

# **Special Educational Needs and Disability Strategy 2020-2024**

## **Consultation**

## WIRRAL'S AMBITION, VISION AND PRINCIPLES

### Introduction

This document sets out the Local Area (LA) strategy for improving outcomes and life chances for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

This Policy has taken into account the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years (July 2014 and update January 2015) and Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, and regulations associated with this; The SEND regulations 2014; 0-25 Send Code of Practice- a guide for health professionals, The SEN (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014, the Order setting out transitional arrangements and the Equality Act 2010.

Wirral's principles, aims and objectives and policy relating to local authority (LA) and CCG/Health responsibilities and the respective responsibilities of early year's settings, schools, academies and post 16 providers are outlined. All partners are committed to ensuring that the additional needs of children identified with SEN and those with a disability are met in a timely and effective way. Parents, partners and stakeholders have all contributed to the document.

There is a commitment from the Local Area, parents and professionals to support all children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) to achieve the very best outcomes. Supporting SEN children and young people is everyone's responsibility and is achieved through effective partnership working. When the document refers to what 'we' will achieve, 'we' refers to our partnership working with Health, Education, Social Care, Families, Children and Young People.

### Our Ambition

*'Our vision for children with special educational needs and disabilities is that they achieve well in their early years, at school and in college, and lead happy and fulfilled lives.'*

For many families, feedback indicates that the reforms have brought about positive change, but for some the process has been troublesome and not easy to navigate. We must ensure that the Local Area listen to feedback from parents/carers and young people to make the necessary improvements.

Every education setting, supported by the Local Authority, health and social care must demonstrate good SEN practice and a commitment to ensuring each individual is truly included in their setting, school or college community.

## Wirral's 2025 Vision

We will work collectively to secure the best future for our residents, be inspired to achieve community prosperity, by our excellent people and services. Key priorities will focus on the following: -

- A prosperous, inclusive economy where local people can get good jobs and achieve their aspirations
- A cleaner, greener borough which defends and improves our environment
- Brighter futures for our young people and families –regardless of their background or where they live
- Safe, pleasant and clean communities where people want to live and raise their families
- Services which help people live happy, healthy, independent and active lifestyles, with public services there to support them when they need it

## Wirral's 2020 - 24 SEN/D Vision

We will be focus on making Wirral great for children young people and their families. driven by the voice of the child, young person and their families. We will continue to build on a model that is integrated and responsive to needs to ensure children and young people are given the best possible opportunities to achieve their ambitions and reach their potential.

We will focus on the four areas below: -



Breaking The Cycle



Continuous Improvement



Creating a Culture of Inclusion



Investing in our people to make it

In partnership with key local area partners and stakeholders, including parents and carers, we will work to provide a holistic approach to break the cycle so that children and young people are well supported to stay with their parents/ carers wherever possible. Resources and assets will be used innovatively to support children and young people with Special Educational Needs. We will work to further develop a culture of inclusion to ensure that young people with SEND are not permanently excluded from school. We will work with mainstream schools to look at developing more resource based provision so that more young people with EHCPs can attend a mainstream school. We will provide development opportunities so that the workforce can continuously improve. We will further an effective performance framework so that service areas can be appropriately held account.

With a strong commitment to inclusive education or inclusive opportunities for all SEN young people will realise their aspirations and participate fully in wider society.

### **The aims of the strategy**

The changes brought in by the Children's Act 2014 combined with the underlying principles provide the vehicle to improve all our services for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

