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# West Sussex Education and Learning Strategy

2022–2025



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# Foreword

As the UK emerges from the covid pandemic, it is the right time for West Sussex County Council to reflect, to look forward, and to reassess the priorities for education and learning as we set out on the next stage in our journey.

We owe it to our children and families to recognise that the disruption of recent years has had a profound effect on both the learning journey our children are engaged in, and also on their broader health and wellbeing. Many of the key priorities already established to improve outcomes and provision for all children in West Sussex remain our key priorities. However, the experience of our children and young people through the pandemic has led to renewed urgency in tackling the inequalities that inhibit some of our young people from achieving as well as they ought.

Catching up on lost learning many have experienced over the last two years has to be the key aim for us all. This also extends into providing our most vulnerable adults with opportunities to develop their skills to secure employment and be financially independent. This strategy draws all the Council's resources together towards achieving these goals.

**Nigel Jupp**  
Cabinet Member for  
Learning and Skills

The events of the last two years have had a profound impact on our children and families in West Sussex. As we emerge from the pandemic, this Strategy provides a clear focus for all of us in supporting our children and families in raising achievement and overcoming barriers to learning. It is a key component of the wider Children and Young People's Planning to provide children with the best start in life.'

**Lucy Butler**  
Director of Children, Young  
People and Learning

This strategy provides a single view of the learning journey for all children from the time they enter nursery until they reach adulthood. The key themes within the strategy have been shaped in partnership with our stakeholders and aim to raise the bar with respect of meeting the learning needs of all our children and young people irrespective of where they live within the county.'

**Paul Wagstaff**  
Assistant Director:  
Education and Skills

# Introduction

**This document sets out the Education and Learning Strategy for 2022–25, developed in response to feedback from a range of stakeholders.**

1. This document sets out the Education and Learning Strategy for 2022–25, developed in response to feedback from a range of stakeholders. This includes parents/carers, young people, those working in or supporting an education setting, and members of the county council and its officers. The strategy has children, young people and our most vulnerable adults in West Sussex at the centre of its thinking. It embeds the Council's SEND & Inclusion Strategy 2019–24 as a central plank in improving provision and outcomes for our children and young people with additional learning needs. The strategy is integral to the County Council's Corporate Plan 2021–2025 and its key ambitions for keeping people safe from vulnerable situations; promoting a sustainable and prosperous economy; helping people and communities fulfil their potential; and making the best use of resources. Key Themes within this strategy have a direct link to the Council's Plan in broadening the skills, ambitions and opportunities for all children, young people and our most vulnerable adults. It supports them in the foundations to contribute to the County's future economic growth and prosperity.
  2. Whilst the strategy outlines a programme that embodies statutory responsibilities of a local authority, it does not aim to outline all the statutory functions of a local authority. Many of the operational statutory responsibilities will run alongside the strategy in the form of continued business as usual. Inclusion is a central ambition of the strategy and is core to the County Council's Strategy Plan and the plans set out by the department of Children, Young People and Learning. Inclusion permeates the strategy and all of the key themes therein.
  3. The Council aims to work collaboratively with all stakeholders over the next three years to ensure that all West Sussex children and young people have access to high quality education and learning. It aims to help all achieve the best outcomes and opportunities for future education, employment or training. There exists a clear connection between the Council's Strategic Plan, the department's plans and organisation, and with the principles and workstreams within this strategy. The Council's ambitions in tackling climate change remain central to the actions taken in implementing this strategy.
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4. West Sussex County Council's Department for Children, Young People and Learning is committed to putting Children First in its work and its strategic thinking. The department has been through a major redesign in the way it delivers its services to support children, young people and families. For the Education and Skills service, this has led to greater co-ordination of its resources alongside those of Children's Social Care and Early Help. This aims to better deliver a cohesive programme that really does make a difference in challenging the barriers to success. The restructuring of the department has enabled a single view of the child's learning journey from the age of 2 years through our early years settings, schools, post 16 provision, and into adulthood. This provides an opportunity for the strategy to tackle some of the challenges that are complex and difficult to address, particularly at key transition points in that journey.
  5. The setting of key priorities, laid out as key themes, are supported with more detailed workstream plans and timelines co-created with partners and stakeholders. Workstreams will be developed and fine-tuned as the Strategy unfolds and key initiatives are introduced. Whilst the Education and Learning Strategy incorporates planning for Post 16 and adult community-based learning, it does not aim to cover the much wider skills agenda in full. A Council wide skills strategy will be developed separately with its own governance, reflecting the multiple stakeholders and dependencies Pan Sussex. A Skills Strategy will be one that is aligned to sector led strategic planning, ensuring a skilled workforce able to meet future economic needs and developments in the region.
  6. The Education and Learning Strategy is not a catch all. It does not aim to cover all the challenges facing children and families as we emerge from the covid pandemic and face the significant cost of living crisis. It is a strategy focused on learning and achievement. The strategy is constructed within the boundaries of a local authority's statutory responsibilities (a local authority's statutory responsibilities for education are summarised in Annex 1) and the levers for change that it can apply. The strategy will need to be viewed alongside the detail of the SEND & Inclusion Strategy 2019-24, the broader Council strategies for Mental Health and Wellbeing, and the key plans within the Children, Young People and Learning Department. It must also be viewed alongside major national policies on the future role of a local authority in education and learning, and the priorities set within these policies for improving outcomes for children and young people aged 2-19 years.
  7. Several principles which the County Council considers to be enablers and values that underpin our strategic intent, and which provide influence and support to enable change to happen are outlined in paragraph 23.
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# Education and Skills Directorate

8. During 2021–22, the Education and Skills Service within West Sussex went through a significant redesign. This led to a rethink in how the Service operates to support schools and learning providers in line with the local authority's statutory responsibilities. This redesign incorporated Early Years Education and Care, along with the management of Free Entitlement for 2 and 3 year-olds, and support for Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) Early Years providers. This provides a significant opportunity to address issues of quality and continuity of provision through transition from early years into schools. This connection has led to services for schools and early years settings being reframed. It has led to these being more closely aligned to the Council's Early Help and Family Safeguarding services within a District and Borough structure to better join up the support for our most vulnerable children and families.
  9. Since 2022, there have been significant reductions in grant from the government to fulfil the Council's school improvement responsibilities and to support schools in improving provision and outcomes. This has provided an opportunity for the local authority to reassess how such services can be reconfigured to meet future priorities. It has led to an even greater focusing of its resources in inverse proportion to success, and to working with those schools and providers needing the greatest help.

