

Special Educational Needs Strategy

Southampton City Council

2013-2016

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1. Vision

The overarching vision of this strategy is for all children and young people in Southampton with Special Education Needs (SEN) to receive high quality educational support that enables them to thrive and prosper as individuals.

We will achieve this through:

- Working together to deliver high quality multi-agency assessments to identify strengths and needs.
- Delivering flexible, personalised support through high quality provision.

2. Strategic Objectives

Through consultation with key stakeholders, the following strategic objectives have been agreed:

1. To ensure there are clear processes in place for the **early assessment and identification of SEN** in order to enable the council to make informed decisions on the most appropriate provision and resource for a child or young person, and for the council to meet statutory duties.
2. To ensure that there is **a flexible continuum of high quality educational provision for children with SEN and disabilities (SEND)**, including support and training for staff in mainstream schools, specialist additionally resourced provision within mainstream schools and specialist provision. The council will aim to build capacity and enhance quality through the development of centres of excellence and good practice.
3. To work with schools to monitor and **improve attendance and attainment** of children and young people with SEN and disabilities in mainstream and special education provision.
4. To improve processes for more **robust SEND place planning** through joint working with the schools' infrastructure team.
5. To **improve transition into school and from primary to secondary school** through better links between Early Years providers and practitioners and schools and services that support school age children.

6. To **improve transition to post-16 and adult services** through multi-agency transition planning across the age range to improve outcomes for children and young people.
7. To continue to be at the **forefront of new and emerging good practice in the field of SEN**, including the implementation of the new integrated assessment and Single Education, Health and Care Planning processes (0 to 25 years) in readiness for the new SEN and disabilities legislation to replace the statementing process from 2014.
8. To **strengthen multi-disciplinary and multi-agency working** in order to ensure that children and young people benefit from the specialist expertise of a wide range of professionals working in collaboration and adhering to inclusive principles.
9. To continue to **develop a multi-agency integrated assessment and support service** in order to make better provision for children and young people with SEN and disabilities.
10. To ensure there are **open and accountable processes for agreeing and allocating resources**, including the use of personal budgets where appropriate, based on a thorough assessment of needs.
11. To develop **service delivery models that empower children and young people**, their families and the professionals who support them, that build capacity and sustainability.
12. To **promote pupil participation in all areas of service delivery**, including through the increased use of Person Centred Planning and embedding the use of Person Centred Planning in the Integrated Assessment and review process.
13. To ensure that an audit is carried out of SEN expertise within children's services and this is used to inform the **provision of planned and evaluated workforce development opportunities**.
14. To work with parents/carers to provide accessible information on the range of resources available in the city across education, health and social care for children and young people with SEN and disabilities. This will be published in the **Local Offer**.
15. To implement the recommendations from the review of SCC services for **children and young people with hearing impairments**.

The delivery of these strategic objectives will be achieved through an Action Plan that will be regularly reviewed and monitored to ensure that there is good progress towards the delivery of these Objectives.

3. National Context

Definition of SEN and Disability

The SEN Code of Practice defines that a child has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them and that:

Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- a) Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or*
- b) Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority*
- c) Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.*

The new SEND reforms will continue to use this definition to define SEN.

The Equality Act 2010 defines that a person (P) has a disability if:

- a) P has a physical or mental impairment, and*
- b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on P's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities*

There are an estimated 3,000 children and young people with disabilities in Southampton based on the Equality Act definition, however the majority will not need specialist support. It is estimated that around 800 children and young people (aged 0-25 years) have learning difficulties which require a statutory assessment and special educational provision to be made.

Pupils with SEN are currently classified into three distinct levels of provision of need, these are:

- School Action – where extra or different help is given, from that provided as part of the school's usual curriculum
- School Action Plus – where the class teacher and SENCO receive advice from outside specialists (e.g. a specialist teacher, educational psychologist, speech and language therapist or other health professional)
- Statement – a pupil has a statement of SEN when a formal assessment has been made. It is a document which sets out the child's needs and the extra help they should receive to meet these needs.

The SEND reforms propose to replace statements of SEN with a single assessment process and combined Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The School Action and School Action Plus categories are proposed to be replaced by a single school based SEN category.

The indicative SEN Code of Practice published in March 2013 indicates that there are likely to be four primary areas of Special Educational Need:

1. Communication and interaction;
2. Cognition and learning;
3. Emotional, social and behavioural development;
4. Sensory and/or physical

The governments proposed SEND reforms are set out in the 'Children & Families Bill 2013' which is available on the Department for Education website at:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/departmentalinformation/childrenandfamiliesbill/a00221161/children-families-bill>

Needs & Trends

The 2012 national analysis of the numbers of children with SEN found that 1.62 million pupils had SEN which is 19.8% of all pupils. Of these children, 226,000 had a statement of SEN, 2.8% of all pupils.