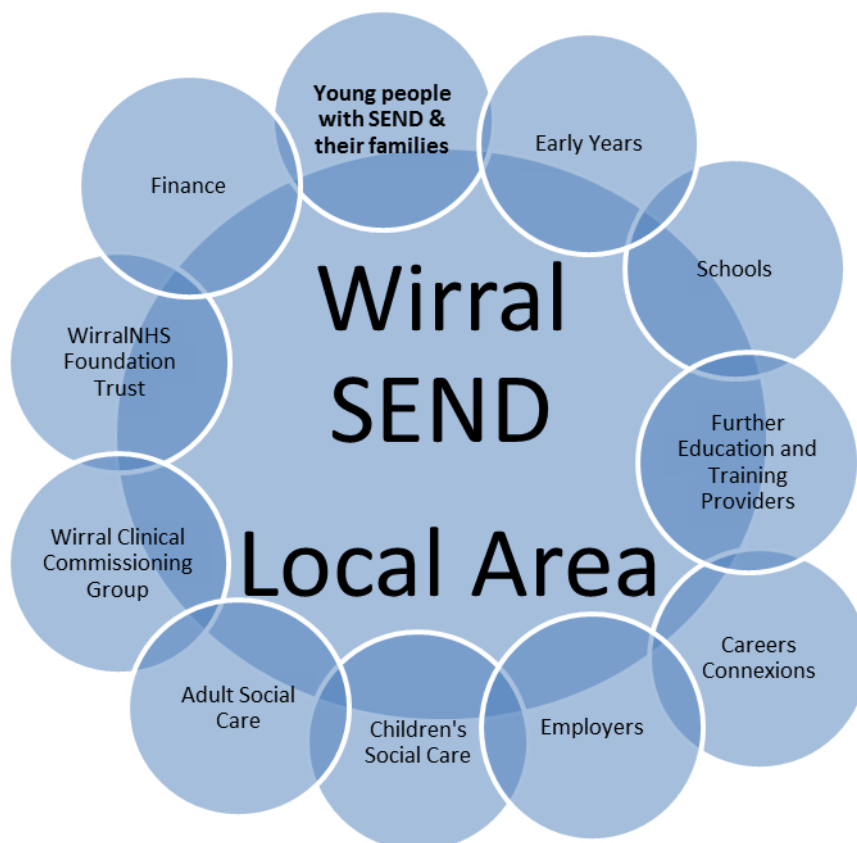
### **If we are successful by 2024, we would expect to see**

- All statutory responsibilities to be met through robust accountability and governance arrangements
- Positive engagement with a wide number of parents enables good participation and co-production of policies and procedures that shape future provision
- Early identification of SEN needs with the appropriate support and intervention enabling children and young people to attend local schools
- Access to high quality, local services, which meet young people's needs and enable them to achieve to the best of their ability
- Smooth transitions from each phase of education ensuring that there is continuity of support for SEND young people
- SEND young people are engaged in purposeful training, employment or education so contributing to their local communities
- An embedded integrated service of support across education, health and care from 0-25.
- Improved outcomes for Wirral children, young people and their families

## SEN STRATEGY

### Wirral SEN/D Strategy

It is recognised that the success in the delivery of the strategy is dependent on ensuring that there is an effective infrastructure in place and that parents, children and young people are involved at each stage. The following diagram depicts the key partners in Wirral's SEN/D local area.



The SEND strategy aligns closely with the Schools Strategy and gives regard to the All Age Disability Strategy.

The Schools Strategy is committed to ensuring that

- Children Are Ready for School
- Young People Are Ready for Work and Adulthood
- Vulnerable Children Reach Their Full Potential

The All Age Disability Strategy is committed to ensuring that

- All people with disabilities are well and live healthy lives
- Young people and adults with disabilities have access to employment and are financially resilient

- All people with disabilities have choice and control over their lives

These plans and the SEN/D Strategy aim to ensure that there is high-quality provision that ensures all children and young people with SEND reach their potential. All partners are committed to inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.

Wirral acknowledges that for a small percentage of children and young people with SEN/D specialist/ special school provision may be required. The Local Authority is committed to maintaining its specialist and special school provision but acknowledges that the profile of this provision will change with the Local Authority securing places for those children and young people with the most complex needs.

## **WHERE ARE WE NOW?**

### **Where we are now?**

#### **Provision**

Most children and young people in Wirral may attend mainstream early years settings, schools or colleges or specialist provision such as mainstream schools with resource provision or special schools.

Information about provision for learners can be found on the Local Offer website. All schools are required to publish their SEN information Report in which they outline their support for SEND young people. All colleges in the local areas detail their support on the Local Offer.

#### **Special Educational Needs Reform**

In September 2014 the new statutory Education Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment was introduced. As a result, the process of transferring statements to EHC plans commenced. The new legislation included the introduction of EHC plans for learner with SEND up to the age of 25. Since September 2014 we have seen a 35% increase in requests for assessments. Not all of these have been agreed and this points to more work needed to support early identification and school support for learners with special education needs.

#### **SEND Funding to Support Learners**

In 2013 the government changed the way in which all maintained schools, academies and non-maintained special schools were funded, including arrangements for funding SEN provision. It was intended that there would be:

- a more transparent, simpler and consistent system of funding for schools which focused on the needs of pupils;
- delegation of funding directly to schools to ensure it was used to support children according to individual need.