This has led to the greater commissioning of expertise from schools and external partners to provide peer support to schools, and to a traded offer of services more generally available to all schools and learning providers. Whilst grants provided to local authorities remain challenging, schools and learning providers themselves remain under significant financial pressures. Increasing demand for special educational needs support challenges both the High Needs grant provided to the local authority, but also schools' own budgets as increasing numbers of children need additional support post-covid. Increased costs and inflationary pressures combine with a falling birth rate to leave some schools and Early Years settings facing a challenging future.
  10. The role of the local authority is reshaping in response to national policy and changes in funding which will determine the way a local authority operates in the future. Three key national policy initiatives have been introduced in 2022, each of which have a direct impact on the role of a local authority and both its strategic direction and operational structures. These include the Education White Paper: 'Opportunities for All' (2022); the SEND Green Paper consultation 'Right Support; Right Place; Right Time;' 2022; and changes in Post 16 Qualifications. Whilst the Schools Bill (2022) aiming to embed 'Opportunities for All' into law has been withdrawn, some
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key expectations remain. The national deficit in the High Needs Block which supports special educational needs, and the Council's own work in reducing local financial pressures on the grant will continue to be a significant priority for the Education and Skills team. All will be reflected in the way services are deployed and reshaped to support education and learning. It may reduce flexibilities to support beyond the local authority's statutory role.

# Engagement Survey

11. A period of engagement took place between February and June 2022 to gather the views of a range of interested groups and individuals on the future direction of education and learning within the County. An online survey drew significant interest from parents and the community. Focused engagement sessions with schools and the Further Education Sector provided a greater understanding of current and future priorities. Further engagement sessions with officers and councillors reflected organisational priorities in response to the publication of National Policy initiatives in April 2022.
  12. There are ten key challenges facing the local authority and which were raised in engagement events:
    - Whilst academic success and educational outcomes have improved in recent years, there is still more to do to ensure that all children achieve as well as they ought. Some families face challenges which put them at a disadvantage. The impact of Covid has interrupted learning and the confidence of many children and young people. Assessment and examination results in 2022 reflect the significant disruption to learning over the last two years
    - Children who have SEND or are vulnerable, for example young carers, are not always achieving as well as they might, and inclusive practice is not consistently applied in all schools and across all parts of the county to enable them to do so
    - There are still too many children falling out of education and learning either through exclusions or through parents removing children from school rolls as they consider provision is not meeting their child's needs
    - Learning and curriculum opportunities, along with the quality of provision for children and young people varies across the county. This results in 'inequality of access' to the range of opportunities appropriate to both children and young people's needs and interests, and is too dependent on where children live within the county
    - Even before children reach school age, the underachievement of our disadvantaged children is notable compared with their non-disadvantaged peers. Whilst progress is being made in closing the disadvantaged gap as seen in the 2022 Key Stage 2 assessments, the overall discrepancy seen in disadvantaged children's readiness for school at the end of the early years remains a constant throughout their learning journey
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- Removing the barriers to academic success for some children and young people are complex and require the engagement of many partners
- Pathways and provision for students after 16 years vary across the county. There can be limited opportunities for the full range of options in some areas leading to students having to either travel to find the courses they want to study, or having to pursue local courses to which they may not be suited
- Some of our most vulnerable young people continue to be at risk of criminal exploitation, exclusion, or harm
- The current number of specialist placements in our maintained schools and academies is currently insufficient to meet escalating demand. This is leading to children increasingly having to travel out of their local communities or attend private schools at significant cost
- The proportion of surplus places in our primary schools is increasing as the birth rate falls and house building slows down. This both places pressure on schools in retaining staff, and also in managing the needs of all children with dwindling resources. It also leads to some schools becoming vulnerable, affecting their ability to continue their improvement journey and maintain financial stability

13. The online survey and engagement sessions aimed to identify the top priorities for learning provision over the next three years. Feedback from those who were involved has been core to identifying the Key Themes and to developing a common vision and strategy.



# Vision and Ambitions

14. In aiming to keep children safe from vulnerable situations and helping people and communities fulfil their potential, the County Council aims to address issues of inequality in education and learning. It aims to level up the quality of provision in those localities and in those learning providers where provision is not meeting the needs and interests of all. This includes provision for the most vulnerable, those with SEND, and those who have ambitions for vocational qualifications. It also includes those providers and schools requiring improvement, along with those Districts and Boroughs where pupil and student outcomes that are not high enough. All children and young people deserve the best start in life in West Sussex and this can only be achieved if they have full access to a broad range of high-quality learning opportunities. This will enable every young person to secure the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to help them achieve their own ambitions. It will help support the development of a sustainable and prosperous economy across West Sussex.
  15. Overcoming inequalities, learning gaps, and providing additional support is the responsibility of everyone involved with the lives of children. This can only be achieved through co-operation and both strong and responsive partnership working across all services, families and learning providers.
  16. The Education and Learning Strategy is part of a co-ordinated series of actions and plans within the Children, Young People and Learning department. The breadth of these plans and relationships co-ordinate to tackle the barriers that many of our families and children face. They work collectively to enable our children, young people, and the County's most vulnerable adults, to secure the best outcomes, and develop their confidence and independence.
  17. Inclusion and respecting the needs and vulnerabilities of all is central to our mission. It is achieved through a culture that values all and respects all. It puts the principle of Children First in all decision making. This embeds a focus on high achievement and good progress made by all children from their respective starting points. Where there is discrimination, or where children and young people are restricted from achieving success, it is the local authority's role to call this out and to create a climate that values children and young people and helps them succeed.
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# Where are we now?

18. The Education and Skills annual report in 2020 identified a number of key priorities based on the Council's education and learning performance measures at the time. These included but were not restricted to:
- Ensuring all pupils who are disadvantaged and those who are more able are challenged to achieve their potential
  - Providing strategic support for curriculum design, implementation and impact
  - Implementing the SEND & Inclusion Strategy
  - Exploring and implementing creative approaches to alternative provision to reduce the risk of exclusion
  - Integrating cross directorate service delivery through the Children First Strategy
19. Whilst the local authority and schools have worked hard to tackle these priorities, the impact of covid cannot be underestimated. Managing learning during that time has required redefining our operational activity to meet a new and challenging situation in our schools. Schools have worked



hard to maintain a level of normality and to provide learning experiences through a range of methods to reduce the risk of children losing ground through this period. However, several of the priorities that were identified in 2020 remain priorities today. National research and reporting have shown that many children and young people have lost ground over the period of the pandemic. Some have suffered a loss of confidence, increased anxiety, and have found their return to school challenging.



20. National data for Key Stage 2 assessments, along with GCSE and A level results in 2022 show a mixed picture on pupil and student attainment overall. West Sussex outcomes reflect a fall in Key Stage 2 outcomes from 2019. Whilst overall GCSE results in West Sussex show an improvement on the outcomes achieved in 2019, they are variable across schools and are generally below the highs of 2020 and 2021. Catching up on lost ground whilst ensuring that schools have the knowledge, expertise and resources to support those who's social, emotional and mental health has suffered during that time, is essential.
21. Coinciding with 'learning to live with covid' and returning to new ways of working in schools, the government introduced several key policy initiatives during 2022, some of which will, over the next three years, play a major role in the future shape of provision, the drive to raise standards in schools, and also the role of local authorities and their responsibilities for education. Any forward strategy for education and learning cannot ignore these key initiatives and strategies which will affect the way funding is deployed, and the way local authorities and their partners influence provision and outcomes.

