



# SEND Updated Action Plan - July 2020



# Introduction and Context



**This latest SEND partnership action plan builds on a number of key developments including:**

- **Overarching Children and young peoples strategy**
- **refreshed SEND strategy; all age autism strategy**
- **improved JSNA factsheet and detailed work on integrated needs assessment**
- **regular oversight of performance information**
- **updated content for SEND Local Offer**
- **outstanding actions from our previous Written Statement of Action and findings from the SEND re-visit**
- **learning from good practice, quality assurance work, feedback from families and stakeholders**

**Since March 2020, the impact of Covid-19 on all services for children and young people has required a dynamic and considered response by all stakeholders. The impact on children and young people in receipt of SEND Services has seen some services change, whilst others are delivered differently. This has been accompanied by enhanced monitoring and joint working to ensure that risks are managed and essential services continue to be delivered.**

**Over the next 6 months, there will clearly be a period where organisations are working to restore services as part of the national and local response to COVID-19. This will impact on the volume of improvement work that can be taken forward.**

**This SEND Action Plan therefore reflects a practical balance between delivering what parents and young people need during this period, working to restore services, taking forward priority improvement work and also refreshing how we assess the impact of our work through a review of the performance management framework and development of a new SEND Strategy**



# What's changed since the SEND inspection in 2017?



## **Some of our key developments cover:**

- Leaders significantly strengthened focus on SEND
- Refreshed strategies and wider Durham 2035 vision
- Review of governance and new posts in local authority and health
- Focus on performance management and quality assurance
- Undertook a detailed health needs assessment
- New joint commissioning strategy and integrated commissioning function
- Revisions to Local Offer co-produced and new pages
- Renewed emphasis on co-production

## **Examples of changes for children and young people**

- More children and young people educated in local settings
- More participation and engagement of young people e.g. reductions in exclusions
- Improved access and reduced waiting times for health provision
- Increased involvement of children and young people in service developments e.g. short breaks, mental health support

# Examples of what's in place now



**Integrated Steering Group for Children  
County Durham SEND Strategy  
2019 - 2020**



County Durham  
**Integrated Community  
care partnership**



**Special Educational Needs and  
Disability (SEND)  
Local Area High Priority Indicators**

2019/20 Quarterly Performance Report

Quarter 2

October 2019

Contact: Laura Malone, [laura.malone@durham.gov.uk](mailto:laura.malone@durham.gov.uk) / Tel: 03000 267 348

## Health Needs Assessment for Children and Young People with SEND in County Durham

### Key findings and next steps

December 2019

#### Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

##### Contents

Why is it important?  
Durham data – the local picture  
Population  
School Census  
SEN2  
Population projections and prevalence estimates  
Primary needs  
Disability  
Disability Living Allowance and PIP  
Learning difficulty  
Early years  
Children in Need  
Looked After Children  
Transition years  
Academic attainment  
Groups most at risk  
Links to strategies and plans  
Evidence of what works

##### Why is it important?

Nationally, many children and young people with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) have poorer outcomes than their non-SEND peers. Better understanding of the needs of this population will allow us to commission more effective services and provision to meet needs and improve outcomes.

A child or young person has special educational needs (SEND) if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her' (Children and Families Act, 2014). This means that some of this cohort may have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than most of their peers, or they may not be able to use the universal provision available within their school because of their disability which calls for special provision to be made for them to help them learn. Children's SEND can be multifaceted and there is acknowledgment that for some children positive outcomes will not be achieved unless arrangements across education, health and care are joined up.

Where the term 'SEND' is used within this factsheet, it refers to special educational needs and/or disabilities. Further definitions are defined in the SEND code of practice.



**Special Educational Needs  
and/or Disability (SEND) in  
schools**

A guide for parents & carers



**DurhamCountyCouncil** @DurhamCouncil · Jan 11  
#ICYMI From special educational needs funding proposals to improving the private rented sector, find out what's on the agenda at Cabinet meet next week: [durham.gov.uk/news](https://durham.gov.uk/news)



1



**DurhamCountyCouncil** @DurhamCouncil · Jan 11  
We have children of all ages including babies and teenagers that are in need of loving, stable homes, and patient, caring adults to look after them. Could you help? Find out more about fostering: [ow.ly/bLib30q6uNb](https://ow.ly/bLib30q6uNb)



## Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and our Local Offer

Welcome to the Local Offer in County Durham. Our Local Offer is designed to help you find the very best support for your child or young person (from birth to 25 years) with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). It is here to help you find information, advice and guidance about the types of services and support available to you. We also have a guide for parents and carers: [Special Educational Needs and/or Disability \(SEND\) in schools - A guide for parents and carers \(PDF, 1.2mb\)](#)

**Local Offer** ✓

About the Local Offer in County Durham



What special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) means



Children and Young People's SEND Promise for County Durham



Information for professionals and providers



Strategies, plans, policies and inspections



Advice and support



Early years and childcare



Education, training and



Becoming an adult



Youth Offer - for young

# Our Current Key Areas of Focus – July 2020 +

1. Communication, Participation and Engagement
2. Enhancing Quality/Performance of Services
3. Systems Transformation
4. Leadership
5. Workforce Development



