IMPOWER Review – Feedback for parents and carers

IMPOWER was a review carried out on behalf of NELC to explore SEND services and identify strengths and key areas for development. A key part of the involvement was gathering views and opinions from professionals, parents, families and most importantly, children and young people with SEND.

Challenges faced
- Needs of children and young people are changing but a lack of understanding of these changes is putting pressure on provision.
- There are opportunities to intervene more effectively earlier, but we need to consider our early offer.
- Parents and carers feel confused and disconnected with the SEND system.
- There are challenges with inclusion that are driving demand for higher cost services.
- We need a better way of tracking the impact of investment on SEND and outcomes for children and young people.

Recommendations
- Improve the way of tracking impact, exploring and challenging spending and the impact of investment on SEND and outcomes for children and young people.
- Take opportunities to intervene earlier such as; providing clear information, advice and guidance. Improve the accessibility of the Local Offer, ensuring the content is relevant and up to date.
- Engage with families of children and young people with SEND and coproduce a SEND Strategy.
- If 5% less pupils had a mainstream education placement rather than a specialist provision, reinvestment in promoting inclusion in mainstream schools can take place, maximising outcomes and reduce permanent and fixed term exclusions. Providing robust SEND support with improve opportunities to remain in mainstream school.
- Reshape a range of panel groups to improve holistic decision making and achieve better outcomes. This would include a new look SENAG panel who carefully consider how funding is being given and used properly to achieve the best outcomes.