# Key Principles

22. Success in achieving the outcomes we seek relies upon key dependencies. These dependencies reflect that much of the early years sector is delivered through private organisations; responsibilities for improving schools and student outcomes rests with schools and their governing bodies; and that the local authority’s responsibilities with the academy sector are very limited.
23. Achieving the ambitions set out in this strategy requires co-operation and an openness among learning providers to align their own priorities with those identified by West Sussex and included within the strategy. It relies on the key principles being shared by all stakeholders. These principles form our shared core of thinking in the planning of workstreams and priorities to maximise their impact. These principles are:
- Improving learning is more than improving outcomes for children but developing a lifelong passion and curiosity for learning through into adulthood
  - Improving learning and achievement is focused on all children and young people achieving as well as they can
  - Centres of learning, which could be schools, early years providers, or independent alternative curriculum providers, should always provide children and young people with a safe environment where they can learn confidently and are free from intimidation, prejudice and harassment
  - The West Sussex County Council SEND & Inclusion Strategy, agreed in 2019, should remain at the heart of the Education and Learning Strategy with inclusive practice being core to the culture of all centres of learning
  - Improving provision and outcomes for children with SEND and vulnerabilities is only possible through strong partnerships and collective ownership of actions and policy from across the sector
  - The local authority will, within its statutory powers and responsibilities, provide strategic direction and ambition to achieve the best outcomes for the County’s children and young people, and will work with a range of partners to achieve these. It will use its role to engage, influence, coach and support schools and education providers to collectively achieve these ambitions
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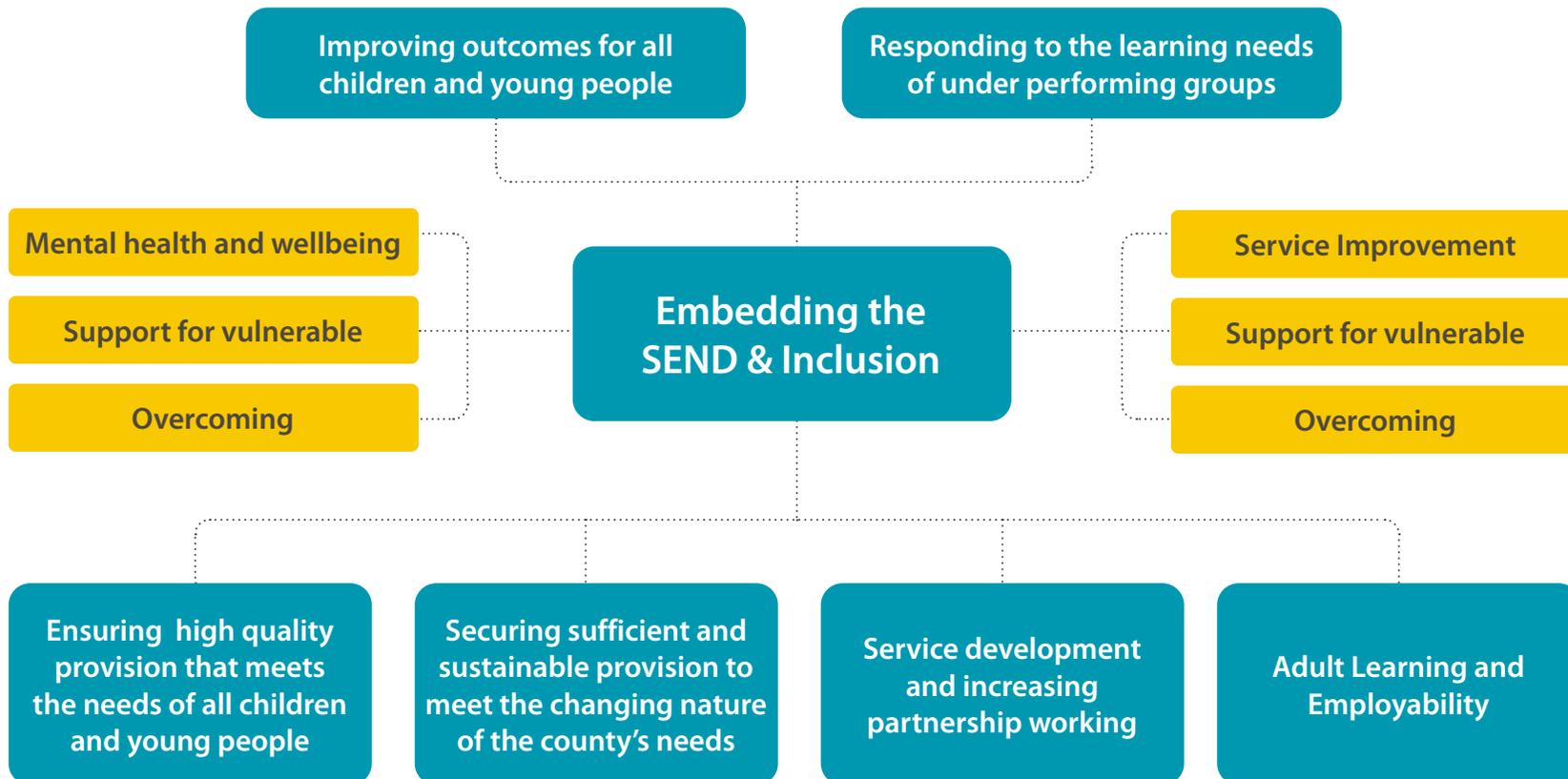
- Improving outcomes and opportunities for all children, young people and our vulnerable adults should not be determined by where people live, but strong provision and outcomes should be accessible for all
- The Education and Learning Strategy should not be viewed in isolation. It should be viewed alongside the strategic 'Children, Young People and Learning Plan' which covers service improvement; support for vulnerable families; improving outcomes and life chances for the disadvantaged; supporting children's mental health and wellbeing; developing strategic relationships and integrating technology; ensuring value for money; and engaging with partners to jointly deliver improvement
- Ensuring that children and young people can access education and learning as far as is possible close to where they live may not always be feasible. However, the SEND Green Paper indicates an ambition that there should be 'appropriate and affordable specialist provision for those who need it... and this should be of high quality and close to home wherever possible.' For children and young people with specialist learning and support needs, we should always aim to achieve the concept of 'Live local – Learn Local' wherever possible and efficient
- In encouraging lifelong learning, we should provide a space for our children and young people to explore the issues that affect them both now and into the future. Our own work in meeting demand for new school places should also reflect the issues both of today and the future. All that we do should use all opportunities and tools we have to address the issue of climate change to assure the future for all our children