# Theme 1 – Communication, Participation and Engagement

Aim: Develop and embed strategic co-production with children, young people and families

No	Action	Start Date	End Date	Lead	Outcome
1	Developing targeted communications to ensure public awareness is raised, with particular reference to Covid-19 and returning to education.	Jul 20	Dec 20	Education Providers/ Local Authority	Children, young people and families are well informed through education settings
2	In relation to Covid-19 ensure a clear focus on risk assessments, confidence building and return to learning/supported distance learning to achieve high attendance rates amongst young people with SEND.	Jul 20	Dec 20	Education Providers/ Local Authority	Parents and carers are provided with clear guidance on returning young people to school safe, happy and settled.
3	Undertake an audit of current communications mechanisms and levels of engagement with providers.	Commenced	Oct 20	Integrated Commissioning Unit	Parents and carers are given helpful, reliable and consistent information about services
4	Continue to develop the content and accessibility of the Local Offer both in relation to Covid-19 and ongoing use by young people and families. This will include opportunities for greater use of social media and video as a means of communicating.	Sep 20	Dec 20	SEND Strategic Partnership – Subgroup	Parents and carers are given helpful, reliable and consistent information about services
5	Understand existing Service User feedback mechanisms and develop additional arrangements where there are gaps.	Commenced	Oct 20 Scoping Report	SEND Strategic Partnership – Subgroup	Service user values and experience inform service reviews and developments
6	Promote and evaluate the use of the co-production standards from the Participation Strategy to determine their effectiveness at strategic or operational levels. To include engagement with harder-to-reach groups.	Sep 20	Oct 20 - Promotion Mar 21 - Evaluation	SEND Strategic Partnership – Participation Subgroup	Service user values and experience inform service reviews and developments
7	Agree the revised SEND Promise ensuring that stakeholders are aware of the Promise.	Jul 20	Sept 20	SEND Strategic Partnership	Children and young people receive clear statements of standards to be delivered.
8	Continue to explore the use of online platforms and virtual events to engage stakeholders and ensure their participation in service development and improvement	Aug 20	Dec 20 – Programme developed	SEND Strategic Partnership - Subgroup	Parents and Young People have Increased opportunities to influence services
9	Further develop Opportunities for Parent Groups to participate in SENCO/Governor/Education related arrangements	Aug 20	Dec 20 – programme developed	SEND Strategic Partnership – Participation Subgroup	Increased opportunities for Parents and Young People to influence services

# Theme 2 – Enhancing Quality/Performance of Services

Aim: Leaders have an accurate view of effectiveness and develop quality and consistency across all services in the area

No	Action	Start Date	End Date	Lead	Outcome
1	To develop arrangements to ensure the timely and accurate reporting to leaders across the system on the quality of EHCPs to provide challenge and secure improvements.	Sept 20	Dec 2020	Leadership Group/EHCP QA Subgroup	Children and young people with SEND receive consistently high quality services informed by appropriate professional advice.
2	Expand the Designated Clinical Officer's (DCO) work to develop quality and consistency across all health services including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further develop the DCO role to provide oversight and quality assurance of all health partners advice and information submitted as part of the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) process.</li> <li>Undertake a SEND audit of health providers to establish a baseline position of barriers to gaining appropriate health and social care advice, knowledge of statutory responsibilities and existence of standard operating procedures.</li> <li>Ensure that health advice provides sufficient insight into how clinical conditions affect a child or young person's daily life.</li> <li>Develop arrangements to ensure consistent participation of health professionals in multi-disciplinary meetings.</li> </ul>	July 20	Ongoing	Designated Clinical officer (all actions)	Children and young people with SEND receive consistently high quality services informed by appropriate professional advice.
3	Further develop multi-agency SEND performance, data and intelligence to provide oversight of all aspects of SEND work and enable challenge and scrutiny (with focus on feedback from young people and families)	July 2020	December 20 – Scoping work	SEND Leadership Group	Children and young people with SEND receive high quality services appropriate to their needs.
4	Develop innovative and electronic ways of enabling EHCP Review processes to be completed by professionals online.	Commenced	Oct 20 – Business Case	DCC Children/young Peoples Services	More efficient approaches to creating EHCPs for children and young people with SEND.

