurance Audit Programme with colleagues across the Local Area Partnership. This programme, launched in September 2025, introduces a more qualitative framework and uses familiar, accessible language to describe plan quality. Each quality assured EHCP is now assessed with an overall judgment, ensuring consistency and clarity in evaluating standards. The new four-level EHCP Quality Assurance programme launched in September is now operational.

Between September and December 2025, 329 EHCPs were audited, 3% of the overall number of EHCPs in Suffolk (11,536 current EHCPs) and were selected randomly.

- Inadequate plans reduced from 9.5% in September to 0% in December, despite increased number of plans audited.
- Good quality plans improved in December (by 17%) but remained below

**Next steps:**

Strengthen the identification of need

Improve quality and consistency of professional advice

# Non School Alternative Provision

## **Current position:**

A specialised team has been assigned to 'Section 19 – otherwise (S19)' within the Statutory SEND Service. This is the **Non-School Alternative Provision Team (NSAP)** who, from January 2026, will ensure that where S19 applies this is quickly identified and steps taken to put provision in place. Currently there is a Manager and 4 Assistant Coordinators in place from January.

## **What this means:**

- Children & young people who are not in a setting have the provision in their EHCP put in place.
- Gaps in education are addressed quickly, reducing the risk of disengagement and increased vulnerability.
- For families and educational settings, it provides reassurance and a structured approach to reintegration.
- Close working with the Education Access Team for those children who have been permanently excluded to ensure continuity of provision.
- The team manager will link with the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) team so that young people's needs for provision under Section 42 are also made, as they are over non-statutory school age.

## **Future plans for the NSAP Team:**

- Increase capacity to build case holding coordinators who can then provide consistency to families throughout the annual review and provisioning process.

# Statutory SEND Service – Pod Staffing & Oversight

**Phase based pods** will be introduced into the area reviews teams by May 2026, this will ensure the teams are specialist in phases.

This will **support improvements** in:

- Cross service working
- Transitions
- Caseload management and oversight

Each **area team** will have phase-based Pods, appropriate to the level of children and young people within that team.

The **NSAP Team** will function as a separate Pod and over time, staffing can be matched to specialist area.

The **EHC Assessment team** are also exploring phase-based specialism within coordinators to mirror the Pod format.