# Key themes and priorities

24. The strategic priorities forming the Education and Learning Strategy cover seven key areas, two of which are child and student outcome focused, and five of which cover areas of provision and strategic support. Each of the key themes is supported with specific workstreams. These workstreams contribute towards achieving West Sussex County Council's education and learning goals and ambitions for the next three years, whilst setting the foundations to meet the national education policy ambitions for 2030.
  25. The seven key themes also have close links to the County Council's Strategic Corporate Plan and the broader plans and initiatives embedded in the Children, Young People and Learning (CYPL) department. Collaborative working and co-ordination between different teams across the department aims to ensure synergy between them and that the drivers and enablers within the CYPL plans are drawn. Only through this can we fulfil the Council's education and learning ambitions for our children and young people.
  26. In order to meet the learning ambitions set within the strategy, children need to feel safe. They need to rebuild relationships and be supported in addressing the anxieties that may have developed over the covid pandemic. Whilst there are separate strategies and plans to support the mental health and wellbeing of our children, the co-ordination of these plans alongside the workstream plans within the current strategy will be crucial. Where workstreams include specific focus on social, emotional and mental health, or have dependencies on other plans, these will be referenced.
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- Children, young people and learning
- Education and skills key themes



## THEME 1

# Improving outcomes for all children and young people

27. Improving outcomes and achievement for all children in West Sussex continues to be a key priority. Whilst national assessment outcome data for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and at the end of both key stages 1 and 2 had been rising in the period leading up to 2019, outcomes were still not high enough. In 2019, West Sussex was ranked 109 out of 151 local authorities for outcomes at the age of 5 years (EYFS); 106 out of 151 local authorities for outcomes at the age of 7 years (Key Stage 1); and ranked 116 out of 151 local authorities for outcomes at the age of 11 years (Key Stage 2).
  28. The gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers was greater in West Sussex than both regional and national averages at all key stages. Data on school readiness in 2019 using the PACEY model indicated that, whilst 71.4% of West Sussex 5 year-olds had the health, emotional maturity and skills required to successfully settle into school, in line with the national average, only 52% of disadvantaged young children in West Sussex were similarly ready. Based on the proportion achieving the expected combined standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, the gap between disadvantaged pupils in West Sussex and their non-disadvantaged peers was 26% compared with a difference nationally of 19%.
  29. National research and inspection evidence suggests that many of our youngest children have missed out on quality early years experiences and the many social interactions over the last two years. These are crucial to developing social confidence and early language. This is reflected in a reduced number of 5 year-olds achieving a good level of development in 2022 due to gaps in their personal, social and emotional development. The impact of the disrupted learning over the last two years is also reflected in the 2022 national assessments with a significant fall in the outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2, particularly in writing. Whilst 2022 examination outcomes for GCSE and A levels showed an improvement on outcomes achieved in 2019, there was a decline in the proportion achieving the highest grades, along with a fall in English Baccalaureate entries.
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30. There are many facets to raising the achievement and outcomes for children and young people in West Sussex. Raising attainment and achievement should be a focus for all, including our children in care, those with additional learning needs, those learning English as an additional language, refugees, those with SEND, and those who are high attainers. For those children electively home educated (EHE), although the local authority has limited powers to intervene and support, it is important that high quality information and guidance is offered to parents to help them in their decision making. The following workstreams have been identified as helping towards improving outcomes and supporting high achievement for all children. A local authority's role in improving education standards across its schools is limited. It does not extend to the direct delivery of this work but rests with championing high standards. It requires influencing improvement through networking best practice, and in intervening in those schools and early years settings where there are concerns on the quality of provision.

### **WORKSTREAM 1**

#### **Securing high achievement in literacy and numeracy competencies for all pupils and students**

This workstream will aim to work with schools on sharing best practice in raising attainment for all pupils including the most able. It will focus on tackling some of the areas where West Sussex data suggests weaknesses in performance compared with both national averages and statistical neighbours. This would include writing and mathematics, and the achievement of greater depth for high attaining pupils.

### **WORKSTREAM 2**

#### **Working collaboratively with the Early Years sector to improve outcomes for young children including early language, reading, and personal, social and emotional development**

This workstream will involve the development of an Early Years Strategy for learning along with transition planning into schools.



### **WORKSTREAM 3**

**Ensuring smooth transitions for all so that every child is well prepared for their next stage of learning.**

This workstream will build on current transitions planning incorporated into the SEND & Inclusion Strategy, but will also address issues of curriculum continuity. It will involve planning for those children and young people at risk of disengaging with education at transition points, and will include careers guidance and support.

### **WORKSTREAM 4**

**Ensuring that all children, irrespective of the learning provision they attend, have access to a curriculum of relevance and meaning to enable them to develop a broad knowledge and diverse range of skills that motivate and inspire learning and achievement**

This workstream will focus on the provision of a range of high-quality curriculum pathways, including vocational and alternative curriculum, and appropriate adaptations for those who need them.

**THEME 2**

# Responding to the learning needs of under-performing groups

31. Whilst setting an ambition for high achievement and improved outcomes for all children and young people, there are particular groups of learners who are not achieving as well as they ought. The local authority has a key statutory responsibility for reviewing patterns of underachievement, and for providing leadership in tackling underperformance. To this end, there has been significant success in the local authority's School Effectiveness Strategy 2018–22 and partnership working in tackling underperforming schools. The proportion of schools deemed good or outstanding in November 2022 reached 91.4% with 93.6% of West Sussex children attending schools that are good or outstanding. This marks the highest proportion on record in West Sussex.
32. The 2022 Key Stage 2 national assessments saw a closing of the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers in West Sussex. However, overcoming the barriers to success remains an essential priority if our disadvantaged children are to fulfil their learning potential. Similarly, raising the attainment and achievement of those groups of children and young people who are particularly vulnerable, for example, the children we care for, asylum seekers, young carers, children with SEND, those not in education, employment or training (NEET), and those both subject to Youth Justice oversight or at risk of criminal exploitation, remain a key priority. It is crucial that these vulnerable children and young people have access to high quality learning that is both appropriate to their needs, and assures their future independence and access to continued learning or employment. Building on the Education White Paper '*Opportunities for All*' (2022 DfE), support for schools in tackling persistent absence is recognised as crucial in ensuring young learners maximise the opportunities available for them in school. The local authority has a statutory duty to provide a multi-agency partnership with schools to improve the attendance of children, and to tackle persistent absence. Improving attendance has to be a key area of priority as increasing numbers of children and young people struggle to return to the routine of learning and school attendance post covid.
33. A key piece of work to support schools in reducing exclusions and suspensions remains high priority. This has to include improving early identification of those at risk of exclusion and

engaging a multi-agency approach in supporting schools and families. It must include the provision of an appropriate full time alternative curriculum for those excluded, and a rebalancing of the resourcing towards prevention. This links closely to the SEND Green Paper and the Alternative Provision Strategy already being co-created with schools.

### **WORKSTREAM 1**

#### **Tackling the attainment gap for disadvantaged by working to overcome the barriers to success**

This workstream aims to build on the work already initiated in tackling the attainment gap. It aims to focus on both identifying and tackling some of the key barriers that implicitly restrict opportunities for those children from disadvantaged backgrounds and in poverty.

