NHS
Norfolk and Suffolk
Integrated Care Board

Suffolk SEND Quality Framework

SPCF
Suffolk Parent Carer Forum
Working towards a brighter future for Suffolk's children and young people

Suffolk
County Council

SEND Improvement Board
October 2026

included, supported, fulfilled.
SUFFOLK'S SEND STRATEGY 2024-2029

Ask of The Board

- Ask of SIB is to endorse the Suffolk SEND Local Area Quality Framework
- Partnership sign up to the 9 Quality Principles across the system
- Partnership commitment to implementation of the Framework

Contents

- Progress to date
- Local and National Context
- Purpose of the Suffolk SEND Quality Framework
- Commitment from the Quality Assurance and Performance Steering Group
- Forward plan

Progress to date

- Across several working group meetings between February and June 2026, the Suffolk SEND Local Area Partnership has developed the Framework based upon national best practice and local intelligence
- Group consensus that as a LAP we have already asked and heard from CYP, families and practitioners regarding what good quality services would look and feel like, with many young people feeling as though they keep sharing their views but nothing changes. Therefore, compilation and cross-referencing of Suffolk-specific lived experience with national quality principles was undertaken
- Group agreed to refer to this as a Quality Framework, not including only ‘assurance’ or ‘improvement’, to ensure that both are given equal importance. Reflection that in Suffolk we can struggle to capture the improvement elements and revisiting previously established baselines of assurance activity
- We have sought SOG approval and endorsement of this consistent, partnership-wide (and partnership-developed) approach to defining, assuring and continually improving the quality of SEND services and provision across Education, Health, Social Care and Community settings

Collaborators

Suffolk County Council

NHS Norfolk and Suffolk Integrated Care Board

SPCF

Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice & Support Service
sendiass in Suffolk

Centre for Learning
Developing people in adult and children's services

CYP Intelligence Hub

NHS East of England

NHS Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust

NHS West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust

Psychology and Therapeutic Services P&TS

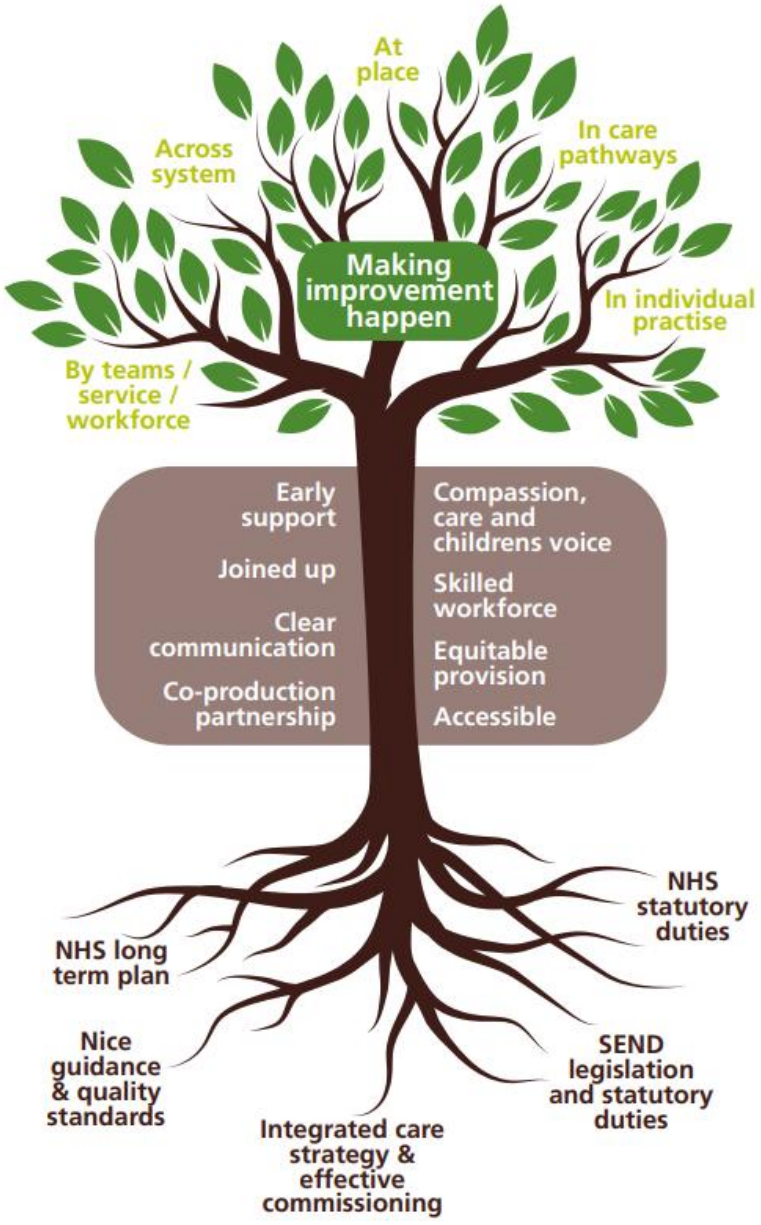
ASSET Education

Specialist Education Services SES

Young Person's Network

Local and National Context

- LAIP action 1.1 – develop and strengthen the SEND Quality Assurance Framework within Suffolk
- National SEND Quality Improvement Framework published in 2024 SEND Quality Improvement (QI) Framework
- The aim of the national SEND QI Framework is to support local health systems to have a person-centred approach to quality improvement, with an agreed definition of quality, best understood and experienced through an individual learning lens
- The Framework was coproduced with parents and carers and children and young people, and 8 key quality principles were developed (see tree trunk)



