



West Sussex Special Educational Needs and Disability Strategy 2016





Contents

Executive summary	3
Where are we now	5
Existing Support, Advice and Guidance Services	6
Demand for Specialist Provision	7
Pupil Progress and Attainment	7
Exclusions	8
School Quality	8
Commissioning	8
Relationship with Independent and Non Maintained Special Schools (INMSS)	9
Strategic Context	10
Nationally	10
Locally	11
What young people and their parents have told us	12
Young people focus group outcomes	13
What some schools have told us	14
Our Vision	16
Aims and objectives	16
What will we do?	17
Annex A	20
SEND Strategy Action Plan	20

Dear West Sussex Resident, Parent and Professional,

We are asking for your views on how the County Council can strengthen education for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). It is important for us to gather the views of West Sussex families, professionals, young people and many more on the new strategy which we are co-producing with nurseries, schools, colleges and parents.

Many of our mainstream and special schools provide an exceptional education for our children and young people with SEND and we want to extend this high quality education even further. It is important that we continually improve our services but also make sure that we can adapt to the expected increase in demand. This consultation is not about closing specialist schools or moving children from their current school, it is about inclusion and ensuring children with SEND can get a good education at a school close to their home.

We are also asking you to feedback on what you see as priorities for improvement which will give us a better understanding of where you feel our resources are best spent. We want everyone to get involved with a commitment to partnership working to ensure that all children and young people with SEND have access to good quality education within West Sussex.

Please view the new strategy document and action plan before completing the consultation questions. The consultation is open until Friday 20 May 2016.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Hillier

West Sussex County Council Cabinet Member for Children – Start of Life

West Sussex Special Educational Needs & Disability Strategy 2016 - 2019

Executive summary

1. Children and young people in West Sussex with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) will be supported to attend the education setting that best meets their needs, as close to their home as possible. Through working in partnership across all agencies that work with children and young people with SEND we will ensure that the whole family receives the support needed at the right time, to build resilience and empower them to flourish in West Sussex.
2. We want to make sure that every child growing up in West Sussex has the best possible start in life. A challenging agenda for improvement has been set out in the Future West Sussex Plan and the Families Plan. Children and young people with SEND deserve to be able to attend high quality, local provision, which meets their needs and enables them to achieve to the best of their ability like any other child. As a Local Authority, we also need to ensure that this provision is cost effective and takes into account predicted future demand.
3. We recognise that SEND affects the whole family, including the parents/ carers and siblings, and that the whole family is key to supporting the child or young person with SEND and helping them to reach their potential. We therefore need to take a shared, creative approach with our partners within the LA, other public sector organisations, and the private voluntary and independent sector to ensure that support is in place to address not only the needs of the child or young person with SEND, but also their family.
4. There are some examples of excellent provision for children and young people with SEND within our special and mainstream schools, early years' settings and FE provision.

However there is more we need to do to improve outcomes for these children and young people and their families.
5. Too many children and young people have to go to a school too far from home, and sometimes out of West Sussex, to have their education, health and care needs met. Out of county placements may not always be the best way of achieving positive outcomes for children and young people with SEND, and may cause extra strain for the rest of the family. Independence skills may be learnt in contexts which differ substantially to where their family live which make them irrelevant for when they return home. In addition the young person is likely to lose the social networks that they have built up and may have difficulty establishing new ones .
6. Less than half of our children and young people with statements or Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) attend a mainstream school. This is less than the national average and our statistical neighbours and we would expect more children to be in a local mainstream school. In many education settings pupils with special educational needs do not make good enough progress and there are wide achievement gaps between them and other learners. Exclusions for children and young people with SEND are far too high, in 2014-15 around 80% of those who were permanently excluded were categorised as having SEND.

*Research by the University of York Social Policy Research Unit 2009



7. We also know that our specialist provision for children and young people with SEND has not kept pace with changing needs, for example in relation to developing our capacity to meet the increasing number of children and young people diagnosed with autistic spectrum condition. In addition 'out of county' placements are frequently required for young people with social, emotional and mental health needs due to a lack of capacity within West Sussex.
8. At age 16 many young people with SEND do not have the same opportunities as other young people to progress to further learning and training and to access employment and independent living as they move into early adulthood. A disproportionate amount of our young people with SEND find themselves 'not in education, training or employment' (NEET) once they leave school, college or university.

9. This strategy is designed to address these issues and to bring about the necessary improvements in the quality of provision, support and outcomes for these children and young people, from the early years of childhood to early adulthood. It has been co-produced with schools, young people and parents. Our shared vision is that all early years' settings, schools and colleges in West Sussex are able to deliver high quality education for children and young people with SEND, maximising value for money from the Dedicated Schools Grant. To do this we will need:

- **To build a model of educational provision and support in West Sussex which enables young people, wherever possible, to live and go to their local early years setting, school or college.**
- **To ensure that local early years, mainstream and special educational provision is effective, of a high quality and delivers the best educational outcomes for children and young people with SEND (0-25 years).**
- **To ensure that children with SEND are, where possible, welcomed and included within their local mainstream early years setting, school and college.**
- **To deliver an offer that is sustainable and cost-effective now and into the future and takes due account of predicted demand.**

Where are we now

10. In total in West Sussex there are 20,656 children and young people with SEND receiving support in an early years setting, school or college, with around 3,890 of these having a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Less than half (around 35%) of the children and young people with statements or EHCPs attend a mainstream school. The number of children and young people with Statements or EHCPs attending individual schools varies greatly with some schools having significantly over the average on roll, whilst others do not have any. Most local FE colleges are committed to developing their provision for students with learning difficulties and disabilities, although the availability of appropriate provision is variable.
11. Around 53% of West Sussex children and young people with a Statement or EHCP are placed in special schools and around 10% in Special Support Centres (SSC) based within mainstream schools. 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.
12. Of the specialist placements 433 (11%) are in independent and non-maintained Special schools. These placements are usually for significant physical disabilities or where maintained provision is at capacity (mainly for autism or complex social, emotional and mental health needs). If trends continue as they are we will see an additional 91 children being placed in this type of placement by 2019, at significant additional cost.
13. A survey in 2015 of parents of children and young people with SEND in West Sussex found that parents do not always have confidence in mainstream schools being able to meet the needs of their children. Parents highlighted particular issues at transition points from early years settings into school, from primary to secondary and then from school to college. There are also a

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.



number of highly specialist non-maintained schools in West Sussex to which parents are attracted. Parental preference is of high importance, but there may have been insufficient emphasis on increasing parental confidence in local provision and providing the support for the whole family that would help to do this.