### **WORKSTREAM 2**

#### **Raising the attainment and achievement of those groups of children and young people who are vulnerable, for example, children we care for, asylum seekers, young carers, children with SEND, those young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), and those both at risk of criminal exploitation and with Youth Justice oversight**

This workstream will focus on strategies and both multi-agency and partnership working to raise aspirations and directly tackle the causes of underachievement where it exists.

### **WORKSTREAM 3**

#### **Working in partnership with schools to improve the attendance of children and learners**

This workstream will fulfil the DfE's role for local authorities set out in 'Working together to Improve Attendance 2022'. This includes monitoring attendance and the inappropriate use of extended part-time timetables, along with providing multi-agency support to schools to improve attendance and tackle persistent absenteeism.

### **WORKSTREAM 4**

#### **Supporting schools in the early identification of children at risk of exclusion, providing appropriate provision to meet their needs, whilst rebalancing resources towards prevention and greater partnership working to achieve positive outcomes**

This workstream aims to reshape the way children and young people at risk of exclusion are identified and supported. It aims to rebalance the use of funding towards prevention. It also aims to ensure that those young people subject to Youth Justice oversight or at risk of criminal exploitation are appropriately supported through full-time provision.

### THEME 3

# Embedding and developing the Council's SEND & Inclusion Strategy

34. The Council agreed a SEND & Inclusion Strategy in 2019 as a key driver to improving provision and outcomes for children with special educational needs. This strategy covered three key areas:
- knowing our children and families well (an inclusive person-centred approach);
  - meeting the needs of our children and young people through our schools, education settings and services; and
  - working together towards solutions (collective responsibility)
35. Much has been achieved in improving the tools and support for schools in developing a culture of inclusive practice. Actions taken to date have avoided 486 children moving from mainstream into independent special schools. An ambitious SEND Capital Sufficiency Plan is in place to create over 500 new specialist places in the county's schools and academies over the next five years. Achieving this is subject to the financial constraints faced, along with increasing construction costs. A therapeutic approach to securing a cultural change in how schools and settings manage children exhibiting complex behaviour needs has been introduced. Key workstreams covering transitions between settings and schools, alternative provision and better data analysis of future need are well developed. Engagement sessions held through 2022 highlighted the need to maintain the focus and scope of this strategy and to continue with the workstreams and plans already in place and highlighted below. However, it is important that, whilst continuing the existing workstreams, actions reflect any changes arising from the outcomes of the SEND Green Paper consultation, and any changes to the Ofsted process of SEND Area Reviews.
36. The role of a local authority in managing the assessment of children with special educational needs and for securing appropriate provision to meet these needs is significant. As demand increases, this puts even greater pressure on the High Needs Block grant provided by the government to meet the needs of children with SEND, but which is already overcommitted.
37. The following key workstreams are already being implemented and remain high priority.

### **WORKSTREAM 1**

#### **Securing inclusive practice as the core of all learning provision across the county**

This workstream is a cross service workstream aligning services and support to ensure that all schools are inclusive. It focuses on schools having the skills, knowledge and capacity to meet the needs of all the children and young people they care for. It contributes significantly to the reduction of the High Needs deficit.

### **WORKSTREAM 2**

#### **Strengthening the education, health and care needs assessment process to improve timeliness of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) within the context of increasing demand**

This workstream is focused on reducing the time taken to complete Education, Health and Care Plans against an increasing demand.

### **WORKSTREAM 3**

#### **Implementing the local authority's Alternative Provision Strategy towards early intervention and reducing exclusions**

This workstream aligns closely with Workstream 4 in Key Theme 2 and targets improved quality and co-ordination of alternative provision along with a reduction in exclusions.

### **WORKSTREAM 4**

#### **Embedding therapeutic thinking as a core tool to secure a culture change in the management of behaviour across all providers and localities**

This workstream focuses on the expansion of 'Therapeutic Thinking' as the key strategy across all schools to bring about a cultural shift in the way complex behaviours are managed in schools.

### **WORKSTREAM 5**

#### **Securing appropriate increases in specialist places in the county's schools and academies, thereby reducing the High Needs Grant overspend**

This workstream focuses upon capital delivery of additional specialist places in schools and academies to reduce reliance on the independent non-maintained special school (INMSS) providers. It therefore has a significant part to play in reducing the High Needs deficit, the grant provided by the government to provide for children with special educational needs.

### **WORKSTREAM 6**

#### **Incorporating key themes arising from the national SEND policy review**

This workstream will pick up on issues arising from any policy announcements and drivers arising from the SEND Green Paper consultation.

**THEME 4**

# Ensuring high quality provision that meets the needs of all children and young people

38. The landscape of education providers across West Sussex is diverse. Although the quality of provision in schools and Early Years settings is generally strong with the proportion of schools and settings Ofsted rated good or outstanding being at the highest point ever in West Sussex, there remain inequalities between districts and localities. Access to a diverse range of high quality and appropriately targeted pre and post 16 vocational courses varies between schools and localities. Therefore, access to good provision, and to a full range of curriculum pathways to meet the broad range of students' needs both pre and post 16 is dependent upon where in the county the young person lives. Tackling this inequality is morally the right thing to do. A local authority's direct responsibilities are limited with respect of Post 16 and Further Education. However, working in partnership with schools and colleges, the local authority plans for a diverse range of opportunities and courses that appropriately meet the needs of all young people wherever they live.
39. The impact of the pandemic, along with current cost of living pressures is having an impact on both schools' and early years providers' ability to recruit. Key roles required to support children with SEND in schools are becoming increasingly difficult to recruit. Financial pressures on Early Years settings are leading to challenges in recruiting and retaining a high quality and experienced workforce. In both cases, this inhibits some of our youngest and most vulnerable children from being able to access high quality provision. A county wide local authority recruitment plan to support the development and retention of a high quality and well qualified workforce is crucial in sustaining improvements into the future.
40. Whilst the covid pandemic has created many challenges, it also provided the catalyst for schools to look at new ways of engaging children and young people through online and virtual learning. Such approaches have created a diverse range of pedagogies and approaches with some engaging pupils in new and exciting ways.

### **WORKSTREAM 1**

**Ensure that children and young people have equal access to good or outstanding learning provision irrespective of where they live.**

This workstream increases the focus of our Standards and Effectiveness team in monitoring provision across our schools and early years providers and intervening in inverse proportion to success. It also focuses on providing a programme of professional development and peer school to school support.

### **WORKSTREAM 2**

**Work with schools and post 16 providers to ensure efficient use of public funds in providing a diverse range of options for young people to access education, employment or training locally.**

This workstream aims to work with schools and colleges to ensure a broad range of post 16 courses appropriate to student's needs and interests, whilst also ensuring efficient use of public funds. This will require a fundamental review of how Post 16 provision is organised across the county to ensure equality of access to a diverse range of programmes and qualifications locally.

