

Update for Parent Carers: Joint Working Group Meeting



We recently met with heads of service from education, health, and social care as part of our new **Joint Working Group** — a space for open, collaborative dialogue between parent carer representatives and strategic SEND stakeholders. These meetings will now take place **every two months**, and we'll be sharing updates with you each time.

Here's what we've learned from our first meeting:

- **Education Services** are realigning clusters to better match public health footprints, moving from nine education clusters to six social care clusters. Headteachers have responded positively so far.
- A new **Inclusion Strategy** is being developed, covering SEND, alternative provision, early years, and partnerships. Families and schools are being invited to contribute, with a target launch in spring.
- A **single multi-agency SEND panel** is being introduced to improve consistency and communication. Improvements to the EHC hub and SharePoint are also underway.
- **Educational Psychology assessments** are expected to return to statutory timescales by February/March 2026 following procurement delays.
- **Health services** are focusing on early help and support for families waiting for neurodiversity assessments and working to simplify mental health pathways.
- We're also looking at ways to improve **representation** from underrepresented parent carers, including outreach via SENCOs, GP practices, and special schools.
- **DIASS** reported 195 new enquiries in September, with common themes around EHC needs assessments, tribunals, and unmet provision. They're exploring better support for families without digital access.