Existing Support, Advice and Guidance Services

14. SEND Hub Networks have been set up to support mainstream schools to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. The Hub Networks are partnerships of education providers, professionals and parent carers who are working together to develop the inclusive ethos and capacity of mainstream schools and increase the confidence of parents in the ability of settings to support their children. This is working well in many areas. The specialist resourced provision in mainstream schools (Specialist Support Centres) also provides much needed support for many SEND pupils to be educated in a local school.
15. The West Sussex SEND Information, Advice and Support Service provides impartial information, advice and support to parents and carers of children who have SEND. The service aims to encourage partnership between parents, their child's school, social care, education, health and other agencies. The service is



available for any parent carer whose child has or may be identified as having special educational needs and / or a disability.

16. The West Sussex Local Offer, gives early years settings, schools and colleges guidance as to what support the local authority would expect a child or young person, if necessary up to the age of 25, to receive through the learning setting's own practical and financial resources, so they have a positive journey through education and prepare successfully for adulthood.
17. As part of the West Sussex Early Help offer, local Family Support Networks have been set up to support all agencies that are working with the children and young people and their families, including mental health services, schools, early childhood services and young people's services. The Networks are not specifically focused on SEND, although this may be affecting a number of families they are dealing with. There are some good links between Early Help and the SEND Hub Networks, but these could be strengthened to further use the range of professional expertise to support the needs of the whole family, and ensure consistency.
18. The Early Childhood Service provides inclusion support to families and private voluntary and independent (PVI) early education and childcare settings through integrated teams based in 12 Children and Family Centre group areas. The Early Support Co-ordinators work directly with families with a child under 5 as soon as their additional needs have been identified. There are eight Early Years Hubs for parents with children under 5 with SEN or disabilities based in children and family centres. These hubs provide access to information, advice and guidance, sensory toy libraries, and specialised play and learning opportunities to support children's learning and development prior to a child starting school.

Demand for Specialist Provision

- 19.** The number of children with a statement or EHCP has risen over the last 5 years from 3210 in 2012 (0-19) to 3898 in 2015 (now 0-25 years). There has been a significant increase in the diagnosis of children and young people being on the autism spectrum and speech, language and communication needs. For those young people leaving school there is an increase in requests for EHCPs and demand for college places (171 in 2015/16 up from 128 in 2014/15). This increase in demand is putting pressure on the high needs budget.
- 20.** Special schools maintained by West Sussex are at maximum capacity within current buildings and resource. There is also pressure on some early years and mainstream school placements (which is likely to increase due to planned housing development). There is inconsistent utilisation of Special Support Centres which are based in mainstream schools, with some being over capacity and some having places which are not being filled.
- 21.** This has resulted in a significant proportion of the children and young people with SEND in West Sussex having to travel long distances to get to school. 358 children have to travel more than 20 kilometres (38 of which are residential placements), with 90 travelling over 40 kilometres (although 78 of these are residential). This is not only unsatisfactory for the children and young people themselves but also has an impact on the transport budget for the Local Authority. In 2014-15 West Sussex spent over £8 million transporting children and young people with SEND to school. This is an increase from £7.5 million in 2013/14.
- 22.** There were 22 appeals against West Sussex in 2015 registered by the SEN and Disability Tribunal, 8 of these were appealing against the school named in the Statement or EHCP. Although this is a reduction on previous years, this indicates that there is still a need for greater collaboration between the LA, schools and parents to ensure that parents have confidence in placement decisions.

Pupil Progress and Attainment

- 23.** The attainment and progress of pupils with SEND shows wide gaps compared to other learners, although the gap is broadly in line with the national picture.

Key Stage 1 Attainment Gap in 2015

Reading	SEN support 32% Statement or EHCP 64%	(national 32%) (national 69%)
Writing	SEN Support 39% Statement or EHCP 66%	(national 40%) (national 69%)
Maths	SEN Support 26% Statement or EHCP 61%	(national 25%) (national 69%)

- 24.** At Key Stage 2, the SEND gap continues to be significant. For Level 4 Reading, Writing and Maths combined the attainment gap is 53% for pupils on SEN Support and 73% for pupils with a statement or EHCP. This is compared with 47% and 74% nationally.
- 25.** At Key Stage 4, in 2015 pupils with SEND continue to achieve less well. For 5+ A*-C (including English and Maths) the attainment gap is 43.3% for young people on SEN Support compared with 43.1% nationally and 56% for pupils with statements or EHCPs compared with 55.8% nationally.

Exclusions

- 26.** Around 80% of children and young people who were permanently excluded in 2014/15 were in receipt of SEN Support or had a statement or EHCP. Over 60% of these were identified as having social, emotional and mental health issues. This pattern is similar for fixed exclusions, although the percentages are slightly lower. There is also a small, but significant number of children and young people with SEND who are being educated in Alternative Provision while waiting for their EHCP assessment to be completed or for a specialist placement. Schools and partners should be thinking differently about how we can put in place packages of support to enable these children and young people to remain within mainstream school placements and how best to support their families to strengthen this arrangement.

School Quality

- 27.** There are 11 local authority maintained special schools supporting over 1500 pupils with Statements or EHCPs. 91% of West Sussex special schools are good or outstanding compared to 87% nationally, according to OFSTED. The overall effectiveness of schools with Specialist Support Centres shows that around 33% of them are rated as requiring improvement or inadequate by Ofsted.
- 28.** We recognise that there is much expertise and good practice in our early years settings, special and mainstream schools. We know from parents and governors that committed staff in many schools are doing a good job in supporting children and young people with complex needs. A key priority for the new School Improvement Boards will be for all schools that host specialist SEND provision to be good or outstanding schools.