For mainstream schools, the Council delegates funding for SEND pupils through an agreed funding formula, largely based on pupil numbers and a defined number of pupil characteristics. A significant change was for schools to provide up to the first £6,000 of

additional support for all pupils with special educational needs from this delegated funding. Top up funding over £6,000 can be allocated from the high needs block to meet assessed needs over this amount.

Special schools are funded on a commissioned number of places at a fixed amount per place. Top up funding is then allocated from the high needs block according to the provision required to meet individual pupil needs. The same funding principles also apply to post-16 provision in further education colleges.

Consultation is currently taking place regarding the way in which special needs pupils are funded. Three models are being consulted on determine what best meets the needs of children and young people.

Information regarding the details schools are expected to put into place and information of their offer to support learners is published on the Local Offer and on school websites.

### **SEN Pupils in Mainstream and Specialist/ Special Schools**

Wirral's overall pupil population in 2016 was 51,108 and in 2018 was 51,579. Wirral has 7,010 children and young people identified as requiring SEND support in a mainstream school or college. The number of children and young people identified as requiring SEND support by a mainstream school was 7,050 in 2016. There was a slight drop to 7,010 in 2018. The average in England of children and young people identified as requiring SEND support is 14.6%. Wirral's average is significantly higher at 16.8%.

The number of children and young people with a statement of an Education, Health and Care Plan was 1,528 rising to 1,633 in 2018 - an increase of 105 over a 2 year period. Wirral's EHCP average at 3.2% is higher than the England average of 2.9%.

The local FE College and 6<sup>th</sup> Form College are committed to developing their provision for students with learning difficulties and disabilities.

30.6% of Wirral children and young people with an EHCP are placed in mainstream schools against the average in England of 49.1%. 69.4% of Wirral children and young people with an EHCP are placed in special schools against the average in England of 50.9%. 3.1% are based in SEN units/ resourced provision attached to a mainstream school which is in line with the national average. We believe that some of the children who are currently supported in our special schools could be supported in their local mainstream school and it is a priority to address this.

Of the specialist placements 13.7% are in independent and non-maintained Special schools compared to the average in England of 10.1%. Some of these placements are because of parental choice for a non-maintained special school situated within the Local Authority.

### **Early Years**

Early Years (EY's) Private Voluntary Independent settings, childminders and vulnerable 2 year olds in school nursery provision are supported by an effective Local Authority (LA) Early Childhood Services structure.

The identification and planning of SEN/D support in early year's settings and childminders is encouraged through the graduated approach. The Early Years SEND Team manager, as a qualified teacher, has appropriate skills, knowledge and expertise in empowering settings with the confidence in recognising SEN/D needs.

Settings and childminders continued professional development is facilitated by the highly skilled EY's SEND team who offer termly SENCO cluster networks, SENCO Accreditation Award training, SEND themed training, setting and peer on peer support, which fosters effective integrated working with the LA.

Parents are supported to make the right choice for an improved outcome for their child, with the support of Early Years SEND Officers. The LA's 3 main Children Centre hubs host access to sensory rooms/sensory resources supported with activities to empower parents to be confident and enjoy play, learning and developments of their child.

SEN/D support following the early identification of very young children can be accessed through the LA's EY's Portage Service, delivering interventions in the home. Whilst it is small, it is highly regarded by families and effectively contributes to the SEND assessment process. The service equips and supports families with the skills and expertise to effectively contribute to the assessment process.

The Inclusive Practice Fund (IPF) is available to ensure the inclusion of children with additional needs in early education/childcare. A multi-agency panel processes application from settings, childminders and Foundation 1 classes in schools for children accessing their 2, 3 + 4 year free entitlements, inclusive of extended hours for children accessing the 30 hour offer.

The Disability Access Fund (DAF) is promoted to settings, childminders and Foundation 1 classes in schools, to support children with disabilities or special educational needs. It aids access to early years places by supporting providers in making reasonable adjustments to their settings.

A Partnership meeting with settings, LA and schools ensure there is an inclusive transitional pathway for children with SEN/D, setting the scene for the next stage of a child's journey which is also supported with an "enhanced transition" 6 week IPF package to settle in.

