

Effective SEND system research

Purpose of Report

For information.

Summary

To receive an update on the LGA/CCN-commissioned research on the shape of an effective SEND system.

LGA Plan Theme: Putting people first

Recommendations

That the Board

- a) **Note the work undertaken by the Isos Partnership on this project to date; and**
- b) **Provide feedback on the findings to date and proposed next steps.**

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Background

1. In March 2023 the Department for Education published the [SEND and Alternative Provision improvement plan](#), which proposes significant reforms to the systems that support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
2. While the LGA welcomed many of the proposals set out in the improvement plan, we raised concerns that they did not address the fundamental cost and demand pressures in the existing system or give councils the powers to lead local SEND systems effectively to ensure that the needs of all children and young people with special needs can be met.
3. Local Government Association (LGA) and County Councils Network (CCN) members have expressed similar concerns regarding the efficacy of the improvement plan proposals and we have therefore commissioned the Isos Partnership, an independent consultancy, to test this hypothesis in discussions with councils and partners and then develop a series of alternative policy proposals, that, if implemented, would ensure the needs of all children with SEND can be met within existing budgets.
4. Work on this project commenced in October 2023 and Isos colleagues will be attending the Board to provide an update on the work undertaken to date, developing policy recommendations and next steps. A short slide deck, summarising this work, is attached at **Annex 4**.

Implications for Wales

5. Special Educational Needs and Disability policy is a devolved issue and the findings of the research, and the LGA's on-going SEND policy work applies to councils in England only.

Financial Implications

6. There are no financial implications for the LGA arising from this report.

Equalities implications

7. The Board will want to consider the impact of this research on equality, diversity and inclusion.

Next steps

8. Officers will take account of the views and feedback from Board members as the final report and recommendations are developed.