Commissioning

- 29.** Recently provision planning in West Sussex has been opportunistic rather than based on a strategic analysis of need. There may be a lack of appropriate provision for some pupils within West Sussex maintained schools, for example pupils on the autism spectrum who are meeting learning expectations for their key stage, but are not able to cope with the social demands of mainstream schooling. The historic closure of settings for children with social, emotional and mental health issues has also skewed the provision in some areas of the county.
- 30.** The commissioning of specialist placements is often based on availability, rather than a strategic decision based on data and cost forecasts. Data has not always been collected systematically or utilised when it is available. A better understanding and management of our data could help ensure early intervention, improved place planning and enable us to measure the quality of provision. While there have been some notable successes in relation to jointly commissioning services between education, health and social care, there is more work to do and joint commissioning across education, health and social care is a priority for improvement.
- 31.** There are limited residential placements available within maintained provision. The Panel which agrees joint responsibility and funding for complex needs placements, requires improvement and better decision making, with pooled funding, to ensure we address delays and secure the most appropriate and cost-effective placements for children and young people with complex needs.
- 32.** With diminishing resources, it is key that different services and agencies work together to creatively commission services that provide early intervention and prevention for children and young people with SEND, and their families, prior to the escalation of needs. Resilience and independence skills should be built in at the earliest opportunity to help prepare for successful home to school transition.



Relationship with Independent and Non Maintained Special Schools (INMSS)

- 33.** West Sussex has developed good working relationships with some private and voluntary education providers in the early years and school sector. This collaboration offers parents greater choice and a best value approach to some high cost needs. To ensure effective commissioning and best value for money West Sussex has introduced a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for the procurement of education placements for children with SEND within the Independent and non-maintained sector. A new Common Outcomes Framework has recently been co-produced, with relevant stakeholders, to ensure that high quality outcomes are achieved for the children and young people placed in these settings.
- 34.** Once placed in out of county settings, the Local Authority does not always carry out effective annual reviews and monitoring of placements to consider the option of return to mainstream provision and whether the provision is achieving good learning outcomes for the child. We need to consider how we can improve monitoring and quality assurance of these placements.

Strategic Context

Nationally

- 35.** The Children and Families Act 2014 offers simpler, improved and more consistent help for children and young people with SEND. The new system extends the rights and protection to children and young people by introducing education, health and care plans and extending provision from birth to 25 years of age.
- 36.** The reforms, which came into force in September 2014, require:
- The local authority to develop and publish a Local Offer, and to work closely with the NHS and schools to use resources through joint commissioning to improve the range of support available in a local area.
 - A more flexible model of joint commissioning that promotes access to personal budgets, focuses on specific groups of children or areas within the county and ensures that children and young people's needs are met
 - A cultural change in the way in which we listen to and engage with children, young people and their parents and carers.
 - Better commissioning of new provision to ensure needs are met in local schools and by local community services.
 - Positive transitions at all key stages within a 0-25 age range, especially a more successful transition to adult life.
 - Improved quality and range of information available for children, young people and their parents and carers enabling them to make informed choices.
- 37.** The Act sets out the expectation that children and young people with special education needs should be included within the activities of mainstream schools together with children who do not have special educational needs, so far as is reasonably practicable and is compatible with -
- (a)** the child receiving the special educational provision called for by his or her special educational needs,
 - (b)** the provision of efficient education for the children with whom he or she will be educated, and
 - (c)** the efficient use of resources.
- 38.** Schools have statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that they do not discriminate against children and young people with SEND, this includes admission arrangements, the way schools provide education and exclusion practices.
- 39.** Where a pupil can show that they been treated less favourably it is for the school to prove that that treatment was for something other than the pupil's disability. Schools must evidence that their actions are not discriminatory and demonstrate they understand their statutory duties to pupils with SEND in policies and daily practice.
- 40.** If schools implement a policy or practice that puts a pupil with SEND at a disadvantage then that may be classed as discrimination, even if this is unintentional. For example, many behaviour policies make no adjustment for pupils with SEND, this would be classed as indirect discrimination because a pupil with SEND may be unable to conform to the behaviour expectations of other pupils in the school.

41. S20 of the Act requires schools to avoid (as far as possible by reasonable means) disadvantaging pupils with SEND. Schools should ensure that pupils with SEND can be involved in every aspect of school life. This may involve changing the way schools teach pupils. For example, a pupil who cannot hear but can lip read may need a teacher to face them when speaking.

Locally

42. In conjunction to the development of this Strategy, a review of Alternative Provision (for children and young people not in school) is being taken forward which aims to increase the life chances of students through the appropriate use of Alternative Provision and to support schools in improving pupil outcomes for vulnerable students.

43. Work is also underway focusing specifically on Pathways and transition to adulthood for young people with SEND. The primary aims of this are to work with children and young people to help them prepare for their future and improve the experience of transition for the young people and their families. There is not however always effective joined up planning that links educational needs with needs related to health, care and support. Social Care transition processes are being revised in response to Care Act 2014 and it is important that effective transition planning for young people with SEND is incorporated into those changes.

44. A strategy is also being developed concerning the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools. The aim of the Strategy is to facilitate a whole-school approach to emotional wellbeing and mental health and increase understanding of emotional wellbeing and mental health service provision and referral routes. Outcomes for pupils and students will be improved, particularly their resilience, empowerment and capacity to recognise issues and seek support early.

45. This draft strategy should also be viewed alongside the West Sussex Future Plan, Accessibility Strategy, Early help action plan, and Families Plan.



What young people and their parents have told us

46. Children, young people, parents and carers have told us that they want children and young people's needs and outcomes to be at the heart of the system, for them to be treated with respect and valued as individuals who have a valuable contribution to make to their school, their community and wider society.

47. A survey was carried out during 2015 of 557 parents and carers of children with SEND in West Sussex concerning their experience of services for their child. 53% of respondents said that their child attended a special school (53%); 37% attended a mainstream school; 9% were at a special support centre in a mainstream school; the rest (1%) received alternative provision.