### **WORKSTREAM 3**

**Strengthen the use of new technologies to enhance learning opportunities for all children and young people, and develop digital literacy as a core skill.**

This workstream aims to build upon the significant development and use of virtual learning and innovative use of IT over the pandemic, through sharing best practice. It aims to make best use of new opportunities created through the implementation of a new school management information system (MIS) in schools.

### **WORKSTREAM 4**

**Implement a recruitment strategy to secure a high-quality workforce to support children and young people's learning, whilst engaging with partners to secure continuing professional development to maintain and further develop a talented workforce.**

This workstream will work with schools and the early years sector alongside our strategic partners including Multi Academy Trusts, universities and our regional teaching and research schools, to implement a major recruitment drive along with creative solutions of securing and sustaining a high-quality workforce.

## THEME 5

# Securing sufficient and sustainable provision to meet changing nature the county's education and learning needs

41. The Education White Paper: 'Opportunities for All', signposted an ambition that all schools should be part of a partnership with a strong Multi Academy Trust (MAT), or with plans to be so, by 2030. The full impact of the withdrawal of the Schools Bill (2022) which aimed to provide the legislation to enact key provision within 'Opportunities for All' is yet to be clarified. However, West Sussex is committed to supporting schools in making informed choices on their future organisational structures. Part of this is that of strengthening partnership working to provide strong communities of schools whether these are localities of schools, maintained school partnerships and federations, or Multi Academy Trusts. The White Paper provided clarity on the definition of strong partnerships or Multi Academy Trusts. These were seen to be ones that were inclusive, providing good outcomes and with

the capacity to grow and support underperforming schools. An optimum of 10 schools or 7,500 learners is deemed by the DfE to an indicator of a strong MAT. West Sussex is well behind the curve on this with a larger than average number of MATs in West Sussex being regarded as small or single academies. West Sussex has a strategic role to play in planning for a diverse range of partnerships which include the provision of strong MATs as well as the possibility of setting up its own MATs where these add value. West Sussex is committed to ensuring all maintained schools are aware of their future options to ensure that they are a part of a strong federation, locality or Multi Academy Trust. It will require significant work in partnership with the Department for Education, MATs, strategic partners, including Diocesan authorities, and both governors and headteachers of the council's maintained schools.

42. Whilst demographic changes are occurring across the county as the birth rate falls and surplus primary provision increases, cost-of-living pressures and increased energy prices are also affecting the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) Early Years sector. Sustainability of early years provision in some communities is at risk. With falling birth rates, a number of primary schools also face a challenging future. The local authority's role in strategically planning places and ensuring sufficiency of high-quality places in schools and Early Years settings to meet current and future demand remains. Expanding and creating new schools in response to housing developments and working to make all our schools energy efficient as part of the Council's response to climate change will continue.
43. The local authority will face expansion of schools and school places in some areas of the county as well as meeting the growth in demand for specialist places for children with special educational needs. However, there are areas of the county where schools face a future with significant surplus school places. In some, across a locality, this will challenge some schools' financial viability and long-term sustainability. Reducing surplus provision to create greater efficiencies and to secure the sustainable future for schools is a challenge for the local authority as the bulge in demand for school places leaves our primary schools and works through our secondary schools. Although it is always the intention

to prescribe to the principle of 'live local-learn local' wherever possible and efficient, planning for sustainable provision which is sufficiently viable to enter into partnership with MATs, may require some consolidation and restructuring of current provision.

#### **WORKSTREAM 1**

##### **Reduce surplus school places to ensure sustainable and financially viable schools into the future.**

This workstream will build on initiatives already begun in reviewing provision in localities and agreeing achievable plans for reducing surplus school places in line with projections for future demand. Where this provides an opportunity to align provision to create all-through primary schools, this will still be a key consideration.

#### **WORKSTREAM 2**

##### **Respond to basic need and work to increase places locally where demand requires.**

This workstream aims to respond to ongoing demographic changes and building developments arising from District and Borough's housing and residential building plans. It aims to use Section 106 funding from developers to invest in increasing provision that is aligned with the Council's climate change strategy wherever possible.

### **WORKSTREAM 3**

**Work together with the early years sector to ensure sufficient high quality and accessible places for learning and care local to need.**

This workstream will focus on working with the Early Years sector and local communities to ensure sufficient affordable learning and childcare places to meet local demand. This also includes working with providers to secure sufficient places to meet the growing demand for 2 and 3 year-old Free Entitlement.



### **WORKSTREAM 4**

**Develop a strategic county wide plan for the longer-term provision of a diverse range of high quality school partnerships and MATs**

This workstream will involve work in mapping out the landscape and engaging with strong MATs, both currently operating within West Sussex and with those operating externally. It will include developing a strategic county wide plan and will involve close partnership working with the Diocesan offices to ensure sufficient choice for our church schools in forming partnerships either with MATs or strong localities of local schools. It may involve a role for the local authority in communicating and brokering links between schools and particular MATs. As part of the development of the strategic plan, consideration will be given in consultation with schools, to the setting up local authority MATs where this is deemed to add value and deliver on any gaps that could arise.

## THEME 6

# Service development and increasing partnership working

44. A significant redesign of the Council's services across the Department of Children, Young People and Learning has taken place over the last two years. A significant change has also taken place in the way in which schools and Early Years settings are supported. It also changes the way in which teams supporting schools co-ordinate their work with the broader family support teams. Embedding these changes and securing effective relationships and new ways of working with our schools and early years settings is a key priority in ensuring the co-ordination of support around the child, the family, and the school or setting. This is essential to ensure that the needs of children are firmly at the heart of all we do. Co-ordinating work by aligning resources alongside Early Help, Family Safeguarding and Youth Justice will create a stronger and more effective wrap around support for children and their families.

45. Many schools and Early Years settings continue to be reliant on support to help them improve. Whilst many may wish to access high quality advice and guidance with expertise that may be held by the local authority, access to a much wider range of expertise can be gained from external sources. A co-ordinating, brokering and commissioning role for the local authority that is responsive to need, whilst offering its own services on a commercial basis, is already a key commitment arising from the redesign of the Council's Standards and Effectiveness Service. Embedding a co-ordinated approach including direct advice, and the use of broader local partnerships to support schools, early years providers, and families is important for many schools. The ability to ensure timely support where needed remains a key requirement to ensure the quality of provision is secure.

### **WORKSTREAM 1**

**Embed a co-ordinated approach alongside broader local partnerships to support schools, early years providers and families to ensure timely support where needed.**

This workstream reflects a significant change in the ways of working with schools and Early Years providers to monitor provision and quality. It focuses on organising support and intervention around both a District and Borough support structure. It also reflects the introduction of a stronger commissioning model to broaden access to expertise required at particular times.

### **WORKSTREAM 2**

**Work in partnership with stakeholders to ensure best use and deployment of the service support teams.**

This workstream focuses upon the greater co-ordination of education and learning support alongside Children's Social Care, Early Help, and support for families.