### **Special School/ Specialist Provision**

There are currently 10 special schools on Wirral; 4 catering for Complex Learning Difficulties. In other authorities these are referred to as Severe Learning Difficulties (2 at primary/ 2 at secondary), 2 catering for Moderate Learning Difficulties and Autistic Spectrum Condition (1 primary/ 1 secondary), 1 catering for Specific Learning Difficulties and Autistic Spectrum Condition at primary and 3 catering for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (1 primary, 2 secondary). In addition, there is a Hospital School.



There are 12 resource bases in primary schools and 4 in secondary schools. These are all operated in very different ways and were established by the Local Authority to promote inclusive opportunities for CYP.

### **Commissioning of Special School / Specialist Base Provision**

Wirral commissioned a review of its arrangement for High Needs places. The aim of the High Needs evaluation project is to assess whether the current provision is meeting the needs of Wirral's children, in the right locations, and in an efficient manner, and to enable a strategic view of provision with children with SEN in the context of anticipated trends and the available resources, informing options for change.

### **Exclusions**

The number of permanent exclusions from special schools remains low. A concerted effort is made by school leaders of special schools not to permanently exclude students. Wherever possible pupils at serious risk of permanent exclusion will move to another school for a fresh start.

Over the past 2 years the number of SEN support pupils who have been permanently excluded from mainstream secondary schools has increased.

## **PUPIL PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT**

### **Education Outcomes 2019 - Pupil Progress and Attainment**

The proportion of SEN children attaining GLD showed a decrease whilst non-SEN children showed a slight improvement in attainment from last year (1.2% compared with 0.3% respectively). As a result, the gap widened by 1.5%. The proportion of SEN children meeting GLD showed an improvement in attainment from last year in Wallasey and West Wirral.

Attainment of SEN pupils with an EHCP has decreased by 5.0% and the attainment of SEN pupils without an EHCP has decreased by 1.6% in 2019.

### **Phonics**

The proportion of SEN pupils attaining the phonics standard remained the same as last year at 39.8%. The attainment of non-SEN children has increased by 1.5% so the gap has widened. The proportion of SEN pupils attaining the phonics standard increased in three localities; South Wirral, West Wirral and Wallasey. The SEN gap narrowed in two localities; West Wirral and South Wirral. The gap widened in two localities; Birkenhead and Wallasey. The SEN pupils in West Wirral continue to have the lowest performance with 29.1% attaining phonics.

The proportion of SEN pupils with an EHCP who attained the phonics standard increased by 8.6 % while the attainment of SEN pupils without an EHCP has decreased by 2.1% over the last year.

### **Key Stage 1**

#### **Reading, Writing and Mathematics Combined (RWM)**

In RWM the attainment of SEN pupils increased by 1.9%, whereas the attainment of non-SEN children has decreased by 1.7%, so the gap has narrowed.

The proportion of SEN children in South Wirral who achieved the expected standard in RWM increased by 5.9% to 18.2%, and in Birkenhead by 4.8% to 21.5%

The SEN gap narrowed in three of the localities, most noticeably in Birkenhead with a 10.2% decrease. South Wirral also saw the gap narrow by 3.9%, and Wallasey. The only locality where the gap widened slightly was West Wirral by 0.3.

In RWM attainment for SEN children without an EHCP increased, whereas attainment for SEN pupils with an EHCP decreased slightly.

### **Key Stage 2**

#### **Reading, Writing and Mathematics Combined (RWM)**

A greater proportion of both SEN and non-SEN pupils met the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined, so the gap has narrowed slightly. In Wallasey and West Wirral, a larger proportion of both SEN and non-SEN pupils attained RWM which resulted

gaps narrowing. In the Birkenhead locality, there was a decrease in the proportion of both SEN and non-SEN pupils attaining RWM, so widening the gap.

In RWM attainment of SEN pupils with an EHCP has decreased, whilst the attainment of SEN pupils without an EHCP has increased.

#### **Key Stage 4**

In 2017, 2018 and 2019 Attainment 8 for Wirral pupils with SEN support was above the national average. However, AT8 for SEN support decreased.

For Wirral pupils with EHCPs AT8 in 2018 and 2019 was above the national average, though AT8 decreased by 0.9

The Progress 8 measure of children with SEN support pupils was better than the national average. The provisional 2019 Progress 8 measure of children with SEN support decreased.

In 2018 progress for EHCP pupils was above the national average. In 2019 provisional progress for pupils with an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan decreased.