48. In general parents were happy with the education/early years services their child had received in the past 12 months (an average score of 8 out of 10) and this included some really positive experiences of mainstream settings:

"The school has been fantastic and put a lot of changes in place to help. I cannot praise this school enough."

"The support received at school has been absolutely brilliant, every step of the way. The SENCO, teachers and support staff could not do more to support us."

49. However some parents also reported that mainstream schools are not always as welcoming and supportive as they could be:

"Our requests for their input in helping prepare our child for forthcoming changes in school have been dismissed. A better attitude towards SEN kids from mainstream schools is needed (who see our children as costly and risky for their stats)."

"Mainstream schools need to understand about disabled students, that they are all different."

50. Due to a lack of capacity in some areas, children and young people have to travel out of their local area to go to school. Parents felt that there was a need for increased support in mainstream schools and specialist provision to ensure that children can be educated nearer to home. There was also a perception from some parents that specialist provision is more appropriate for their child:

"We need more special needs schools. They are way over subscribed making it difficult for your child to get the help they need."

"We need more schools built to cater for children with SEN as mainstream schools are not suitable or do not have the resources."

51. Some parents also felt that our special schools are too generic and that schools focusing on specific learning difficulties would better meet their children's needs

"Due to the shocking lack of good quality education for children on the more severe end of the autistic spectrum we have had to send him out of county."

52. Parents have reported varying practices when it comes to inclusion. Some schools work very hard to ensure that their young people are an active part of the school, for example ensuring that they can attend school trips and take part in sporting activities.

Henry has multiple disabilities but loves school. He doesn't talk but joins in with the other children at school. When his teachers noticed he had become withdrawn and didn't join in at playtimes they tried to find out if something had happened at home. Everything at home was fine but they found out that one of Henry's friends at school, who was also 'nonverbal', had moved away and

he was feeling bereaved. Henry's parents thought that what the school did to help him was nothing short of genius. The school organised a Skype session every morning and Henry and his friend were able to communicate. There was no talking – just smiles and waving. Henry was happy and joined in again at playtime.

53. This is not always the case however and some children with SEND find themselves increasingly 'excluded' from everyday school life. Parents have reported particular problems when their child's special needs impact on their behaviour. The behaviour policies of some schools reflect a blanket approach to all children and fail to recognise that, for some children with SEND, behaving in the same way as their peers is not a reality.

Young people focus group outcomes

54. A Focus Group was held with 14 young people with a range of disabilities on their views of inclusion within mainstream schools. The young people currently attend a mainstream school with a Specialist Support Centre (SSC) in West Sussex. The young people clearly communicated that they like the opportunities that a mainstream school gives them, with the main themes being :
- **Independence** – This was very important to all of the young people who took part. There was a general feeling and anxiety from the young people that their opportunities may become fewer the older they get. One participant mentioned friends who had gone to a special college had not really achieved the independence that they hoped that they would have in the longer term.
 - **Inclusion** – Being part of a mainstream school was important to the young people as they felt included and part of something bigger. The young people understood that this was also important for their fellow

'non-disabled' students as by being in an environment with a range of abilities meant that they too were learning about difference and inclusion. The young people pointed out that this would help everyone as they enter adulthood to not see disabled people as 'different'.

- **Safety** – There was a very strong sense that feeling safe was important to all the young people and this was provided through the SSC with the unit being referred to as a 'safe space'. They also described how it provided a space where they could be with other disabled young people who understood what it meant to be disabled.
- **Choice** – Some of the young people had chosen the school whilst others hadn't but they all stated that young people should have choice and make their own decision about what school they wanted to attend. One young man (a wheelchair user) explained how he had originally wanted to go to a mainstream school without a SSC but on visiting it a few times he felt that they 'did not want me', so he decided to attend one with a SSC.

"In the end it was simple, I chose to come here as they wanted me, why would I want to go somewhere that didn't?"

Victimisation of children and young people with SEND

55. There seems to be a particular issue concerning bullying of children and young people with SEND. A small scale survey in West Sussex last year found that disability-related bullying accounted for 74% of the responses and was significantly higher than any other form of bullying. These findings concur with national research which shows that children and young people with additional needs and disabilities are more likely to be bullied than their non-disabled peers .

What some schools have told us

56. Schools have a statutory duty to ensure that children and young people with SEND are included within mainstream provision (as long as reasonably practicable). The majority of schools are committed to creating an inclusive learning environment for all, but there are a number of factors that make this challenging. Schools are expected to reach certain performance thresholds, regardless of the cohort. This puts pressure on teaching staff to prioritise the achievement of the majority. Schools also need to perform against a constantly changing landscape, the new curriculum, assessment etc. Providing quality personalised learning opportunities, resources and support requires money and school budgets are stretched.
57. Funding additional staff, resources and services is not always possible. Additional funding is available through the 'notional' SEN budget and top-up funding, however when the needs of a pupil require high levels of support and intervention, the cost of provision can sometimes exceed any additional budget received. Supporting a child or young person who needs a high level of resources whilst an EHC needs assessment is being completed can also be a challenge, particularly for small schools.



58. Teaching staff may feel ill-equipped to effectively support pupils with SEND in their class and provide for medical needs. In addition the procurement and funding of specialist equipment is complex and referral systems and thresholds require a considerable level of understanding to refer to the correct service in the right way. The physical site and buildings can also sometimes make inclusion of children with SEND difficult.
59. Parental choice can result in one school attracting more pupils with SEND whilst another welcomes none. This results in some schools being stretched beyond the resources that they have available to them.
- “Schools can feel in a vulnerable position where a year group with a high proportion of pupils with SEND could fail to make floor standards. We have dealt with this by communicating progress and attainment with a focus upon different groups of pupils. This is not just about removing those with SEND from the results rather, it is highlighting potential anomalies. For example, if a pupil has a chronic medical condition and is therefore persistently absent, their progress will be affected. We have also recorded progress in different ways such as recording the achievement of Personal Learning Plan targets, case studies and intervention assessments”.*
60. Despite the challenges, some schools have found that inclusion has enhanced the learning opportunities for all pupils. When pupils with SEND are enabled to attend their local school successfully they can learn within their own community and alongside friends. The social and emotional benefits are hugely important for the children, particularly in terms of their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth. Schools have also witnessed that pupils without SEND soon see beyond the differences and instead, value the individual. This will hopefully have a life-long effect on them and help shift perspectives in society for the better. Inclusion has also led to improved early

*London University's Institute of Education 2014

assessment and identification of pupils' needs as the understanding and expertise of teaching and support staff develops.

