



West Sussex Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Inclusion Strategy: Update

Our Vision

It is essential that our strategy for SEND and Inclusion really prepares for the future needs of our children and young people. While over 90% of our children with SEND are taught in mainstream schools within West Sussex, it is also true that over 90% of our SEND pupils who are excluded are also taught within our mainstream schools. Our strategy has to focus on how we support our schools with the knowledge and expertise they need to include all pupils with SEND and to help them achieve positive outcomes. If we are able to support our SEND pupils in mainstream schools well, then we will be able to reduce the pressure on specialist provision and in turn, will be able to reduce the numbers we need to place in the independent sector. This will help better manage provision that meets the needs of West Sussex children in West Sussex Schools.

Our aim has to be to better provide for all our children in **our** schools and to reduce the reliance on the higher cost independent sector. Our strategy development will look at how we work across teams and services to better co-ordinate the provision and support, and build the expertise we need to make West Sussex a leader in provision for SEND and inclusion across the south east.

For the last 3 years (2016-19) we have been working on the following objectives as set out in our strategy for 2016-2019:

1. To ensure that children with SEND are, where possible, welcomed and included within their local mainstream school.
2. To ensure that local mainstream and special provision is effective, of a high quality and delivers good educational outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
3. To build a model of educational provision and support in West Sussex which enables young people with SEND, wherever possible, to live and go to school/college locally.
4. To deliver an offer that is sustainable and cost effective now and into the future and takes due account of predicted demand.

We have made much progress in collaboration with our partners. Together, we have worked with schools, settings, parent carers and other professionals to develop peer support networks to explore inclusion of children and young people through five SEND Partnership Projects and the Index for Inclusion pilot.

Multi-agency partnerships have been key to the success in two further areas of work: the Intensive Planning Team has supported children and young people at risk of education breakdown; and the Therapies in Schools project has developed accredited training packages with health professionals to upskill staff and embed therapeutic aims into the curriculum.

Our West Sussex [Local Offer](#) has been designed and developed and is seen as the 'go-to' place for information, support and services on all things SEND for parent carers and professionals.



In addition:

- A Designated Medical Officer has been appointed.
- Person Centred Planning training has been delivered to enable wider and longer term outcomes for the child and their family to be heard and captured within a planning framework.
- A toolkit for children with emotional based school avoidance (EBSA) has been developed along with a training and support programme for emotional literacy support assistants (ELSA).
- In line with SEND reforms, the age range for SEND has widened to 25 years and all Statements of SEND have been transferred to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).
- A SENCO Leadership Development Programme was designed and delivered by STAGE School Alliance.
- A comprehensive provision mapping tool is being piloted with 20 schools.
- The SEND and Inclusion newsletter updates readers of recent news.



Where we are now

We recognise that we still have much to do to achieve our objectives and are currently revisiting and updating our SEND Strategy.

- A key change will be our wider focus on Inclusion of all SEND children and how we hold each other to account for our joint work and progress. This will include detailed accessible action plans and performance indicators against which we can measure our success.
- Our strategy has to be greater than increasing specialist provision but has to address how we manage children who have adverse childhood experiences and which manifest themselves in challenging behaviour in schools.
- Our focus must be on delivering top class provision and achieving positive outcomes for our children within the financial constraints we have; ensuring that spending within the high needs block is managed well.
- Making a difference and putting our strategy into practice needs us all to work together across service boundaries, and can only be achieved through partnership.

There are many aims, ideas and thoughts that we could include but our strategy has to prioritise key imperatives as well as being manageable and achievable.

Our focus for the future includes:

- Improved pupil outcomes and independence in partnership with the parent carer and child.
- Improved mainstream provision for inclusion.
- Improved diversity of maintained and academy specialist provision and support.

- Reduced out of county and independent school placements.
- Early identification and intervention.
- School to school support and challenge.
- Sustainable financial operating models for specialist provision.
- Effective use of transport budget
- Improved transition planning / range of options.
- Improved engagement of parents and carers to aid informed decisions.
- Continuous improvement and measurement through KPIs.

During February 2018, a SEND Local Area Inspection was undertaken by Ofsted and CQC. Although this was a very positive experience, which highlighted many areas of good practice, the following recommendations for improvement were also recommended:

- Build capacity in front line support services impacting opportunities for school leaders to discuss children and young people needs and train/upskill staff
- SEND Support – improve identification and provision (Autistic Spectrum Condition / Social, Emotional and Mental Health)
- Improve quality & consistency of EHCPs including operational efficiencies in systems, processes and timelines.
- Improve Post-16- transfer to adult services
- Improve Early Years transition to school

What's next?

In order to review our SEND Strategy we have embarked on a series of workshops and events. The first draft of the strategy will be available for consultation in May.

Timeline for Strategy Development:

Milestone	Dates 2019
Project set up	February
Workshops/ Stakeholder input	March - April
Strategy writing, plan development	April-May
First draft written	Mid- May
Consultation commences	May-June
Review strategy in light of consultation	June/July
Final draft sign off	July
Select Committee	September
Cabinet Member Decision	October
Strategy live and implementation	November

Please look out for further information and take part in our consultation this summer term. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your on-going commitment to working together to ensure that all children and young people with SEND have access to high quality, local education within West Sussex.