### **WORKSTREAM 3**

**Work with the sector to ensure a professional and commercial range of services responsive to need and which makes best use of the expertise of partners to secure a sector led approach to support.**

This workstream aims to provide a range of non-statutory support services to schools and others that are of high quality, professionally led, and also commercially viable.

## THEME 7

# Adult learning and employability

46. The County Council reset its strategy for economic renewal in 2021 reflecting a changing workforce and trends in employment over the covid pandemic. Priorities were reset, particularly with respect to the adult workforce, levelling up, and economic regeneration. This has coincided with the national levelling up agenda, major investment in local further education providers, and the support of new technologies. It has also led to a co-ordinated business sector led Pan Sussex approach to the development of an Adult Learning and Skills plan.
47. The Adult Skills agenda is very broad. Leadership is driven from many organisations representing the business, training and Further Education sectors, and those working to secure longer term skills for employability in the future. A separate Skills Strategy with its own governance and links to the business sector and a Pan Sussex view is crucial. This will be set out separately in due course.
48. Whilst there are many organisations engaged in leading the skills agenda, West Sussex does have direct responsibility for ensuring that grants directly provided for the delivery of adult learning in the community, are used effectively and provides good value for money. Grants received by the County Council for supporting the County's most vulnerable adults are not insignificant. The work on Adult Community Learning has a crucial role in retaining the relationship and support for the most vulnerable adults in West Sussex who often lack the confidence to access existing education and training. The local authority also continues to have a crucial role in tracking and working with those young people who leave school at the age of 16 years without pathways into employment, education or training. Continuing to drive forward a programme which captures these young people early and secures appropriate pathways into education, training or to employment, including apprenticeships, is essential if they are to overcome the poverty trap.
49. Work on Adult Community Learning for our most vulnerable adults and reducing the number of young adults aged 16 years and over currently not in education, employment and training remains a key priority. Whilst this is underpinned by dedicated workstreams within this strategy, the work will also feed into the broader skills agenda and governance of a Pan Sussex Skills Strategy.

### **WORKSTREAM 1**

**Ensure a sustainable model of support for adult community-based learning that reaches the county’s most vulnerable adults and provides high quality and responsive provision**

This workstream focuses on the future delivery model for adult learning in the community and improving access for our most vulnerable adults. The aim is to reflect a changing need in the county council’s contracting and delivery model for this service whilst also creating clear and meaningful links into the broader Pan Sussex Skills Strategy.



### **WORKSTREAM 2**

**Work with schools and those young people not in education, employment or training to secure appropriate and robust pathways into further learning or employment**

This workstream continues to support those young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) in securing access to appropriate course or employment opportunities. It also aims to provide careers support for those under the age of 16 years where schools consider bespoke advice and information is required.

### **WORKSTREAM 3**

**Through working with strategic partners, implement a high-quality programme to improve adult numeracy skills through the national Multiply programme.**

This workstream is focused upon the delivery of a strong programme of numeracy for the county’s vulnerable adults and school leavers who do not have formal mathematics qualifications and therefore are restricted in the employment opportunities available to them.

## ANNEX 1

# Statutory responsibilities of a Local Authority

### **School place planning duties (s13-14 Education Act 1996)**

The Council as an education authority has a duty to promote and champion high standards of education and fair access to education. It also has a general duty to secure sufficient schools in their area, and to consider the need to secure provision for children with SEN. This includes a duty to respond to parents' representations about school provision. These are referred to as the school place planning duties.

The LA has a duty to follow statutory processes when establishing, closing, or making alterations to a school (s6A, 7,9, 10,11, 15 and 19 Education and Inspections Act 2006 and school organisation regulations).

The class size duty requires the LA to restrict class sizes for children aged 4-7 years to 30 pupils per class (s1 School Standards and Framework Act 1998).

### **Education otherwise than at school**

The Council as an education authority has a duty to make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise for each child of school age who for reasons of illness, exclusion or otherwise would not receive it unless such arrangements were made. This does not include for those children whose parents/carers choose to educate their children at home, known as Elective Home Education (EHE). For such children, the local authority has the duty to provide information for families opting to educate their children at home. Where there are safeguarding concerns regarding a child being educated at home, the local authority has the duty to act under safeguarding procedures to ensure that the child is safe.

Local authorities may establish pupil referral units but do not have a duty to do so (s19 Education Act 1996). However:

- Where a PRU is established, the LA has duties to set up a management committee and to delegate its duties to the management committee
- The LA has a duty to provide education for a permanently excluded child from the sixth day after the exclusion

### Welfare/inclusion

The local authority has a duty to do the following.

- Make arrangements to establish the identities of children residing in the area who are not receiving suitable education (s436A Education Act 1996)
- Begin procedures for issuing a School Attendance Order if it appears to the local authority that a child of compulsory school age is not receiving a suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (s437 Education Act 1996)
- Consider serving an education supervision order before prosecuting for truancy (s 447 Education Act 1996)
- In relation to pupils excluded from school to receive information from schools and pass it to the Secretary of State and to establish review panels (s51A Education Act 2002)
- Develop accessibility strategies to facilitate better access to education for disabled pupils. Schools also have to develop access plans which build upon the local authority access strategy. (s88 Equality Act 2010)

### Special Educational Needs

The Council as education authority has specific duties in relation to provision of education for children with special educational needs (SEN). The main duties are (Part 3 Education Act 1996):

- To publish information about SEND provision available in and outside the area
- To identify whether a child for whom they are responsible has SEN
- To assess a child who in their opinion has SEN
- if the assessment shows that it is necessary, to make an EHC Plan determining the child's needs and the educational provision required
- To ensure the specific provision set out in the plan is made
- To keep the plan under review
- To educate children with SEN in mainstream schools where possible
- To inform parents when SEN provision is made
- To arrange for and participate in mediation where required
- To make all decisions with regard to:
  - the views, wishes and feelings of the child and his/her parent or the young person
  - the importance of involving them in decisions and providing the right information and support to allow them to do so
  - the need to support the child or young person and help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes

- To promote integration of education and training provision with health and social care
- To make joint commissioning arrangements about education, health and care provision
- To make arrangements for an advice and information service and a dispute resolution service for parents of children with SEN

### School transport duties

The local authority has a duty to do the following.