61. There is more to do to encourage and support children and young people to stay within maintained provision. Strong leadership – including from Academy Trusts - is vital to help the teachers, governors and parents understand what an

inclusive culture is and how to apply it to their setting.

“Inclusion has enhanced the learning opportunities for all pupils at our school. We have found that the social and emotional benefits are hugely important for the children, particularly in terms of their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth”.



The social and emotional benefits are hugely important for the children, particularly in terms of their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth.

Our Vision

Aims and objectives

- 62.** Our shared vision is that all early years settings, schools and colleges in West Sussex are able to deliver high quality education for children and young people with SEND, maximising money from the Dedicated Schools Grant. To do this we will need:
- To build a model of educational provision and support in West Sussex which enables young people, wherever possible, to live and go to their local early years setting, school or FE provision.
 - To ensure that local early years, mainstream and special educational provision is effective, of a high quality and delivers the best educational outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
 - To ensure that children with SEND are, where possible, welcomed and included within their local early years setting, mainstream school and college.
 - To deliver an offer that is sustainable and cost-effective now and into the future and takes due account of predicted demand.
- 63.** This vision has been developed in partnership with education providers, parents and young people and success will be dependent on a strong commitment from everyone involved in commissioning, providing and delivering education and support for our children and young people with SEND and their families.
- 64.** Every early years' provider, mainstream school and post 16 setting will need to make effective provision for children with SEND so that they make good progress in their learning and can move on easily to the next stage of their education and later into employment and independent adult life. Transition should be a good experience for every young person.
- 65.** There is considerable good practice in West Sussex across all sectors but there are also significant gaps in what we provide. This strategy aims to address those gaps, specifically:
- Insufficient inclusion of children and young people with SEND in local early years settings, mainstream schools and colleges.
 - The lack of enough specialist provision and school places for children and young people with autism spectrum condition and complex social, emotional and mental health needs.
 - Our need to transport children and young people considerable distances from home in order to go to a school that can meet their needs.
 - Gaps in educational achievement and progress for children and young people with SEND.
 - Poor transition arrangements, in particular from early years settings.
 - Schools and families not being aware of how to promote independence and build resilience in a child with SEND, especially prior to transition points, and not prioritising and planning for this.
 - The lack of appropriate provision in some areas of the county for young people with SEND post 16.
 - Insufficient joint working between agencies when commissioning packages of education and care for complex needs.
 - Divisions between educational support for a child or young person with SEND and the support offered within Early Help for families as a whole.
 - The focus solely on the educational needs of the child, without considering other needs which may be barriers to educational progress, or without placing this in the context of the wider needs of their family.

What will we do?

1. Ensure that local early years' settings, mainstream and special educational provision is effective, of a high quality and delivers the best educational outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

- Develop the quality and capacity of early years providers, schools and colleges, in order to meet the needs of local families and their children with SEND. We want to ensure that schools and other education settings know where to access support if they need it.
- Consult schools, the SEND Hub Networks, Early Years Hubs and Family Support Networks on expanding and enhancing and joining up the work of SEND Hubs. Share good practice between schools and provide a more consistent support offer across the age range 0-25 years.
- Ensure that all specialist SEN provision accessed by West Sussex children and young people is good or better and that all West Sussex Special schools are effective centres of excellence, providing models of best practice and high quality training and support for other schools.
- Improve progress rates and outcomes for all children and young people with SEND so that we close the achievement gap between them and other children and achieve outcomes which are above national expectations. We aim to build on the existing vocational skills provision in schools and FE Colleges to ensure that all young people have effective pathways to adulthood. We will explore ways to measure and evidence outcomes in terms of the transition and journey for the whole family.
- Link with Early Help partners to tackle exclusions and poor inclusive practice by developing a new approach to supporting children with challenging behaviour. This will include effective strategies to minimise the impact of behaviour on family life, education and access to community services to ensure that children can continue to be supported at home and within their mainstream school where possible.

- Link with the Alternative Provision Review and work with Social Care and Early Help to consider options for funding family focused proactive intervention programmes, developing a swift response from multi-agency teams around the setting to avoid permanent exclusions where possible and developing a new strategy for placing children waiting for an EHCP or special school placement.
- Introduce better access to support for young people with mental health and behavioural issues, including through expanding counselling in schools and programmes to build young people's resilience.



2. Ensure that children with SEND are, where possible, welcomed and included within their local early years setting, mainstream school and FE provision.

- Improve inclusive practice in all settings from pre-school to post 16. The earlier parents experience inclusive mainstream education the more likely they may be to expect their child to be able to attend mainstream in statutory schooling.
 - Consider options to work with early years' settings, schools and colleges to develop an agreement on what inclusion looks like and challenge all mainstream settings to be more inclusive.
 - Consider the introduction of an 'inclusion kite mark' to reward excellent inclusive practice.
 - Ensure that support and advice is available to education providers and families about how to promote a child or young person's independence and resilience in order to prepare them as they approach transition points.
 - Ensure that transitions from one stage of education to the next are well managed so that there is continuity of support for children and young people with SEND.
 - Increase parental confidence in, and knowledge of, the support provided by West Sussex schools. Improve the engagement of parents by providing them with timely information, advice and support from all relevant services. Ensure the needs of the whole family are identified and considered. Provide better personalisation and develop services with the active involvement of young people and their families.
- 3. Build a model of educational provision and support in West Sussex which enables young people, wherever possible, to live and go to their local early years setting, school or FE provision locally.**
- Develop a range of flexible provision across maintained special

schools and mainstream schools in West Sussex, as well as the highest quality and cost effective independent and non-maintained Special schools where some children and young people are placed. This will include reviewing our current provision to ensure that it meets the needs of all our children and young people with SEND.

