

Dorset Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy 2018 to 2021



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Executive Summary

This document describes how Dorset County Council and Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), in partnership with schools, colleges and other educational settings, health providers, voluntary and community sector organisations, social care providers, children, young people and parents and carers will work together to meet the needs of children, young people with SEND and their families from birth through to adulthood.

It describes:

- our vision
- the commitments that all agencies and organisations make to delivering this vision
- the drivers for change
- our priorities and the things we will do to make a difference
- how we will monitor progress

Our vision

Children and young people in Dorset with SEND are happy and enjoy their education and social life. They and their families trust and have confidence in the support they receive.

- We work together to give children and young people with SEND in Dorset the best chance to succeed; enjoy family life and go to school as close to home as possible.

- Together we support children and young people with SEND to maximise their potential at home, in the early years, at school and at college and to prepare well for adulthood.

- Our young adults with SEND have opportunities to work, live independently, participate fully in their community and live full, healthy lives.

Our commitments

We will:

- make it easier to get support
- put children, young people and families at the heart of what we do
- focus on making sure a positive difference
- work together as a single system
- work with children, young people, parents and carers
- provide inclusive education for children with SEND in mainstream early years settings, schools and colleges
- deliver a seamless pathway to adulthood and independence

Why do we need to change?

- Children and young people with SEND in Dorset don't achieve the same outcomes as other children across the county
- We all recognise the need to work better together to ensure that children and young people with SEND receive the support they need to reach their full potential
- We need to make sure that we fully implement national reforms and use our resources effectively to meet these needs as there are growing financial pressures on all organisations
- We are not doing well in meeting the required timescales for Education, Health and Care Plans
- There are more children and young people from Dorset living and attending school outside the county than we would like
- We need to be better at working with children, young people and parents and carers
- We need to make the cultural shift from providing support and services too late to early help and support
- We have some areas of promising practice that we can build upon and we need to share this across the county to improve the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND from birth through to adulthood
- We need to get better at learning from each other and from other areas across the country

Making a difference: our priorities for change

Working together for joint outcomes

- services across education, health and social care are jointly planned
- services and professionals work together
- parents and carers trust and have confidence in the services and support they receive
- better early identification of need and early help
- a greater focus on preparing for adulthood
- improved educational attainment
- professionals are confident and effective

Timely joint assessment, planning and review

- information, advice and support is easy to access
- specialist assessments are timely
- assessments, plans and reviews are completed within statutory timescales
- plans are focused on making a difference
- professionals are confident and effective

Working with children, young people, parents and carers

- professionals listen to and respect the views of children, young people and parents/carers
- children, young people, parents and carers:
 - are involved in service design and development
 - have good experiences of services and support
- information is available in accessible formats

Monitoring and quality assurance

- a culture of accountability is created
- data and information are used well
- monitoring and quality assurance is improved
- sufficient provision is available locally to meet the needs of all children and young people
- services and support are value for money

Management of SEN funding

- benchmarking is used to inform spending decisions
- financial tracking systems are improved
- funding models meet the needs of children and young people
- costs are reduced

1. Introduction

This document sets out our strategy for improving outcomes and life chances for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in Dorset. The strategy will be led by Dorset County Council and Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group working in partnership with schools, colleges and other educational settings, health providers, voluntary and community sector organisations, social care providers, children, young people and parents and carers.

Who are children and young people with SEND?

SEN	children or young people that require special educational provision because they:	have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream school or mainstream post-16 institutions if under compulsory school age they fall within the definitions above or would do so if special educational provision was not provided (Source: Children and Families Act, 2014)
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Disability	children and young people are considered to have a disability if:	he or she is blind, deaf or dumb or suffers from a mental disorder of any kind or is substantially and permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity or such other disability as may be prescribed (Source: Section 17 (11) Children Act 1989) he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities (Source: Equality Act, 2010)
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2. Our vision

Children and young people in Dorset with SEND are happy and enjoy their education and social life. They and their families trust and have confidence in the support they receive.

We work together to give children and young people with SEND in Dorset the best chance to succeed; enjoy family life and go to school as close to home as possible.

Together we support children and young people with SEND to maximise their potential at home, in the early years, at school and at college and to prepare well for adulthood.

Our young adults with SEND have opportunities to work, live independently, participate fully in their community and live full, healthy lives.

3. Our commitments

Our work will be shaped by a number of key commitments to make sure everything we do is in keeping with our vision, the SEND reforms and the Care Act. These commitments will be shared by all involved in our work and will drive our improvement programme:

We will:

- make it easier for children, young people and their parents and carers to get the support that meets their needs at the right time
- put children, young people and families at the heart of what we do and celebrate their individuality
- focus on making sure a positive difference for children, young people and their parents and carers

- work together as a single system, no matter what organisation we work for
- work with children, young people, parents and carers, rather than do things to or for them
- provide inclusive education for children with SEND in mainstream early years settings, schools and colleges underpinned by high quality teaching that meets their individual needs
- deliver a seamless pathway to adulthood and independence, beginning preparation for this early in life

This strategy has been developed using a range of sources of data, information, consultation and feedback from parents and carers and a range of professionals from education, health and social care. We will continue to involve and engage with a range of stakeholders in the delivery of the strategy.