In 2018 more Wirral pupils with SEN support attained grade 4+ in English and mathematics with attainment being above the national average. In 2019 there was a slight decrease in attainment. In 2018 outcomes for pupils with EHCP were above the national average. In 2019 attainment dipped slightly.

#### **Key Stage 5**

The number of SEND young people in Year 12 & 13 not in education, employment or training (NEET) has reduced between December 2018 and December 2019 to 7.4% (or 16 young people) an improvement of 2.8%.

The Learning, Skills and Employment Service works to drive up participation. The service has commissioned and / or been working on the following: -

- Bespoke commissioned participation and engagement service offering 1:1 coaching, careers and participation support for all young people and those SEND between the ages of 16 and 18 and up to 25 if the adult has an EHCP.
- The Wirral Met Colleges Supported Internship Programme over the past two years to create twenty additional recognised internship places for SEND young people seeking employment. This has led to a positive progression rate (% sustained employment) of over 75%.
- The council Adult Learning Service in 2019 employed the SEND intern they have worked with as a recognised business administration apprentice. Council Parks and Gardens have also employed a SEND young person who had previously participated in an internship, this was supported using our ESF funded Ways to Work programme.
- There has been an increase in adopting joined up approaches across Liverpool City Region Supported Internship programmes with an event to encourage employers and young people to participate in Supported Internships taking place in January 2020. A

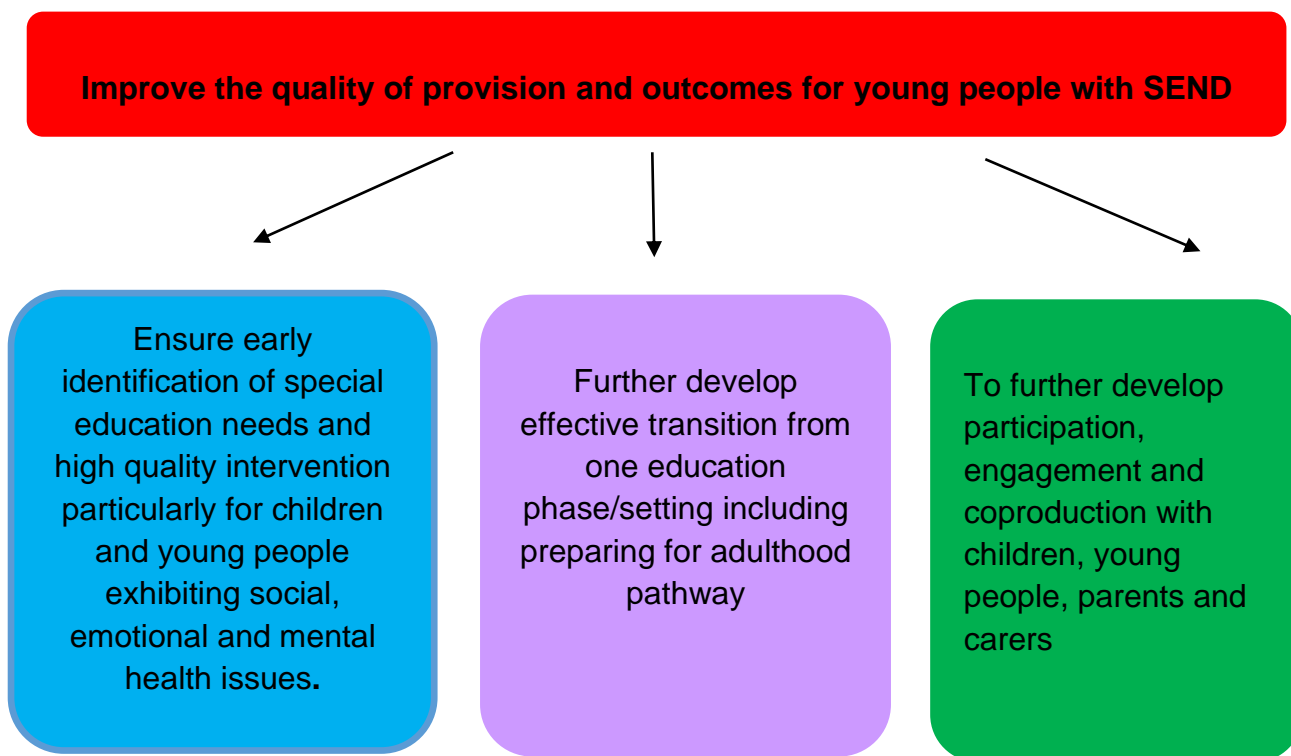
steering group has also been established for key partners and agencies to work together to increase opportunities for SEND young people aspiring to be in paid employment.