- Develop our partnership with providers in the independent and non-maintained sector to share good practice, help manage demand and drive down the overall cost of placements and transport. We recognise that we cannot achieve our ambitions without working in partnership with all providers.
 - Look to decrease out of county residential post 16 placements through a trial of supported accommodation exploring innovative uses of council assets, local provision of education and training and supported living opportunities.
 - Develop post 16 provision so that less than 1% of young people with a statement or EHCP need to transfer into similar independent specialist colleges post 16. Ensure that the range of courses and access levels available in further education mean that most young people can be supported to continue learning in a local college.
- 4. Deliver an offer that is sustainable and cost-effective now and into the future and takes due account of predicted demand.**
- Develop a rigorous commissioning system, based on a strategic analysis of need by improving our use of data and cost forecasts, to ensure that the continuum of provision meets the continuum of need. Work in partnership to implement a regional 'Dynamic Purchasing System' for the South East.
 - Work in partnership and use a wide range of local data to develop innovative approaches to addressing gaps in services through joint commissioning and using evidence-based

practice and research to improve the quality and availability of provision 0-25 years, with good transition to adult services.

- Develop the broadest range of providers, including partnerships with Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools, to increase parental choice and provide a flexible match to the needs of children, young people and their families.
- Ensure better join-up between agencies to simplify and streamline processes. With more complex cases an extension of the approach used in Intensive Team around the Family meetings will be developed - learning from the national Person Centred Planning pilot (Me, My Family, My Home). The work of teams within the Local Authority and partner agencies will be more closely aligned with greater routine communication, shared processes and panels where appropriate.

- Focus on early intervention and prevention as a priority so that the needs of children, young people and families do not increase because early help and intervention is not provided in a timely way.
- Work collaboratively with partners, so that where a family's needs are identified in the process of assessing the child or young person's SEND, the professionals working with them are able to ensure the appropriate support wraps around them in a coordinated way, ensuring they receive the right intervention at the right time.
- Ensure that there is more joined up work by professionals who work with very young children and their families, particularly early years education and childcare providers across all sectors, health practitioners and those providing services through our Children's Centres, so that we achieve the highest quality support for children with SEND aged 0 to 5 years.



Key area	Current position and issues	Recommendations	Key Performance Indicators
<p>To ensure that local mainstream and special educational provision is effective, of a high quality and delivers good educational outcomes for children and young people with SEND.</p>	<p>Current position</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Significant attainment gap between children and young people (C&YP) with SEND and those without. ● A high proportion of children and young people who are excluded have SEND. ● Most special schools rated good or better by Ofsted, 33% of schools with SSCs are rated RI or inadequate. <p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is difficult to find out where to get advice and guidance from LA on educating C&YP with SEND. ● Some teaching and other staff lack the confidence /capability to support C&YP with SEND. ● Schools lack knowledge on procurement / referral systems 	<p>Workforce capability and capacity</p> <p>1.1 By spring 2017 we will coordinate development of an enhanced initial teacher training and on-going CPD offer for teachers, heads and governors on SEND. This will include online and personalised training programmes for schools and early years' settings on autism spectrum condition (ASC), social emotional and mental health (SEMH) and pupil behaviour.</p> <p>1.2 We will continue to provide ASC training to early years settings in partnership with Portage (early years support) colleagues.</p> <p>1.3 We will improve the links between the Early Years Hubs, SEND Hub Networks and Family Support Networks and promote networking opportunities.</p> <p>1.4 We will consult schools and the SEND Hub Networks, Early Years Hubs and Family Support Networks on expanding the work of the SEND Hubs so that an enhanced offer is in place by spring 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Putting those schools, early years settings and colleges that have been successful with particular challenges in touch with those who are struggling. ● Improving the links to expertise in mainstream special and independent and non-maintained schools. ● Expanding provision to provide a more consistent offer across the age range 0-25 years. ● Sharing good practice between SSCs, schools, early years settings and further education. 	<p>Workforce capability</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Programme of training and development in place by spring 2017. 2. Surveys show increased confidence of early years, school and college staff by April 2018.

Key area	Current position and issues	Recommendations	Key Performance Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Building on learning communities of schools to share good practice and help improve transitions, including the relationship with parents/ carers as part of the school community <p>Option</p> <p>1.5. Setting up a single point of contact within the LA for schools to ensure that they get support and advice when they need it – including on referral and procurement processes.</p> <p>Early Years, School and College Improvement</p> <p>2.1 We are building inclusion into the work of the school improvement boards to ensure that the gap between the progress and outcomes for children and young people with SEND and other C&YP is narrowed, including ensuring that a focus on SEND is included within the early years improvement pilot in Chichester and Crawley areas and that underperforming schools with SSCs are prioritised. We will continue to support early years’ settings to ensure children with SEND make progress.</p> <p>2.2 By autumn 2017 we will develop our understanding of how we measure outcomes for Children and Young People with SEND, using the SEND and Common Outcomes Frameworks as the starting point, and consider the use of Holistix database (Early Help) to incorporate the whole family’s outcomes.</p>	<p>School Improvement</p> <p>3. By 2018 increase the proportion of schools with SSCs judged good or better to 78% from 67% (in line with the national average).</p> <p>4. By autumn 2018 ensure that at least 95% of young people with SEND participate in education or employment until they are 18</p>

Key area	Current position and issues	Recommendations	Key Performance Indicators
		<p>2.3 We will continue to develop the vulnerable children's audit tool which will include provision for monitoring educational outcomes for children with SEND.</p> <p>2.4 Through the Pathways to Adulthood Strategy we will ensure that there are high quality vocational programmes which lead to employment and support independent living through FE colleges and Special Schools - being clear about the intended outcomes for young people. We will ensure families and schools are supported to plan for this next stage and transition into adulthood, in order to promote the independence of the young person and resilience of the whole family.</p> <p>Tackling exclusions</p> <p>3.1 By autumn 2018 we will develop a new approach to supporting children with challenging behaviour which provides effective strategies to minimise the impact of behaviour on family life, education and access to community services to ensure that children can continue to be supported at home and within their mainstream school.</p>	<p>Exclusions</p> <p>5.By 2018 reduce the number of children and young people with SEND (including school support) who are permanently excluded from 80% to below the national average (70%).</p>