4. The strategic context

The national context

There have been significant changes to legislation and policy in recent years affecting how organisations should work together to support children and young people with SEND and their families from birth through to adulthood, recognising that successful preparation for adulthood starts in the early years.

4.1 **The Children and Families Act** (2014) offers simpler, more consistent help for children and young people with SEND and extending rights and protections by introducing Integrated Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and extending provision to 25 years. These reforms require a cultural change in the way organisations work with each other and listen to and involve children, young people and families. The reforms also require:

- Improvements in the quality and range of information available for children, young people and their parents and carers enabling them to make informed choices.
- The county council to develop and publish a Local Offer and work closely with the NHS and education settings to use resources through joint commissioning to improve the range of support in our area.
- A more flexible model of joint commissioning to promote access to personal budgets, focuses on specific groups of children within the county and ensure children and young people's needs are met.
- Better commissioning of new provision to ensure needs are met in local educational settings and by local community services.
- Positive transitions at all key stages within the 0-25 age range, especially a more successful transition to adult life.

The Act also sets out the expectation that children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) should be included in the activities of mainstream schools, together with children who do not have SEN needs, so far as is reasonably practicable and is compatible with:

- the child receiving special educational provision called for by his/her SEN
- the provision of efficient education for the children with whom he or she will be educated, and:
- the efficient use of resources.

4.2 In 2013 the government made **changes to school funding** so that each school receives an additional amount of money for special educational provision to meet the needs of children with SEN. This has meant that there is increased delegation of funding to educational settings.

4.3 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. This means that

the best early years settings, schools, colleges and post 16 providers will do what is necessary to enable children and young people to develop, learn, participate and achieve the best possible outcomes through reasonable adjustments; access arrangements and special educational provision.

4.4 The **Care Act** (2014) was introduced to improve choice and control over care and support for adults over the age of 18. This legislation also focuses on outcomes, personalisation and the integration of services. This means that the county council must ensure that there is cooperation between children's and adult's services and promote the integration of care and support with health services to ensure that young adults are not left without support as they transition between children's and adult's social care.

4.5 There is a national focus on **Transforming Care** (2015) for people with learning disabilities and/or autism who have a mental illness or whose behaviour challenges services through empowering people and families, ensuring care is in the right place, improving regulation and inspection and workforce development.

4.6 An independent Mental Health Taskforce published a **Five Year Forward View for mental health** (2016) that made recommendations for improving mental health services that have been accepted by the NHS. There are several strands of work including one that focuses on improving children's and young people's mental health through the delivery of a local transformation plan.

The local context

There a range of strategies and plans locally that will help support this strategy for children and young people with SEND. We will make sure that we make the links between these strategies when we are delivering this strategy to reduce duplication, avoid confusion and make the most of opportunities for working together where this makes sense.

4.7 The **Health and Wellbeing Board** is a partnership between local agencies that seeks to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities for residents of Dorset. The Board also plays an important role in the implementation of Dorset's **Sustainability and Transformation Plan** (2016), which seeks to ensure the affordability of health and social care. There is a strong focus on prevention and a programme of work focuses on children called **Starting Well**.

4.8 **The Children and Young People's Strategy** sets out the vision for how partner organisations will work together to support children, young people and families locally that will be delivered by the Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People, a sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board that includes partners from children's services, including education, health, social care, and the voluntary and community sector.

4.9 The county council's children's services is facing two major challenges – increasing demand and a reducing budget. The county council is leading a programme of whole system transformation, **Forward Together for Children** that changes the way children are supported from cradle through to career by working with our partners and local communities to ensure that we support children, young people and families early and avoid the need for late interventions.

4.10 Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is implementing a programme of changes to local healthcare to help ensure high quality and sustainable services are available for future generations. Through this programme it is working to transform **Integrated Community Children's Health Services** to provide care closer to home and ensure that services work together to better meet the needs of children, including those with complex health needs.

4.11 The **Dorset Transforming Care Partnership** comprises of Dorset CCG, the county council, Borough of Poole, Bournemouth Borough Council and NHS England to develop a plan to avoid secure hospital admissions unless absolutely necessary and to bring people placed out of the area back to the county by commissioning community services.

4.12 The **Dorset Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy** (2016-2020) sets out the way that Dorset CCG, Public Health Dorset and three local council's (Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole) are working together with services in the area to help children and young people across the whole of Dorset to be happy, resilient and less likely to suffer mental ill health. Our **Local Transformation Plan** (2016) sets out how the area will transform mental health services to deliver the NHS Five Year Forward View.

5. Working together

5.1 We will make sure the right people are involved in the delivery of this strategy. This will include councillors; senior leaders; partners; schools, colleges and other educational settings; professionals; parents and carers; and young people. Improvement work will be overseen by a joint SEND Improvement Delivery Group. This group will be accountable to the Dorset **Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People**, which is leading integration and partnership work between the county council, public health and NHS bodies. A diagram of the governance arrangements can be found in appendix 1.