Local and National Context

Definition of quality

Compassion, care & childrens voice

Voice of C&YP and parents and carers is heard, listened to and respected.

Lived experience is values and understood.

Coproduction and partnership

Work in partnership at all levels.

Coproduction is valued at individual system level.

Early support

Early support reduces future need.

Transitions are planned early.

Equitable provision

Provision and support is the same no matter what need(s) a C&YP have or where they live.

Skilled workforce

Disability and neurodiversity aware workforce.

Needs are recognised and understood.

Joined up

Practitioners work together in planning and delivering support.

Communication

With C&YP

With Parents

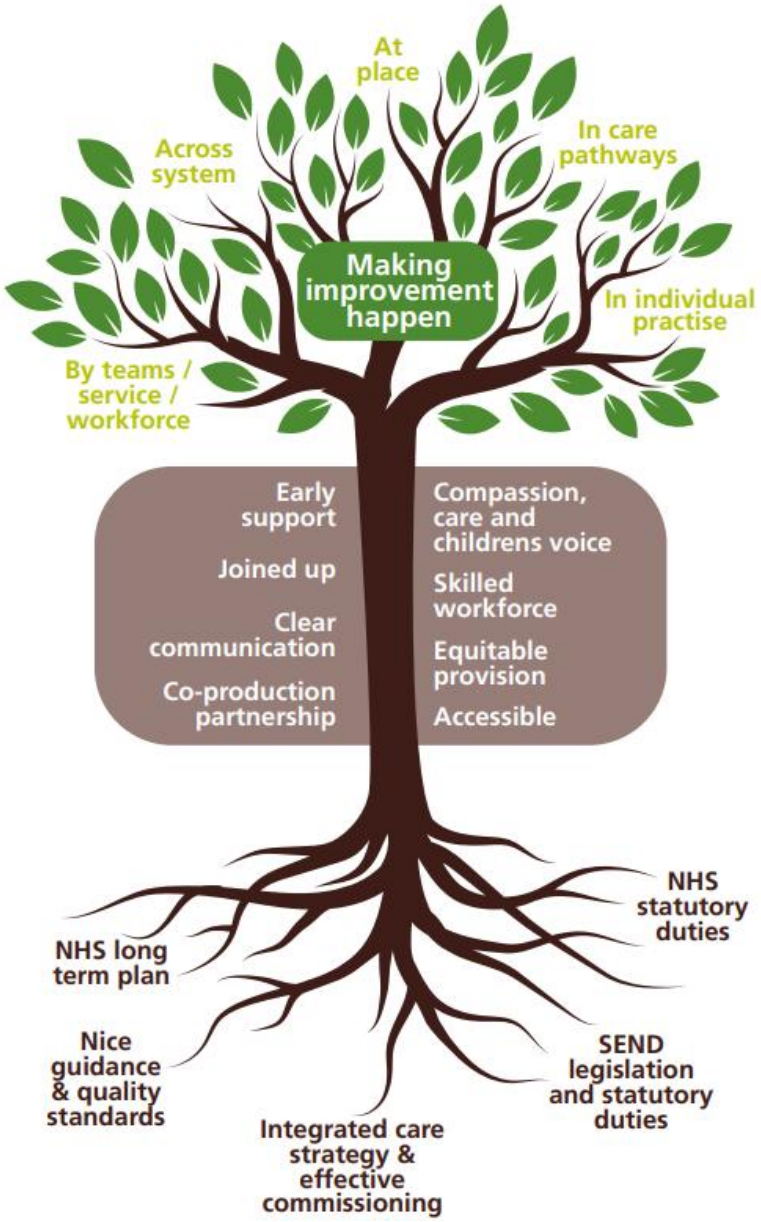
Between practitioners

Appropriate format

Accessible provision

Environments

Reasonable adjustments



Purpose of the Suffolk SEND Quality Framework

- The Suffolk SEND Quality Framework will exist to support local area partners to not only assure but to continually improve the quality of services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), using a person centred, experience-based approach
- The Suffolk SEND Quality Framework has been developed through a collaboration of multi-agency partners, including those representing CYP and parent/carer voice, with shared ownership
- The Framework will provide partners across the LAP with a shared understanding of what good quality services for CYP with SEND look and feel like
- The Framework is based upon the National QI Framework, which has been adopted successfully in other Local Area Partnerships over the last 18 months
- The Framework and associated tool will be best utilised at a team/service/setting level, with options including but not limited to self-assessment, multi-agency review and peer review