Key area	Current position and issues	Recommendations	Key Performance Indicators
		<p>3.2 We are introducing better access to support for young people with mental health and behavioural issues through expansion of counselling in schools and programmes to build young people’s resilience.</p> <p>3.3 We are taking forward work through the Vulnerable Children’s sub group to track the journeys of children and young people not in school (including children with SEND) to identify how to address issues in the system earlier and prevent placements breaking down.</p> <p>Options</p> <p>3.4 We are linking with the Alternative Provision Review to consider options to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with social care and early help to joint fund family focussed proactive intervention programmes. ● Develop a swift response from a multi professional ‘team around the setting to avoid permanent exclusions from schools (particularly primary schools) where possible. ● Developing a new strategy for placing children going through the assessment process for an EHCP or waiting for a special school placement. <p>3.5 Training and support for schools and other education settings to help them understand their duties under the Equality Act, so that by 2017 80% of schools will have received training.</p>	

Key area	Current position and issues	Recommendations	Key Performance Indicators
<p>To ensure that children with SEND are, where possible, welcomed and included within their local mainstream school, early years setting and college</p>	<p>Current position</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 20,656 pupils with SEND, around 3900 having a statement or EHCP. ● Only 35% of C&YP with statements/EHCPs attend mainstream school (less than other similar LAs). ● Children with statements / EHCPs placed by SEN Assessment Team, children C&YP on School Support placed by the Admissions team in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol. ● Inequitable spread of children with SEND in mainstream schools. ● Some C&YP with SEND being placed in Alternative Provision while waiting for their EHCP assessment to be completed. ● Poor transitions (at each stage). 	<p>Inclusion</p> <p>4.1 We will listen to children, young people and their parents and ensure that all schools are challenged where inclusive practice is poor, sharing intelligence with Ofsted.</p> <p>4.2 We will work with the SEND Hub Networks, Family Support Networks, Early Years Hubs and localities to develop a bank of good practice examples and materials for use by early years' settings, schools and colleges to support inclusive practice and good transition by autumn 2017.</p> <p>4.3 By 2017 we will develop a new approach to enabling children with SEND to attend mainstream early years settings – setting the expectation of inclusion from the beginning.</p> <p>4.4 We will continue to offer Disabled Children's Access to Childcare (DCATCH) brokerage to support parents to find childcare to support their child's needs. Providing them with information and support to challenge poor practice if necessary.</p>	<p>6 All schools commit to inclusion agreement (including independent schools).</p> <p>7 Depending on outcome of consultation – Inclusion Kite Mark introduced.</p>

Key area	Current position and issues	Recommendations	Key Performance Indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Insufficient emphasis on increasing parental confidence in local provision. <p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No agreed understanding of what inclusion means. ● Parental confidence / knowledge of options ● Governors / other parent's views 	<p>Options</p> <p>4.5 Developing an agreement with schools (teachers and governors), colleges and early years settings to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agree what inclusion looks like in mainstream settings. ● Set out our expectation that all schools should welcome C&YP with SEND. ● Set out our expectations that children and young people with SEND, and their families, should be supported within their school whilst EHCP assessments are being completed. ● Ensure that the EHCP and educational staff place importance on supporting the child or young person to increase their confidence and resilience. ● Ensure that teachers, support staff and families have high expectations for our children and young people with SEND with regards to what they feel they can achieve i.e. in terms of employment; training; qualifications and the degree to which they can achieve independent living. ● Agree the approach that learning settings should take in responding to and preventing the victimisation and bullying of CYP with SEND <p>4.6 Consulting on introducing a 'kite mark' for quality inclusion.</p>	

Key area	Current position and issues	Recommendations	Key Performance Indicators
		<p>Transition</p> <p>5.1 We will continue to develop the transition pack (targeted support), that supports children in the early years from home to school setting and beyond.</p> <p>5.2 The Early Years and Childcare Advisory Service to continue to support early years settings to lead transition planning meetings with school colleagues to promote information sharing between the setting, parent and school.</p> <p>Options</p> <p>5.3 Carrying out a review to ensure that there is better transition between educational settings – from early years and beyond, learning from the best practice across the country. Linking in to learning from Life Pathways projects, to ensure young people are preparing for their future both during school and post 16.</p> <p>5.4 Improving the quality of information available to guide transition planning at 14. Guidance and support for young people 14-16 with SEND to access education and training. Improving joint working with Health and Social Care to ensure a joined up approach to transition planning.</p> <p>5.5 Introducing a revised LA process to support transition from pre-school settings to primary and primary to secondary to ensure placements are close to home and a fair distribution between schools</p>	<p>Transition</p> <p>8 Survey of parents and young people shows increased satisfaction and confidence following transition points.</p> <p>9 Decrease in the number of placement changes following transition to secondary school</p>

Key area	Current position and issues	Recommendations	Key Performance Indicators
		<p>Parental Confidence</p> <p>6.1 We will ensure that parents and young people are at the centre of planning process and involved in decision making throughout, including ensuring that Planning Co-ordinators meet parents and children very early on in the process, so it is clear that their voice is heard.</p> <p>6.2 We will continue to improve the information available for parents and young people through the Local Offer and Information Advice & Support Service on the options being clear about the benefits and draw backs of each.</p> <p>6.3 Through the Local Offer we will explore ways of marketing SEND provision within special and mainstream schools more effectively – including search engine optimisation.</p> <p>6.4 We will continue to take forward further work through the West Sussex Parent Carer Forum to develop parents' groups at schools and other networking opportunities.</p>	<p>Parental Confidence</p> <p>10 The low number of tribunal cases is maintained.</p> <p>11 85% of surveyed parents report good or better advice and information services by 2018, baseline carried out in 2016.</p> <p>12 Increased users of the Local Offer Website from around 2,000 in Sept 2015 to 10,000 in Sept 2018.</p>
<p>To build a model of educational provision and support in West Sussex which enables young people, wherever possible, to live and go to school / college locally.</p>	<p>Current Position</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some children having to travel long distances to school (350 more than 20 miles). 11% of special placements (433 pupils) are in the independent non maintained sector. Mainly complex physical difficulties, ASC and SEMH. 	<p>Specialist Provision</p> <p>7.1 We will work with special schools to ensure consistency of application of 'criteria' for placement by September 2018.</p> <p>7.2 We are reviewing our existing funding formulas for special schools (2017) and Specialist Support Centres (2018) and developing new ones to better reflect need.</p> <p>7.3 We are looking at decreasing out of county post 16 residential placements through a trial of supported accommodation exploring innovative uses of council assets, local provision of education and training and supported living opportunities.</p>	<p>Specialist provision</p> <p>13 Decrease in the travel budget by 2019.</p> <p>14 43% of C&YP with statement or EHCP educated in mainstream settings in line with our statistical neighbours (up from 35%).</p>