5.2 Individual organisations will take responsibility for monitoring progress through appropriate governance arrangements.

5.3 The **Dorset Schools Forum** plays an important role in supporting the delivery of this strategy through the decisions it makes regarding the Dedicated Schools Grant and consultative role it plays with regards to

arrangements for SEN, early years provision and alternative education provision.

5.4 The **Dorset Health Forum** plays an important role in leading improvements across the health system and the **Dorset SEN 14+ Forum** will support the delivery of excellent education provision and transitions that prepare young people well for adulthood.

5.5 The **Dorset Parent Carer Council**, run by parents for parents, is essential to the development and implementation of this strategy. They provide a strong and united voice for families helping to inform what we do and challenge us to do better.

6. Dorset context

About Dorset

6.1 Dorset has a population of almost 420,000. Almost 60% of our residents live in urban areas, with 40% living in rural areas. Dorset is one of the healthiest places to live in the UK and outcomes are generally good. We have a large population of older people and correspondingly one of the lowest proportions of children in the country, with approximately 104,200 children and young people aged 0 to 24 years.

6.2 Our population is growing and is expected to continue to grow over the next 10 years primarily due to inward migration. The numbers of children aged 0-4 is likely to continue to grow. Dorset ranks amongst the least deprived areas of England but this masks significant pockets of deprivation, largely located in our urban areas and over 14% of children in Dorset are considered to be living in poverty.

6.3 Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 6.5% of school children.

Children and young people with SEND

6.4 There is variation in the definitions of children with SEND so this strategy draws on several sources to estimate a range for the number of children and young people with SEND in Dorset.

- 3,680 children and young people claiming Disability Living Allowance¹ (3.8% of the population, 2014)
- 1,793 children and young people aged 0-19 with a statement of SEN or an EHCP (1.7% of the population)

6.5 Boys are almost twice as likely to be identified with SEN as girls. The gender split in Dorset is 74% male and 26% female. However, census data shows a more even burden of long term illness and disability between males and females, particularly those aged 15 to 24 years.

School Age children and young people

6.6 Pupils with SEN are categorised into 2 groups: those with a statement of SEN and/or EHCP and those receiving SEN support in schools without a statement. Around 16% of pupils in Dorset have SEN, most which are supported at school level without a statement or plan.

Table 1: Pupils with SEN (2017)

	Number	% of all pupils
Pupils with statements or EHC plans	1,568	2.6%
Pupils with SEN support	8,319	13.7%
All pupils with SEN	9,887	16.2%

Post 16 learners at FE College or Special post 16 institutions

6.7 In January 2017, there were 255 16 to 24-year-old Dorset residents with an Education Health Care plan and 49 who had a Section 139a Learning Disability Assessment learning at FE Colleges or Special post 16 institutions.

Nature of SEND

6.8 Available data on the nature of SEN and disability are limited so gaining an accurate understanding of the prevalence of specific disabilities or needs is a challenge. The school census collects data by primary need type but determining a primary condition is not

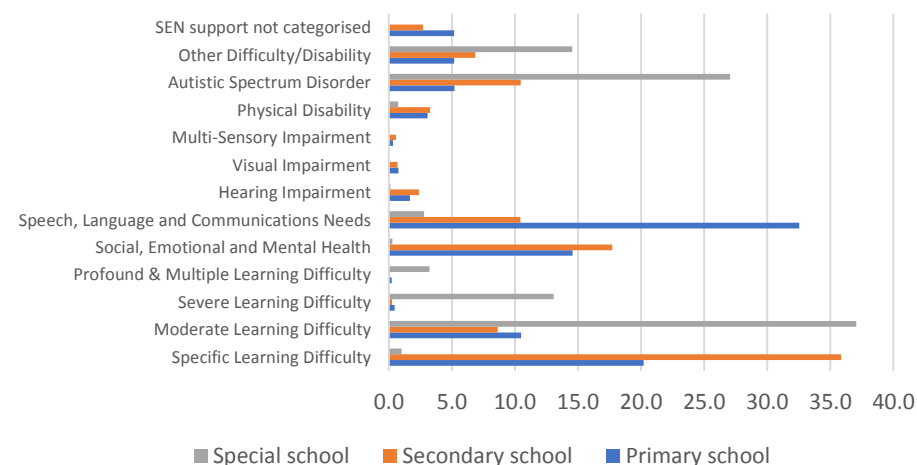
straightforward, particularly if children have complex needs or if learning needs are prioritised over a diagnosed condition.

Table 2: Nature of SEN - % of pupils with SEN

Type of Need	
Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	28%
Social Emotional or Mental Health Difficulty	12%
Learning Difficulties - Moderate	18%
Learning Difficulties - Multiple and Profound	2%
Learning Difficulties - Severe	8%
Learning Difficulties - Specific (Dyslexia)	3%
Physical Difficulties	12%
Sensory Impairment	3%
Speech, Language or Communication Difficulty	12%
Unknown\Other	3%

6.9 Although ASD is the largest category of need across the population there are variations in categories of need across school phases.