- The Learning, Skills and Employment Service has continued to support Wirral Met Colleges SEND department to develop a bespoke careers experience for SEND young in Year 11 at Meadowside, Foxfield and Claremount special schools. The experience is tailored to engage and raise the aspirations of SEND young people. Part of the programme's uniqueness is that peers / ex-students from Wirral Met College's SEND internship programme that have gone on to successfully gain employment.
- Council officers have also undertaken work with Claremount school to support initial discussions concerning potentially offering a small Supported Internship as part of their 6<sup>th</sup> form offer for a discrete group of SEND young people who are not ready to attend a college provision.
- Wirral Council employer apprenticeship grant programme also prioritises young care leavers and those young people with diagnosed / un-diagnosed SEND. The council incentivises Wirral employers through the provisions of a small grant to take on Wirral young people as recognised apprentices.
- The service European Social Funded (ESF) Ways to Work ILM programme has supported and will continue to support young people with SEND by working with employers to create employment opportunities offering using a wage incentive. Since May 2016 42 young adults aged between 16 to 25 have started in supported employment and 63% have achieved sustained employment.
- Learning Skills and Employment Service are currently working with council HR and SEND team colleagues to develop an offer to increase supported internship opportunities internally for SEND young people.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

**All partners in the Local Area have been consulted to determine the SEND priorities for the next 5 years: -**

**There is one main overarching priority with three subsidiary priorities.**



**Please see below the four priorities below with key actions and proposed measurable outcomes. There is a short questionnaire at the end of the document. We are keen to hear your views on the proposals.**

**You can complete the questionnaire and email it to Karen Lesage at**

**[karenlesage@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:karenlesage@wirral.gov.uk) or complete it on-line**

**<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BKSP9YW>**

<b>Strategic Priority 1</b>	<b>Improve the quality of provision and outcomes for young people with SEND</b>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<p>We will work collaboratively across the Local Area to ensure a clear understanding of all specialities so that there is transparency around what services provide; what services deliver and where support is needed.</p> <p>We will review the training and support for mainstream schools to ensure quality first teaching, the Threshold document and toolkit provide schools with the tools to support SEND young people.</p> <p>We will develop a joint commissioning strategy across education health and social care in response identified immediate priorities. We will review and renew with health partners the commissioning of speech and language support as a priority.</p> <p>Working with stakeholder and providers we will continue to develop a high quality post 16 provision offer for learners with SEND in borough to support their transition to adulthood.</p> <p>Developing a greater understanding of the Gatsby benchmarks so that they are embedded and result in an aspirational culture for young people across all provision.</p> <p>We will improve our information management systems to inform on the impact of services and outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>We will work with the specialist SEND sector (special schools and resource provision schools) to strengthen their leading role in developing SEND improvement across the Local Area.</p> <p>We will ensure providers have information about effective interventions and good practice is shared to support pupil progress and close the attainment gap between those children and young people with SEND and others.</p> <p>We will develop a skills audit across the Local Area to identify strengths as well as establish gaps.</p> <p>We will establish a self-assessment checklist for good practice.</p>

<p><b>How we will measure success</b></p>	<p>Increase in the number of mainstream schools that can access advice and guidance from specialist providers to support inclusion</p> <p>Increase in the number of children and young people educated close to home in borough due to high quality in borough provision in settings, schools and colleges</p> <p>The Joint Commissioning plan is completed, and actions implemented.</p> <p>The commissioning of speech and language therapy support meets needs identified in EHC plans.</p> <p>Information systems are reviewed and re commissioned to ensure effective sharing of data improves joint working.</p> <p>The implementation of a minimum competency framework increases the number of statutory deadlines met within the allocated timeframe.</p>
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<b>Strategic Priority 2</b>	<b>Ensure early identification of special education needs and high quality intervention particularly for children and young people exhibiting social, emotional and mental health issues</b>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<p>We work with all colleagues to improve knowledge and skills so that a young person's needs are identified early, and a clear pathway identified.</p> <p>We will work on improving communication across services to improve collaboration and a willingness to support one another.</p> <p>We will work collectively to produce a clear pathway for reporting gaps in provision to improve the experience of the young person.</p> <p>We will survey feedback from children and young people to develop and improve integrated assessments and plans for children and young people with SEND.</p> <p>We will work with education providers to ensure that the support for learners with SEND at school support is clear on the Local Offer and schools are identifying learners in line with the information on their school information reports.</p> <p>We will develop our audit and moderation of our Education Health and Care Plans to continue to develop integrated high quality plans with clear outcomes.</p> <p>We will review feedback from all sources including complaints, mediation and tribunal hearings to develop and improve our service delivery.</p> <p>We will improve our EHC needs assessment process to meet statutory timescale.</p> <p>We will support parents' knowledge of child development to identify issues earlier.</p> <p>We will work on ways to improve communication between educational settings and services to improve the experience of transition for young people at key points.</p>

