

Minutes from the SEND and Inclusion Network Meeting 11th February 2026

1. EYFS Statutory Framework – Key Changes

- Revised September 2024; Reception leaders and teachers must be fully up to date.
- Safeguarding:**
 - Children eating must be in *sight and sound* of staff.
 - Increased vigilance for younger and vulnerable pupils, including SEND.
- Nutrition:**
 - Clearer expectations for packed lunches and meeting dietary needs.

Action: Ensure policies, procedures and Reception practice reflect all updates.

2. Ofsted Expectations in Early Years

- EYFS contributes to all inspection judgements.
- Inspectors may **track individual Reception children**.
- Strong scrutiny of **SEND**, inclusion and curriculum clarity.
- Small schools may experience more intensive focus.
- Leaders should ensure:**
 - Clear curriculum intent and EYFS pedagogy.
 - Strong SEND oversight from the start.

3. GLD Targets & Current Picture

- National GLD target 2028:** 75%
- Cornwall target:** 78.7%
- Current performance:** just over 70% (2025).
- GLD spans prime areas + literacy + maths.
- Implication:** Significant improvement needed over the next three years.

4. Disadvantage Gap – Key Priority

- Cornwall 2025 data:
 - FSM GLD: **61.5%**
 - Non-FSM GLD: **73.5%**
 - Gap: **~22%** (wider than national).

Leadership expectations:

 - Know school-level GLD and FSM GLD.
 - Track trend and scale of the disadvantage gap.

5. Literacy – Writing is the Key Concern

- Writing remains the lowest-achieving ELG.

- Dependent on motor skills, C&L, attention, phonics.
- Support underway:**
- Local writing support programmes, English Hub collaboration, professional dialogue and practical resources.

6. Transition & Integrated Working

- Priorities: high-quality transition into Reception, strong parental engagement and effective Two-Year Integrated Review.
- Greater health–education alignment and early identification expected.

Wider Developments Affecting EYFS–KS1

7. SEND & Inclusion Reform

- Stronger national direction: earlier identification, graduated response, family-centred practice.
 - Increased SEND roles within Family Hubs and new health-visiting leadership posts.
- Implication:** More integrated, preventative support and earlier information-sharing with schools.

8. Speech, Language & Communication

- Major county investment: EY S&L Therapists, nursery nurses, Early Talk Boost, communication-friendly audits, 12-week early interventions.
- Impact:** Better early identification before school entry; increased expectation for communication-rich Reception and KS1 classrooms.

9. Integrated Two-Year Check

- Digital health–education information sharing (Mosaic).
 - Focus on children with emerging needs.
- School benefit:** Earlier intelligence on vulnerable children and stronger transition planning.

10. Prevention & Early Brain Development

- Emphasis on first 1,001 days, home support and parenting.
 - **5 to Thrive** (Connect, Talk, Play, Relax, Respond) promoted county-wide.
- Schools may see:** More shared language and joint training.

11. Screen Use & Parent Engagement

- Countywide “Phones Away, Talk & Play” campaign.
- Schools encouraged to reinforce messaging on reducing screen distraction around young children.

12. Family Help & Referral Updates

- New Early Help referral process (consent required).
 - Tier 4 & 5 through Early Help portal.
- Leaders/DSLs:** must ensure staff are updated and confident with revised pathways.

Summary: What Primary Leaders Need to Prioritise

- Ensure staff understand EYFS statutory changes and Ofsted expectations.
- Monitor GLD and the disadvantage gap rigorously.
- Prioritise early literacy—especially **writing**.
- Strengthen transitions and integrated work with health and Family Hubs.
- Prepare for earlier and more detailed SEND information before Reception entry.
- Engage with prevention-focused approaches and parental messaging.

Reception is foundational: it drives inspection outcomes, inclusion, and long-term attainment – and requires strategic leadership attention.

Contact Information:

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SEND Support service update: - Rupert Lawler

- SEND Support Services are experiencing some challenges currently:
 - Staff absence within the Physical Medical Needs Advisory Team and Cognition and Learning Team is affecting their ability to respond to referrals within the usual timeframe.
 - The service are working on plans to cover the absences, but there will be impact on delivery.
- Positive updates:
 - There is a new Speech and Language Therapist starting in March in the Communication Support Team.
 - A live advert is out for a new SEMH advisor (September 2026 start). They will focus on eating disorders and body dysmorphia.

SEND System Navigators:

Due to staff absence and current vacancies, the usual SEND System Navigator Service is not currently in place. There is an auto response on the phoneline explaining the situation. One staff member is triaging voicemails and forwarding them to relevant teams for follow up contact.

The service is working with the Local Authority contact centre in order to train a number of staff in the management of SEND based enquiries. Once up and running this will add much needed capacity.

In addition to this recruitment is underway for two SEND System Navigator vacancies, with one staff member beginning training in March.

We will ensure that updates to the service are communicated on the various channels and platforms and we thank you for your understanding in the meantime. Improving communication has been an area of focus and the SEND System Navigators have dramatically improved the experience for parents and carers as well as those working within the system, and we are working to ensure service can be resumed as soon as possible.

Education Psychology:

The Network advised that locum EPs are using personal emails. Therefore, it is important that schools receive advance notice from a Cornwall email address of who will be undertaking the assessments with their contact details. This is particularly relevant when the locum is reaching out requesting information.

Roo has communicated this to the EP service, so that a means of notification can be agreed.

Waiting Well with SEND Fund:

Schools can apply for additional funding when both of the following two criteria apply:

1. An EHC needs assessment is underway and is over 20 weeks
2. An Educational Psychology assessment has taken place as part of the EHC needs assessment and the report has been provided.

You can email the request to WWWSEND@cornwall.gov.uk and the request will be decided by the next WWWSEND panel. The aim of WWWSEND is to release funding when it would otherwise have already been in place via the issuing of a Final EHC plan.

ND Pathway Referral

The group questioned: Notification of confirmation of ND assessment pathway acceptance and its relation to access arrangements for examinations:

Response from Katie Purse:

When a request for consultation is entered, the person submitting the request gets an automated email to say that their request has been received. There may be a number of months before they hear again due to the high demand, although we are working hard to reduce these delays.

If from the screening of this request, or the consultation that may follow, it is decided that the young person will be accepted to a waiting list, the parents are informed and receive a written confirmation of this, with the advice to share that with the school.

However, if anyone needs to check if a child or young person is on the waiting list, and the parent is unable to confirm, please contact the team by emailing us on; cpn-tr.ASDTEAM@nhs.net

Cornwall's Family Hubs

Family Hubs promote community partnerships, integrated services, and early intervention to support children and families holistically.

Core Services

- Deliver early support,
- health advice,
- parenting programs,
- SEND support,
- housing,
- mental health,
- targeted family interventions.

Priorities and Targets

Focus on developing home learning, outreach peer support, early years interventions, and achieving 78.7% of children reaching good development levels by 2028.

Parenting Offer

Provides online and face-to-face programs for all ages, including support for pre-birth, children, teenagers, and separated parents.

SEN Support

Accessible through Family Hubs with inclusive environments, multi-disciplinary partnerships, and additional services like neonatal groups, Portage, and youth hubs.

School Support and Partnerships

Supports delivering services within schools, fostering co-design, early identification, and stronger community engagement.

Family Hub Network and Future Steps

Plans to strengthen partnerships, enhance digital platforms, promote branding, and develop seamless data sharing for better multi-agency support.

Area Family Hub Co-ordinators:

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[All information and presentations are on the CAPH Website](#)

CAPH SEND and Inclusion Network Meeting dates for the 2025/6 Academic Year:

- Wednesday 10th June 2026