Figure 1: Proportion of pupils with SEN by Primary Type of Need and type of school (2017)



¹ DLA has been replaced by Personal Independence Payments

6.10 The largest category of primary need in primary schools is speech, language and communication; in secondary schools, it is specific learning difficulty and in special schools it is moderate learning difficulty. Speech, language and communication needs are reported by educational professionals as increasingly challenging.

Predicting future demand

6.11 Due to the changing definitions and policy relating to SEND it is not easy to accurately predict future demand for services or support as trend information is not reliable. We do know that there are rising numbers of disabled children with complex needs and/or life limiting conditions who (with their families) are likely to need support from health, education and social care.

6.12 One way of predicting future demand is to apply current data to population projections; however, care should be taken when interpreting this data as there are many issues that could impact on this data.

6.13 The table below provides some crude modelling of future numbers of children and young people with SEND from now until 2030 based on projected population change. The model suggests that there will be an additional 599 children with SEND in 2030.

6.14 Further work is required to develop and test a more reliable model of forecasting.

Table 3: Predicting SEND using population projections

		2020	2025	2030
Projected population change (ONS)		+1.9%	+4.9%	+1.0%
SEND	Number (2017)	Forecast number based on projected population change only		
EHCPs	1568	1598	1676	1693
SEN Support	8319	8477	8892	8981
Total	9887	10075	10569	10674

Outcomes for children and young people with SEND

6.15 Research suggests that children and young people with SEND experience higher levels of poverty and personal and social disadvantage than their peers (Blackburn, 2010). Analysis in Dorset in 2014 (Borough of Poole, 2014) shows that the impact of deprivation is greater for those receiving SEN support and that certain types of primary need types tend to be concentrated in areas of deprivation than others: speech, language and communication needs; severe learning difficulties and social, emotional and mental health needs.

6.16 Children and young people with a statement of SEN or EHC plan tend to do less well academically than their peers across all phases of education. In Dorset, there are particular challenges at Key Stage 2. In 2017, 16% of Dorset pupils with SEN support achieved the expected standards in reading, writing and maths compared to 21% nationally. For those with a statement of SEN or EHC plan the Dorset figure was 7%, compared to 8% nationally.

6.17 Progress² between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is a challenge for pupils with a statement of SEN or EHC plan. Reading progress in 2017 was -4.8, compared to -3.7 nationally; writing progress was -5.9, compared to -4.3 nationally and maths progress was -5.4, compared to -4.1 nationally.

6.18 Achievement of children with SEN at Key Stage 4 also shows a gap in performance between those with SEN than those without. Progress 8 scores capture the progress a pupil makes between the end of Key Stage 2 and the end of Key Stage 4.

Table 4: Average Progress 8 scores at Key Stage 4 (2017)

	Dorset	South West	Statistical neighbour ave	National
Pupils with SEN support	-0.52	-0.54	-0.54	-0.43
Pupils with statement or EHCP	-1.01	-1.1	-0.98	-1.04
Pupils without SEN	-0.07	-0.03	-0.01	0.07

6.19 Research by the Department for Education (2011) states that disabled young people are less satisfied with their lives than their peers and that families with disabled children report high levels of unmet needs, isolation and stress.

6.20 Children with SEN are more likely than their peers to miss school, often due to illness or for medical appointments. Boys are less likely to be persistent absentees than girls (DfE, 2016).

6.21 Children and young people with SEN are more likely to be excluded from school than their peers. Boys are more likely than girls to be

² Progress is a relative measure, where the national average score is 0. Therefore, anything below zero is below average and anything above zero is above average.

excluded and those with behaviour, emotional or social difficulties have the highest rates of exclusion (DfE, 2016).

6.22 Young people with SEND are less likely than their peers to attain a level 3 qualification than their peers at the age of 19 years. In 2016, 66% of young people with identified SEN attained a level 3 qualification at age 19 years, compared to 27% of those with identified SEN.

Educational Provision for Children and Young People with SEND

6.23 Children and young people with SEND from Dorset are educated in a range of provision including early years settings; mainstream schools; post 16 provision (such as a college); special schools; learning centres (also known as pupil referral units); special resource bases in mainstream schools (providing targeted support for particular needs); and independent schools both within the county and outside the county.

Table 5: Educational Provision for Children and Young People with a statement or EHC (2016)

	Dorset	South West	England
Maintained mainstream schools	20.4	18.7	21.8
Resource based provision	3.4	3.1	3.8
Maintained special schools	29.5	26.4	28.3
Non-maintained and independent special schools	8.0	5.5	6.3
Other settings (early years, academies, hospitals, not in school, awaiting provision)	26.6	33.0	28.6

6.24 There is a greater proportion of children and young people from Dorset educated in non-maintained and independent special school provision in Dorset than regionally or nationally.

6.25 Most 16 to 18-year olds with SEN attend school sixth form or FE College. A small number are Apprentices, traineeships or Supported Internships. Further work is required to support more employment based progression routes.