<p><b>How we will measure success</b></p>	<p>Increase in the uptake of the two and a half review programme</p> <p>Increase in the percentage of young children accessing appropriate services</p> <p>Increase in the number of young people accessing the annual health check when requesting it</p> <p>Monitoring the quality of School SEN Information reports</p> <p>Increase in the percentage of audited EHC plans graded as good</p> <p>The percentage of education setting places identified and agreed a term before children start school</p>
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<b>Strategic Priority 3</b>	Further develop effective transition from one education phase/setting including preparing for adulthood pathway
<b>Key Actions</b>	<p>Working with a wide range of providers, further develop provision, pathways into adulthood, supported internships and employability skills across the 16-19/25 phase.</p> <p>We will work to improve the personal transition experience to adulthood for young people with SEND and their families by further developing clear guidance around pathways and options and person centred planning.</p> <p>We will work to strengthen the partnership with special schools, local FE colleges and training advisors to share expertise and support effective progression towards adulthood.</p> <p>We will work with local stakeholders to promote improved and earlier joint working between Children and Adults' Services in order to support young people into adulthood so that young people get the right information from the right people at the right time.</p> <p>We will work to ensure clear information and guidance is available to parents and families to support the transition from primary to secondary schools supporting the SEN Code of Practice ethos of a right to mainstream education.</p> <p>We will provide clear information about the services that can support preparing for adulthood across education, health and care from year 9 review.</p> <p>We will work collaboratively to improve communication at all transition points.</p> <p>We will improve the quality and consistency of advice to young people and their parents/carers.</p> <p>We will review how the views of children and young people impact on service provision, developments and decisions.</p> <p>We will work with young people and stakeholders to develop a "curriculum for life".</p> <p>We will promote Supported Internships and access routes to</p>

	employment for young people with SEND.
<b>How we will measure success</b>	<p>Evidence that children and young people are fully involved in planning for their own future and ensuring they get the support that is right for them.</p> <p>Transitions from one stage to the next are well managed so that there is continuity of support for children and young people with SEND.</p> <p>Increase in the number of internships</p> <p>Increase in the percentage of young SEND people in employment, education or training</p>

<b>Strategic Priority 4</b>	To further develop participation, engagement and coproduction with children, young people, parents and carers
<b>Key Actions</b>	<p>We will provide training for schools on the Local offer to improve information for users.</p> <p>We will continue to develop the Local Offer to ensure that there is a full range of advice, support and services that can be accessed by children, young people, parents, carers, providers and professionals.</p> <p>We will tell parents where help is available if children and young people do not meet service criteria for a statutory plan</p> <p>We will develop advice and information for parents that is co-produced</p> <p>We will consult with service users on joint commissioning contracts.</p> <p>We will review how we communicate with young people and families.</p> <p>We will work collaboratively to produce a working Coproduction Charter.</p> <p>We will increase the numbers of parents we work with to review and plan services through different groups in addition to the parent carer forum.</p> <p>We will develop the implementation of Personal Budget.</p> <p>We will commission a new provider for disagreement resolution and mediation services.</p> <p>We will work with parents, families, and young people as well as local SEND partners and providers to seek continuous improvement of services through regular consultation, engagement and feedback.</p> <p>We will showcase examples of good production so that we can learn from what works well.</p> <p>We will develop young people to ensure that their voices are heard and influence practice developments.</p>

<b>How we will measure success</b>	Advice and information for young people is co-produced  Regular feedback indicates that parents report information is clear and accessible  The number of hits on the Local Offer increases  Families report that they have greater self-help skills and independence.
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