- Make provision for suitable home to school travel arrangements for eligible children of compulsory school age (5 to 16) to facilitate attendance at a relevant educational establishment. Travel arrangements are provided free of charge. (s508B Education Act 1996)
- To promote sustainable modes of travel to assess general school travel needs. The local authority must publish each academic year a document containing their strategy to promote the use of sustainable school travel. (s508A Education Act 1996)
- To have regard to religion and belief in exercise of travel functions (s509 AD Education Act 1996)
- To specify to what extent the arrangements they include in their annual transport policy statement facilitate the attendance of disabled persons and persons with learning difficulties

- To publish annual Post-16 Transport Policy Statement which must set out the arrangements for the provision of transport, and for financial assistance towards transports costs it considers necessary to facilitate attendance of students of 6th form age

### Admissions duties

The council has duties in relation to school admissions both as local authority and as the admission authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools. These duties are:

- To provide advice and assistance to parents when deciding on a school place and allow parents to express a preference (s86(1A) School Standards and Framework Act 1998)
- For each school year, the local authority must publish the prescribed information about the admission arrangements for each of the maintained schools in their area, and if regulations so provide, such maintained schools outside their area (s92 SSFA)
- To publish each year a composite prospectus for all publicly funded schools in the area
- To formulate, publish and adopt a scheme to co-ordinate admission arrangements for all publicly-funded schools in the area, which allows parents to apply to schools in other local authority areas, and to provide information to the Secretary of State on secondary school admissions on national offer day

- To make arrangements for parents to appeal against admissions decisions
- To establish and manage a Fair Access protocol for in year admissions
- To annually write to parents of prospective schools in their locality with information about schools with atypical admission ages within the local authority or within reasonable travelling distance.
- To include details of schools with atypical admission ages in the local authority or within reasonable travelling distance in their composite prospectus

### Curriculum and assessment

The local authority, and governing bodies have a duty to exercise their functions with a view to securing, and a head teacher has a duty to ensure, that the curriculum provided is:

- Broad and balanced
- Comprises the National Curriculum, including implementing key stage test arrangements (SATs)
- Including provision for religious education and for pupils in secondary school, sex education
- and that they have regard to statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State (Education Act 2002, s79,85(9) and 88 1(A))

In relation to key stage 1 assessment, the local authority must:

- Make provision for moderating teacher assessments in respect of 25% of relevant schools
- Collect teacher assessment information from relevant schools and quality assure it, and submit it to the DfE
- Ensure school have training and advice in all aspects of key stage 1 assessment and electronic systems to submit data

In relation to key stage 2 assessment, local authorities must visit 10% of schools administering tests for monitoring purposes.

From summer 2012, local authorities must monitor at least 10% of relevant schools to ensure Yr 1 phonics screening check is being administered correctly. They must visit at least 10% of relevant schools before, during and after the check and submit information to the DfE. (Key Stage 1 assessment Order and statutory guidance)

### Religious Education

The local authority must establish a body called a standing advisory council on religious education. (s390–391 Education Act 1996).

The local authority must ensure that head teachers comply with their duties to secure due provision of religious education, and that all pupils take part in a daily act of collective worship. (ss 69–70 School Standards and Framework Act 1998)

### School Meals

The authority has a duty to provide school lunches for those eligible for free school meals, and to ensure that the food provided is nutritious. In practice, this duty is delegated to schools.

### School Finance

The local authority has a duty to (s45 etc. School Standards and Framework Act 1998, School Finance Regulations 2008 and 2011):

- Determine school and PRU budget shares in accordance with the school finance regulations
- Establish a schools' forum for the area
- Maintain a scheme for financing schools

Provide accounting information to the DfE under the Consistent Financial Reporting Regulations

### School Governors

The local authority has a duty to do the following.

- Appoint parent governor representatives to local authority committees dealing with education (s499 Education Act 1996)
- Appoint local authority governors to all maintained school governing bodies (s19 School Standards and Framework Act 1998)
- Provide training and information for school governors (s22 Education Act 2002)
- Set up temporary governing bodies for new maintained schools (s34 Education Act 2002)

### School sites and buildings

The local authority has a duty to do the following.

- Ensure that school buildings meet minimum standards (s543 Education Act 1996 and School Premises Regulations 1999)
- Maintain school premises (s22 School Standards and Framework Act 1998)
- Comply with legislation governing disposal of land on school sites (s77 School Standards and Framework Act 1998)
- Transfer land when school changes category or becomes an Academy (Education and Inspections Act 2006)

### Inspection/intervention

The local authority has a duty to do the following.

- Provide information, distribute report and to produce and distribute a post-inspection action plan for Joint Area Reviews and OFSTED inspections
- Produce an action plan if a school goes into special measures following an OFSTED inspection
- Comply with statutory requirements if the authority decides to use its powers to intervene (s64-66 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- To comply with a direction of the Secretary of state to give a school a warning notice (s60A and 69B of the Education & Inspections Act 2006)

### Teachers and staff

The local authority is the employer of all staff in community, voluntary-controlled and special schools. In foundation, voluntary-aided and foundation special schools, the governing body is the employer.

Under the school staffing regulations, the governing body and head teacher in all schools are responsible for the day-to-day management of staff. The following duties are therefore largely delegated to schools, although the local authority will have supervisory or residual role, particularly where they are the employer.

The local authority has:

- Duties in relation to teachers pay (s122 Education Act 2002 and School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document)
- A duty to check that teachers have Qualified Teacher Status (School Teachers Qualifications Regulations)
- A duty to ensure that staff have the necessary health and physical capacity (Education Health Standards Regulations 2003)
- Duties in relation to the appointment, management and dismissal of staff (School Staffing Regulations)
- A duty to keep a register of vetting checks carried out on staff (School Staffing Regulations)
- To establish a performance management policy for teachers (s21 Education Act 2002)
- Duties as employer for pension purposes of all teachers in maintained schools relating to service and contribution remittance (Teachers' Pension Regulations 2010)

### The Prevent duty

This duty arises from the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and relates to a range of organisations including schools and LAs. They must take steps to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Local authorities must work with local partners to protect public, prevent crime and promote strong integrated communities. Some local authorities do this through Community Safety Partnerships.

### **LADO (Local Area Designated Officer)**

The LADO has responsibility under Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013 to manage allegations against individuals who work with children.

### **Academy conversions**

The local authority has a duty to, where the Secretary of State has made an academy order, to arrange to transfer the land and buildings to the academy trust on a 125 year lease and assist with the preparation of the lease and CTA within reasonable timescales.

### **Delegated grants**

The local authority has the responsibility for ensuring that grants delegated to it for supporting education and learning are used effectively and provide value for money in the delivery of its functions.

### **Early Education and Childcare**

The local authority has a duty to (s6,7,9 Childcare Act 2006):

- Secure sufficient childcare places, so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0- 14 (or up to 18 for disabled children)

- Take into account what is ‘reasonably practicable’ when assessing what sufficient childcare means in their area and:
  - the state of the local childcare market, including the demand for specific types of providers in a particular locality and the amount and type of supply that currently exists
  - the state of the labour market
  - the quality and capacity of childcare providers and childminders registered with a childminder agency, including their funding, staff, premises, experience and expertise
  - encourage schools in their area to offer out-of-hours childcare from 8.00am and 6.00pm
  - encourage existing providers to expand their provision and new providers to enter the local childcare market

The White Paper: ‘Opportunities for All’ currently going through to legislation includes new responsibilities for local authorities linked to the delivery of the aims and ambitions set out in the White Paper.

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