6.26 There is a greater proportion of SEN Year 11 leavers who progress into sustained post16 education, employment or training than nationally (DfE Destinations of 2014/15 leavers).

Social care provision for children and young people with SEND

6.27 Children with SEN are often more likely to be in receipt of support from statutory social care services. In Dorset over 8% of children with SEN are 'children in need', 5% are looked after children and 1.5% are subject to a child protection plan.

6.28 Early help and social care services work to help children who are disabled living with their families in their own homes and communities by providing support, advice and guidance.

Specialist health provision for children and young people with SEND

6.29 Children and young people in Dorset with SEND receive specialist assessment, diagnosis and support from a range of provision including:

- paediatric services at Poole Hospital Trust and Dorset County Hospital Foundation Trust, and:
- community health services from Dorset Health Care Foundation Trust including: child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHs); learning disability Services, speech and language Services; and therapy services.

Support for children, young people and parents and carers

There are many service providers across the county that support children and young people with SEND and their families. This section provides

some information on some of the most significant of these services but is not a definitive list.

6.30 Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) offers free and impartial advice to those who have SEND in their family.

6.31 The Dorset Parent Carer Council provides information to parents and carers of children with SEND as well as providing a voice to inform agencies and services about the needs of disabled children and their families in Dorset.

6.32 Short break activities are available for children and young people to try new things and offer opportunities to families and carers to take a break from caring, spend time with each other and other children. There are also options for residential breaks for longer periods of time.

6.33 Portage Pre-school support service provides educational support to young children who have complex needs through the provision of regular visits to the home or early years settings.

6.34 The County Psychology service works with schools and other settings to ensure that children with SEND are happy and successful in their education setting as well as working with children to clarify their needs and explore their views.

6.35 Special Educational Needs Specialist Services (SENS) provide professional support to schools to help with specific learning difficulties as well as working with individual children and young people.

6.36 The Hearing and Vision Support Service works with children and young people with mild to profound visual and hearing impairments.

6.37 Ansbury guidance is commissioned by the county council to provide independent support and advice for young people with SEND to move on to training, further education, work and adult support services.

6.38 Information and advice is available to help support young people and their families entering adulthood to consider education, work, money, housing, staying healthy and safe and activities.

Support for young people with SEND entering adulthood

6.39 As part of a transitions pathway an assessment is completed to develop a plan to transition to adulthood and to assess if a young person is eligible for care and support from adult social care services. The overarching aim to make transitions the best that they can be through a robust system that places the needs of young people at the heart of decision making about daily living and care.

6.40 Some young people will be eligible for support to help them live independently such as:

- Adult learning
- Day Centres providing work and training support
- Shared lives
- Home adaptations or equipment
- Social care services such as help with personal care and personal assistants
- Welfare benefits
- Financial support to access work
- Support to find and stay in employment
- Help to participate in activities

6.41 Information and advice is available for carers online, with some carers eligible additional support following the completion of a carers assessment.

Summary of progress, promising practice and areas for development

From our own local intelligence and following a joint area inspection of progress in implementing the SEND Reforms we know that we are making progress in some key areas, and have developed some positive practice that we can and will continue to build upon. We know that we can always improve and do better on these areas and need to work hard to share the learning from where these things are working across the county. We also recognise that we still have some significant challenges that we need to address through the delivery of this strategy.

Progress and Promising Practice	Areas of challenge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the identification and support of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ children and young people with SEND in the early years ○ children with sensory and behavioural needs in schools • the introduction of Family Partnership Zones to coordinate how we provide early help; some of the parenting programmes we have on offer; coverage of the Healthy Child programme by health visitors • joint commissioning for children with complex needs • access to specialist equipment and training for families and school staff • CAMHS learning disability service • the range of short breaks provision on offer • careers advice and guidance commissioned by the county council from Ansbury Guidance • the range of provision and learning programmes for young people aged 19 to 25 years, including supported internships • quality of local special schools and the outreach support provided from special schools • the SEN Coordinator (SENCo) role for looked after children • educational progress between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 • attendance at school by children with SEND • residential provision for children with complex needs • commitment of professionals to making improvements • commitment of the Parent Carer Council to working with us to make improvements • existing good practice in inclusive mainstream settings • some SEN Coordinators in mainstream schools • SENCo award scheme • inclusion network for information sharing and dissemination of good practice and school SENDCo networks • virtual school support • inclusion work in early years settings • SEN panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responding to the increase in demand for statutory assessments of SEN and the length of time taken to assess SEN needs and issue EHCPs • how quickly we are converting statements of SEN to EHCPs • how well we are working together to strategically plan across the system • inconsistent approaches to performance management and use of data • awareness of and use of the SEND Local Offer web pages and information materials by parents and carers • lack of understanding by parents and carers on how to get help and support from a range of professionals including the service offer from CAMHS • inconsistency in the quality of EHCPs with some lacking information from all relevant professionals • parental dissatisfaction with the assessment and planning process resulting in complaints, appeals and tribunals • inconsistency in the implementation of the graduated offer across schools • high number of children educated out of the county • length of time taken for assessments of autism and ADHD • availability and accessibility of children's community nursing • educational achievement of pupils with SEND at Key Stage 2 • ensuring all professionals have the skills and knowledge required to identify and support children and young people with SEND • the experience of transition between schools and services, in particular between children's and adult's services • financial overspend in the high needs block of the dedicated schools block • responding locally to meeting the needs of the increasing numbers of children with social, emotional and mental health needs; speech, language and communication needs and autistic spectrum disorders • workforce development needs, capacity and the cultural shift required to move to a culture of early help rather than late intervention in a time of increased demand and reducing resources • change fatigue • funding challenges in schools and other educational settings • availability of training • affordability of traded services