Key area	Current position and issues	Recommendations	Key Performance Indicators
	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Special schools at capacity (but higher proportion in special than other LAs). ● Some SCCs over-subscribed, some under capacity. ● Lack of residential provision in county. ● Issue with agencies providing information needed for EHCPs and placements. 	<p>7.4 Special schools are working with mainstream schools through SEND Hub Networks to support them to provide for lower levels of need - freeing up capacity in special schools to take higher level of needs. The Hubs and Family Support Networks to support SENCOs to work together to plan provision and support transition at a strategic level.</p> <p>7.5 By autumn 2016 we will carry out further work to review current provision using a co-production approach. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Considering the need for additional provision to support demand for ASC and SEMH, both within mainstream and special settings. ● Exploring the rise in demand for post 16 provision. ● Reviewing current SSCs with a focus on underutilised provision, to ensure that they are fit for purpose <p>Options (depending on outcome of Provision Review)</p> <p>7.6 Developing our specialist provision in mainstream and special schools to ensure that it meets the increasing demand for ASC and SEMH placements going forwards. Ensuring integrated education and care provision for young people with complex learning difficulties and disorders. Support for families should also be part of this package.</p> <p>7.7 Re-focusing specialist provision within mainstream colleges and planning for additional provision for post 16 pupils who are unable to attend mainstream provision. Launching a trial to test different models for post 16 placements.</p>	<p>15 Reduction in numbers placed in INMSS by 4% by 2019 in line with our statistical neighbours.</p> <p>16 Provision Review completed by autumn 2016.</p>

Key area	Current position and issues	Recommendations	Key Performance Indicators
<p>To deliver an offer that is sustainable and cost effective now and into the future and takes due account of predicted demand</p>	<p>Current Position</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pressure on High Needs Budget. ● Issues concerning the time it takes to complete assessments for EHCPs. ● Provision not based on a strategic analysis of need. ● Introduced a dynamic purchasing system (DPS) for placements in INMSS. ● Increase in demand as a consequence of house building. ● Increasing demand for ASC placements and post 16 provision. <p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Difficulties mapping upcoming need in order to plan places ● LA too binary approach to provision – e.g. seeing one route as fixed ● Relationship with INMSS not used to full effect. ● Demand on other agencies/ resources (e.g. NHS) 	<p>Improved ways of working</p> <p>8.1 By autumn 2016 we will ensure that clear protocols and processes are in place for health, social care, the Virtual School and SEND team to work together to provide an integrated service. Lead for Vulnerable Children to ensure strategic leadership and joined up delivery.</p> <p>8.2 By spring 2017 we will ensure all professionals complete their advice for assessments within timescales so that delays in placement decisions can be avoided.</p> <p>8.3 SEN Assessment team are putting in place a number of actions to improve the timeliness of assessments, including prioritising assessment for the most vulnerable children.</p> <p>Relationship with INMSS and Commissioning</p> <p>9.1 By autumn 2016 we will introduce a new strategic approach to placements, based on clear rationale for using INMSS, rather than lack of capacity in specialist provision in county. Better join up with SEN assessment team and schools, including head teachers sitting on panels.</p> <p>9.2 We will use a rigorous commissioning system to ensure that the continuum of provision meets the continuum of need by improving our use of data and cost forecasts.</p> <p>9.3 We will further develop our partnership with INMSS where this can help drive down the overall cost of placements and transport. All placements through the DPS to ensure best value for money. A regional DPS will be introduced by April 2017.</p>	<p>Ways of working</p> <p>17 Agreed protocols in place for joint working between health, social care and education by autumn 2016</p> <p>18 100% of professional advice will be provided within timescales and 95% of statutory assessments will be completed in time by 2018.</p> <p>19 95% of EHCP Assessments completed within 20 weeks by 2018 Commissioning</p> <p>20 Joint strategic plan in place for placements in INMSS by autumn 2017.</p> <p>21 All placements in INMSS through DPS by April 2017.</p> <p>22 Decrease in High Needs budget spending by 2019</p>

Key area	Current position and issues	Recommendations	Key Performance Indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of join up across LA / social care and other services. 	<p>Options</p> <p>9.4 Ensuring that children and young people placed in INMSS have effective annual reviews which consider the option of return to West Sussex provision and which actively challenge learning outcomes for the child (using the Common Outcomes Framework).</p> <p>9.5 Improving our monitoring and quality assurance of INMSS, in addition to the effective annual reviews of individual children that consider the needs of the whole family.</p> <p>9.6 With the aim of reducing the need for residential placements for children and young people with complex needs, developing more effective joint commissioning arrangements across services and with other LAs. For example by trading services and pooling budgets to provide holistic services for families.</p> <p>Improved Data and Early Intervention</p> <p>10.1 We will improve our understanding of numbers of children coming into the system through better early identification, improved join up with Early Help teams. Enhanced PARMS and better multi-agency working. Early Years settings to consistently flag up issues early if they have concerns about support needed or transition to ensure that wrap around support for the whole family is in place before the child starts school.</p> <p>10.2 By autumn 2017 we will improve our information management systems for SEND, Early Help and Children Looked After with agreed common data sets which can track outcomes, achievement and destinations to enable the quality of provision to be measured</p>	<p>Improved data</p> <p>23 New database introduced by 2017.</p>

Notes

West Sussex Special Educational Needs and Disability Strategy 2016