# Theme 3 – System Transformation

Aim: Children and young people with SEND have high quality support which meets their needs

No	Action	Start Date	End Date	Lead	Outcome
1	Further develop needs-led neurodevelopmental services to ensure that the needs of children, young people and families are met before, during and after specialist autism assessment.	Aug 20	April 21	Children's Strategic Commissioning Group/Principal Ed. Psychologist	Children, young people and their families have better information and access to co-ordinated support
2	Continue to develop arrangements to share data across agencies to ensure that children and young people are effectively identified, and the level of their SEND needs understood: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Develop a digital solution to monitor financial information relating to children and young people in independent provision</li> <li>•Enhance data reports from health partners in relation to community-based services to better understand the needs of the SEND cohort</li> <li>•Develop Child in Need data to ensure we have full understanding of those with a disability</li> </ul>	Commenced	Pilot Oct 20	CYPS Strategic Manager, Support	Improved understanding of the needs of children and young people with SEND
		Jul 20	Dec 20	Integrated Commissioning Unit	
		Sep 20	Dec 20	Strategic Manager, Social Care	
3	Develop a plan and timeframe to move commissioned services towards trauma informed practice where appropriate.	Aug 20	Oct 20 – Plan agreed	Integrated Commissioning Unit	Clear understanding of trauma informed practice within commissioned services
4	Mobilise the new universal health visiting and school nursing service to support the needs of children and young people (0-25 years) with SEND	Commenced	Dec 20	Public Health	Children and young people with SEND in schools experience an integrated nursing support service.
5	Re-procure short break offer to ensure sufficient high-quality options are available to meet the needs of families of children with SEND following delays linked to COVID-19 (including more specific leisure opportunities)	Commenced	Oct 20 – Review completed Mar 21 - Service in place	Integrated Commissioning Unit	Increased options available to meet the respite needs of families who care for children and young people with SEND

# Theme 4 – Leadership

Aim: Provide better coordinated and understood services for children and young people with SEND

No	Action	Start Date	End Date	Lead	Outcome
1	Develop Governance arrangements between the new Integrated Commissioning Unit and the SEND Strategic Partnership to ensure that improving outcomes for children, young people and families with SEND is prioritised within commissioning activity.	Started	Sep 20	SEND Strategic Partnership/ Integrated Commissioning Unit	Outcomes for children, young people and families with SEND are clearly visible in Commissioning activity
2	Oversee arrangements to support children and young people with SEND in transitioning back to Education.	Commenced	Sep - Dec 20	SEND Leadership Group/Education Providers	Children and Young Peoples returning to Education have a positive experience.
3	Put in place support arrangements to enable Stakeholders in the local area to develop the role of Autism Champions	Commenced	Dec 20 – specification agreed by partners	Autism Steering Group	Autism Services meet the needs of Children and Young People and are informed by their lived experiences.
4	Develop a plan to move Services and Education Providers towards trauma informed practice where appropriate.	Aug 20	Oct 20 – Plan agreed	SEND Strategic Partnership	Children and young people with SEND have needs identified and met by services who understand trauma informed practice
5	Ensure that Preparing for Transitioning to Adulthood (Pfa) outcomes are considered and embedded into the EHCP plan at the earliest opportunity for every young person.	Aug 20	Dec 20 – clear examples available	EHCP Quality Assurance Group	Children and young people with SEND have their needs identified and progress to routes appropriate to needs.
6	Ensure that the Think Autism Strategy developments are implemented across all agencies	Commenced	Dec 20	Autism Steering Group	Children and Young People with Autism have their needs met by Services
7	To scope the experiences of young adults and their family as they transition out of formal learning and into adult life. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop focus group discussions / surveys with young learners in colleges</li> <li>Mapping of the existing offer for young people at various thresholds of needs in the 19-25 years age phase</li> </ul>	Sep 20	Dec 20 - Scoping complete	SEND Leadership Group	The needs of older young people with SEND are identified and met

# Theme 5 – Workforce Development

Aim: Improve the knowledge of education, health and social care professionals, and strengthen their understanding of SEND

No	Action	Start Date	End Date	Lead	Outcome
1	Implement a plan to ensure that professionals are utilising appropriate evidence-based tools as a way to identify Speech and Language Communication needs (SLCN) at the earliest opportunity, linking to an all age SLCN pathway.	Sep 20	Dec 20 – Plan agreed	Integrated Commissioning Unit and DCC Children and Young Peoples Services/Education Providers	Improved workforce understanding of the needs of children and young people with SEND.
2	Understand the gaps in the graduated training offer for education providers and professionals/providers in the Local Authority and NHS. Services to undertake mapping of their offer and take up of training to inform future developments	Sep 20	Dec 20 – Programme developed	SEND Strategic Partnership and each organisation.	Improved workforce understanding of the needs of children and young people with SEND, leading to improved inclusive provision and outcomes.
3	For Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) develop a consistent offer of support in all Educational settings to access a development programme that recognises the impact of ACEs and supports the implementation of trauma informed practice	Oct 20	Apr 21 – Offer of support developed	DCC Children and young Peoples Services (Education and SEND)	Improved workforce understanding of the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences and the positive impact of a relationship led approach.
4	To ensure appropriate oversight arrangements of the support for school staff and/or specialist services in delivering appropriate interventions to support good mental health and emotional wellbeing of children and young people with SEND.	Commenced	Implementation in line with LTP Timetable	DCC Children and young Peoples Services/Public Health/LTP/ Education Providers	Children and Young People are accessing and engaging in education

# Our Ambition