7 How are we going to make a difference?

To realise our vision for children and young people with SEND in Dorset we have identified a set of priorities and activities that we will deliver together. This is our joint strategy.

Priority 1: A single system working together across education, health and social care for joint outcomes

What we are seeking to achieve:

- Better strategic planning of services results in improvements in quality, timeliness, accessibility and reliability of services.
- Children and young people with SEND and their families can trust and have confidence that services are working together – leading to improvement in outcomes and enables effective preparation for adulthood.
- Professionals and parents/carers work together to meet needs and contribute effectively to planning processes
- More consistent identification and assessment of need and offer of early help through graduated responses
- A greater focus on preparing for adulthood that results in improved experiences of entering adulthood and independence
- Improve educational attainment at Key Stage 2
- Ensure that professionals have the skills and knowledge they need to work together effectively

What we will do:

- Use this strategy to inform service development, commissioning and school improvement plans
- Implement a new operational model of joint working between children's and adult's services for children and young people with SEND from birth to adulthood
- Review and redesign the Children's Community Nursing Service to provide greater accessibility and service delivery in the community

- Ensure that the roles and responsibilities of all health professionals are clear and all health providers understand their statutory responsibilities in relation to SEND
- Review our decision-making processes and commissioning panels to make sure we are planning services together
- Make sure that there is attendance at multi-agency planning meetings by all relevant professionals and/or written information is provided towards the EHC assessment
- Make better use of screening tools and data and information that might identify those that might need support early in [Family Partnership Zones](#)
- Provide support, guidance and training to universal settings including early years settings, schools, colleges and post 16 providers on identification of SEND and assessment of needs
- Further develop our health pathway of support for children in the early years
- Ensure all Year 9 reviews and annual reviews thereafter focus on preparation for adulthood outcomes
- Review transitions from child health services and identify areas for improvement
- Implement a Key Stage 2 Improvement Plan focusing on raising attainment of the most vulnerable
- Write a workforce development plan for all professionals working with children and young people with SEND
- Provide multi-agency training on personalisation and working together
- Promote the use of quality assured online training tools

Priority 2: Getting it right first time: appropriate, effective and timely joint assessment, planning and review of need that is personalised to the child or young person with SEND

What we are seeking to achieve:

- Children and young people with SEND and their families are easily able to access advice, information and support
- When specialist assessments are required, these take place in a timely way and lead to effective and personalised plans
- Assessments, conversions and reviews of children and young people's education health and care needs are completed within statutory timescales
- Plans are reviewed so they remain relevant to the changing needs of children and their families, leading to improved life chances
- Plans are outcomes focused and personalised
- Professionals have the skills and knowledge they need to contribute effectively to SEND assessment, planning and reviewing processes

What we will do:

- Ensure there is sufficient capacity in the SEND Assessment team to undertake this work
- Ensure that contributions from education, health and social care staff is timely
- Prepare early for transition into Adult Services
- Produce a toolkit for annual reviews and prioritise attendance by appropriate education, health and social care staff for pupils in maintained schools, academies and independent schools
- Jointly review pathways, information flows and paperwork to make it as easy as possible for everyone to contribute
- Monitor performance to ensure requirements are met

- Audit the quality of health and social care contributions to EHC planning
- Involve children, young people and families in identifying outcomes and reviewing progress towards these in reviews
- Ensure that personal budgets are offered as part of education, health and care plans where appropriate
- Appoint champions within education, health and social care organisations to improve communication and respect within their respective organisations
- Ensure all SEN assessment, planning and reviewing officers complete training to ensure they can deliver their roles effectively and extend this training to the wider workforce
- Introduce regular monitoring of complaints and tribunals to identify key trends and themes that will be addressed
- Consider how specialist staff can support and train the wider workforce to better identify need and offer support earlier
- Write and deliver a workforce development plan for all professionals working with children and young people with SEND and their families

Priority 3: Working with children, young people and parents and carers

What we are seeking to achieve:

- Children, young people and their parents and carers are listened to and their views and wishes are acted on and respected
- Children, young people and parent and carers views are involved in service design and development
- Better information about help, support and provision is available in accessible formats
- Professionals have the skills and knowledge to put children, young people and families at the heart of what we do and celebrate their individuality
- There is a focus on making sure a positive difference for children, young people and their parents and carers
- Improve customer experience of EHC planning processes