Purpose of the Suffolk SEND Quality Framework

1. Provide a person-centred, shared definition of quality

The Framework is underpinned by an agreed definition of quality that is rooted in the experiences of children, young people and their families

The Framework ensures that improvement work reflects what matters most to families, children and young people

2. Guide services to improve outcomes through systematic quality improvement

The Framework moves beyond assurance and focuses on continuous action to improve SEND services through learning

3. Align the SEND system around common principles

The Framework consists of agreed principles derived from engagement with children and young people, families and professionals. These principles form the foundation for consistent improvement across Education, Health and Social Care

4. Create a shared, partnership-based approach

The Framework emphasises coproduction at every level - strategic and operational - and recognises that SEND improvement requires joint action across Education, Health and Social Care

5. Provide a structured, evidence-based improvement process

A structure and scaffold, providing a consistent methodology across the partnership for self-assessment and ongoing learning and service development

Suffolk Principles: Mapping Sources

- ‘I statements’ - communication, journey, services, PfA
- ‘Ideal worker’
- ‘What makes an ideal meeting’
- SPCF Survey responses (2023, 2024, 2025)
- Parent/carer responses to Belonging & Inclusion
- My Health Our Future 2026 responses
- Health Complaints summary (Q1, Q2, Q3 2025-26)
- Early Help Strategy young person’s survey
- Multi-Schools Council health focussed work
- SEND Strategy Consultation – CYP, parent/carer, professionals
- Feedback on priority areas – CYP Engagement Hub, SENDIASS
- Children’s Outcome Framework responses
- Draft PfA Strategy

The Nine Suffolk SEND Quality Principles

1. **Voice, Compassion and Care**
2. **Clear Communication**
3. **Partnership & Coproduction**
4. **Early Support**
5. **Equitable Provision**
6. **Skilled Workforce**
7. **Joined Up**
8. **Accessible**
9. **Effective Transitions**

See full Framework document Suffolk SEND Local Area Partnership Quality Framework (1) for more information (including descriptors for each principle)

Quality Assurance & Improvement Tool

Suffolk SEND Quality Assurance & Improvement Planning Tool

Quality Improvement Area of Focus:	
Named Lead completing Planning and Evaluation Tool:	
Stakeholders (if applicable):	
Name of Service/Setting:	
Description/Brief:	
Date:	

Quality Principles and Descriptors	Evidence of Good Practice with supporting narrative	Supporting Documents (links/evidence)	Impact of Current Practice (Quant/Qual Outcomes)	RAG Rating	Gaps / Opportunities for Improvement	Forward Plan & Actions	Timeframe and Review	Named Lead	Additional Comments
Voice, Compassion and Care									
Children, young people and their families feel heard and understood				GREEN: Strong evidence with impact					
Aspirations and achievements of children and young people are recognised and celebrated									
Those working in settings and services are trusting, supportive and kind									
Adaptive and flexible approach evident, taking time to understand how people would like to be treated									
Tools are used effectively to support children and young people's voice, wishes and feelings									
Clear Communication									
Communication with families is proactive, transparent and clear				GREEN: Strong evidence with impact					
Information about the service/setting offer is available and accessible									
Signposting is effective and personalised									
Support and certainty whilst waiting is evident									
Communication allows for children, young people and families to know what will happen, when, where and how									

Commitment from the QA&P Steering Group

- QA&P Steering Group will be the home of the Quality Framework and will conduct a 12-month review of the framework in Autumn 2027
- Commitment from partners within QA&P to utilise the finalised Framework
- QA&P will include as a standing agenda item, enabling regular LAP updates on usage, findings, action plans and areas for improvement
- Requirement for all partners to ensure the SEND Quality Framework aligns with wider Suffolk strategic intentions and strategies e.g. Belonging and Inclusion Strategy
- Emphasis on full QI process – telling the whole story e.g. establish baseline through QA and then commitment to return to QA&P after a defined period of time to provide update on actions put into place as a result of previous QA activity and the resulting impact (QI)

Forward plan

- Continue to build Suffolk library of QA and QI work across the LAP to not only celebrate current good practice, but to increase visibility, reduce duplication, promote QA and QI and increase confidence within other areas of the LAP to commence similar projects/initiatives using the new framework
- LAP continue to gather views and experiences of SEND voice within Suffolk to ensure new intelligence is informing future QAI initiatives and any required refinement of quality principles at 12-month review of framework
- Completed framework and associated documents (finalised late September 2026) to be shared with SIB, SOG, Health Steering Group, SENCO Forum, Local Offer website and others
- Partners across Education, Health and Care have agreed to implementation, with the SCC Leaving Care team and a number of schools having signed up to audit practice against the Framework initially
- **Ask of SIB is to endorse the Suffolk SEND Local Area Quality Framework, for partners to sign up to the nine Quality Principles across the system, and for partnership commitment to implementation of the Framework**