Boys were two and a half times more likely to have statement of SEN at primary schools compared to girls and nearly three times more likely to have statements at secondary school.

Pupils with special educational needs were much more likely to be eligible for free school meals compared with those without SEN.

Of the pupils with statements or at School Action Plus, the most common type of primary need was 'Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties' (21.9% of pupils) followed by 'Moderate Learning Difficulties' (21.7%) and 'Speech, Language and Communication Needs' (18.2%).

Looked after children were approximately three and a half times more likely to have SEN and ten times more likely to have a statement of SEN than all pupils.

From 2008 to 2012, the number of children with statements of SEN did not significantly change, remaining at 2.8% of all pupils every year.

From 2009 to 2012, the number of children with SEN but without a statement (i.e. at School Action or School Action Plus) reduced by 4%.

The increase in the birth rate and continued increase in the complexity of children's needs will add additional pressures to the SEND system.

In 2011, around 60% of children and young people with statements attended mainstream schools and 40% special schools.

4. Local Context

Needs & Trends

In Southampton around 6,650 pupils have been identified as having SEN (22.7% of all pupils); this is above the national average. Of these children, 670 have a statement of SEN (2.3% of all); this is below the national average. The number of children with statements of SEN in Southampton has increased from 581 in 2008 to 670 in 2012, an increase of 15% over the past four years. Around 1,600 children are in the 'School Action Plus' category and 4,400 at 'School Action'

Of the pupils either at School Action Plus or with a statement of SEN, the most common type of primary need is 'Behaviour, Emotional & Social Difficulties' (38% of total), followed by 'Moderate Learning Difficulty' (21%) and 'Speech, Language & Communication Need' (11%).

Around 63% of children who are looked after were classified as having some level of Special Educational Needs with 15% having a statement. These figures are both below the national averages.

In terms of school attainment, 10% of young people with a statement achieved five or more A* to C grades at GCSE level. For those with SEN at School Action and School Action Plus the figure was 59% achieving five or more. For comparison, the Southampton average for all pupils at key stage 4 is 78% achieving the national expectation.

In 2011, 47% of pupils with statements living in Southampton attended special mainstream schools and 53% attended special schools.

SEND Pathfinder

In September 2011, Southampton City Council in partnership with the Primary Care Trust (now Clinical Commissioning Group) were successful in a bid to become a Pathfinder for the proposed reforms to the SEND system. The main elements of pathfinding have been around:

- Establishing an integrated 0- 25 years assessment and interventions service – The Children and Young People's Development Service (CYPDS)
- Developing integrated assessments that result in Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCPs)
- Trialling the use of Personal Budgets within education, health and social care settings
- Development of a Local Offer

Southampton has provided key feedback and learning to the Department of Education in developing more detail around the SEND reforms and in March 2013 was notified that Southampton will be a 'Pathfinder Champion' the purpose of which is to support non-pathfinders in preparation for the reforms becoming law in September 2014.

5. Summary of Consultation

The consultation process around the strategic objectives needed within this strategy began in November 2012 with a discrete period of consultation over recommendations arising from a review of services for children and young people with hearing impairments. This consultation ended in December 2012 and resulted in most of the recommendations being agreed. The full consultation feedback is available in the appendices.

Running from December 2012 to February 2013, consultation over the strategic objectives needed in this strategy resulted in 18 responses from a range of stakeholders. The full consultation feedback is available in the appendices.



6. Action Plan

The initial action plan is attached to this strategy for information. The plan shows each of the strategic objectives and outlines how they will be achieved as well as timescales and who will be involved in achieving the objective. This plan will be regularly reviewed, monitored and evaluated, with amendments made in the light of changes to national and/or local needs or policies.

7. Conclusion

Through the work that Southampton has done as a Pathfinder Champion in the development of the new legislation that will come in for September 2014, the authority is as well placed as it can be to deliver on the new requirements that are set out in this strategy.

8. Appendix

<p>Consultation feedback on recommendations arising from review of services for children and young people with hearing impairments.</p>	 <p>Summary of responses to HI review</p>
<p>Consultation feedback on strategic objectives for Special Educational Needs Strategy 2013-2016.</p>	 <p>SEN Strategy Consultation - summa</p>