What we will do:

- Write a joint communication plan to share the improvement work we are doing
- Ensure appropriate child/young person and parents/carer representation on key decision-making groups and forums
- Collect feedback on service satisfaction and customer experience
- Facilitate an annual conference for children and young people with SEND and professionals working across the SEND system
- Work with children, young people and families to review and improve our Local Offer
- Provide accurate and up-to-date information that enables children, young people and their families to make informed choices for adulthood
- Undertake further engagement work with children, young people and their families on proposed changes to health services

- Develop and implement a participation and engagement strategy
- Support children and young people with SEND to participate in school/youth forums
- Share the results of all our engagement work across the SEND system to contribute to service improvement and planning
- Ensure that children and young people have access to advocacy when having a transition assessment
- Clarify how short breaks are supported through Continuing Health Care (CHC) processes and share on the Local Offer
- Provided clear information on the service offer and pathways for access to CAMHs as well as referral criteria
- Ensure that professionals understand the local offer and can signpost effectively
- Provide mandatory customer care training for frontline SEND staff
- Develop and agree a joint approach with health providers on strength based assessments, personalisation and life-long outcomes
- Support educational settings to include the views of children and young people with complex learning and communication needs
- Write and deliver workforce development plan for all professionals working with children and young people with SEND and their families

Priority 4: Use effective monitoring and quality assurance procedures to challenge, support and develop provision

What we are seeking to achieve:

- A culture of accountability that ensures all parts of the system focus on making life better for children, young people and their families
- Use of business intelligence to identify emerging needs and plan excellent services and settings that support children and young people to meet their aspirations
- Improved monitoring and quality assurance
- Data and information is shared appropriately to enable effective provision of support to individuals
- Sufficient local provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND
- Value for money across the system
- Local early years providers, schools and training providers develop their SEND provision and strengthen capacity to be able to meet the needs of all children and young people

What we will do:

- Implement regular management reviews of local authority and health SEND arrangements
- Carry out SEN reviews in priority schools where the achievement gap for children with SEN is the greatest
- Use school self-evaluation frameworks to monitor effectiveness of schools and education settings
- Introduce case file auditing systems to identify themes for improvement
- Undertake structured needs assessments to help plan services across the system

- Support local settings to increase capacity to meet the needs of more Dorset children with SEND to reduce demand for specialist provision
- Increase the availability of local provision for children with:
 - moderate and severe learning difficulties
 - complex communication needs and autistic spectrum disorders
 - social and emotional and mental health needs
- Reduce the number of children educated outside of the county
- Increase the availability and range of Alternative Education Provision opportunities
- Support the development of employment options
- Complete the work on the implementation of the pathway for Behaviour and Development (ASD/ADHD) by agreeing a new model of working between CAMHs and Paediatrics
- Ensure that electronic systems are used to support information sharing
- Share and celebrate good practice across the system
- Track progress of children with SEND to identify opportunities for intervention that improve outcomes
- Ensure there are effective joint commissioning processes at individual and service levels including children's and adult's services and health services to ensure that money is well spent
- Explore options for joint commissioning of speech, language and communication support
- Carry out an audit of inclusive practice across all mainstream and special schools, early years settings and education and training providers, identifying and disseminating effective practice
- Conduct an annual audit of SEND training completed by staff in schools, educational and training settings to inform the ongoing SEND workforce development plan
- Implement a robust system for monitoring independent provision to ensure value for money

Priority 5: The effective and efficient management of SEN funding to ensure excellent quality, sufficiency and affordability of local SEN provision

What we are seeking to achieve:

- To make use of financial benchmarking information to inform the local area's spending decisions, to share this information efficiently across partner organisations to plan jointly for current and future demand
- To run an effective financial tracking system to better understand spend and to identify opportunities for refocusing investment on early help or more local provision
- To ensure that funding models for SEND provision is more directly related to pupils' needs and provides sufficient capacity to meet those needs
- To reduce costs to the Dedicated Schools Grant and associated council revenue budgets through the completion of Dorset's SEND Specialist Provision Sufficiency programme, in partnership with all stakeholders

What we will do:

- Collect accurate data about all pupils with SEND so that it can be analysed by school/setting, type and severity of need and from this, consider volume, cost and effectiveness of the range of SEN provision required
- Develop a new model of forecasting to better predict future demand for provision
- Make timely decisions on how funding is distributed taking account of demographic and other pressures
- Develop a transparent high needs funding system that is designed to support a continuum of provision for pupils and students with SEND, from their early years to 25 years of age

- Ensure greater collaboration between all partners and stakeholders to agree a child or young person's support package and timely agreement of funding, placements and contracting that leads to more efficient and equitable ways of working and better outcomes for young people and their families
- Agree with settings their responsibilities in relation to the use and deployment of SEND funding, ensuring that these are affordable, well documented and accessible to all
- Ensure that schools and settings account for the expenditure of the delegated SEND funding, providing guidance to ensure a consistent approach
- Work together within and across partners, to secure cost-effective commissioning of places in schools outside the Dorset County Council boundary
- Complete the current review of children placed in independent special schools including Looked After Children with a view to a move home or to alternative local placements where appropriate to reduce costs to the High Needs Block
- Work with education partners and DCC Cabinet to apply for additional capital investment to provide sufficient local specialist provision places, and in so doing realise the full benefit of savings
- Continue to develop high quality local specialist resourced provision across the county for children with Complex Communication Needs (CCN) and Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), and in so doing, reduce high costs for out of county independent placements and associated SEN transport budgets
- Develop further Learning Centre provision to provide short term/long term alternative provision to school and to ensure the buildings are conducive to a positive learning environment.
- Create a fair and consistent way of funding schools/settings where the number of high needs pupils attending cannot be reflected adequately in their formula funding.

8 Measuring our success

To understand if our SEND Strategy is working, we propose to introduce an Outcomes Based Accountability Score Card that enables us to understand progress. This outcomes framework has been developed to support a systems wide approach in which all partners understand their role and make an effective contribution to improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND. A selection of indicators has been chosen to provide the focus for monitoring the impact of the strategy. There are other indicators that individual services, agencies and groups will continue to monitor for themselves. These will be subject to change depending on the availability of information and stages of delivery of the strategy.

	How much did we do?	How well did we do it?
Priority 1: A single system working together across education, health and social care for joint outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance at commissioning and decision-making meetings Number of early help interventions/graduated response offers Number of referrals to specialist services Number of early years developmental checks completed Attendance at Year 9 reviews Number of professionals attending training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer experience survey to explore satisfaction with how well we are working together % of children and young people with SEND educated in mainstream provision % of young people satisfied with transition from children to adult's services (health and social care) Satisfaction with training
Priority 2: Getting it right first time: appropriate, effective and timely joint assessment, planning and review of need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of EHCP assessment requests Number of EHCP assessments Number of requests for information from health, education and social care professionals Number of conversions from statements to EHCPs Number of professionals attending training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of EHCP assessments completed within 6 weeks % of new EHCP completed within statutory timescales % of requests for information received within agreed timescales Number of complaints/tribunals/PALs contacts Waiting times for specialist services Satisfaction with training
Priority 3: Working with children, young people and parents and carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of SEND champions identified by organisation Number of professionals completing training Number of children, young people and parents and carers attending participation events Use of the SEND Local Offer Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer experience survey - Satisfaction with process/support/services Awareness and quality of the SEND Local Offer Annual report on effectiveness of participation and engagement strategy
Priority 4: Use effective monitoring and quality assurance procedures to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of case audits completed Number of professionals completing training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of assessments, plans and reviews (case audits report auditing: outcomes focus,

	How much did we do?	How well did we do it?
challenge, support and develop provision	Number of joint funding agreements in place Number of inclusion self-evaluation frameworks completed Number of places available in Dorset special schools for children with complex SEND	personalisation, voice of child, focus on preparation for adulthood) Number of children placed out of county % of children with SEND attending a school that is good or outstanding Satisfaction with training
Priority 5: The effective and efficient management of SEN funding to ensure excellent quality, sufficiency and affordability of local SEN provision	Number of places available in SEN resource provision Number of places available in local special schools Number of places available in learning centres	Number of children placed out of county that can return to Dorset where appropriate Satisfaction of schools/settings with guidance and support they receive
Is anyone better off?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % children and young people meeting goal based outcomes (measured at review) • Key Stage 2 attainment of children and young people with SEND • Educational progress of vulnerable groups and the attainment gap between SEND pupils and other pupils • Pupil absence rates of children with SEND • Pupil exclusion rates of children with SEND • Change in attitude/skills/confidence of workforce • % of pupils with SEND educated in mainstream provision • % of young people with SEND participating in education, employment or training • % of young people with SEND living independently (where this is appropriate and they wish to) • % of children, young people and young adults who say they enjoy life and feel part of their school/college/work and community (annual survey) • Emotional wellbeing of children and young people with SEND (measure to be developed) • % of parents and carers who say they trust and have confidence in the support and advice that they receive (measure to be developed) • % of children with SEND who are supported to live in the family home for the majority of time (measure to be developed) • Number and % of young people who state they feel prepared for adulthood (measure to be developed) • Gap between attainment of level 3 qualifications for those with SEN and those without 		

9 Implementing the Strategy

- 10.1 This strategy sets out our vision, priorities, strategic objectives and goals over a 3-year period. It describes the **'what'** and the **'why'** of the activities we will undertake to deliver the strategy. It will be accompanied by an **implementation plan** which provides more detail on the **'who, where, when and how'**.
- 10.2 We will identify what we will do and where we expect to be at the end of Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 and the SEND Delivery group will be responsible for the monitoring and reviewing the plan. Delivery of the implementation plan will use a project management approach that identifies constraints and dependencies as well as risks to successful delivery. The SEND Delivery Group will take responsibility for managing these risks.
- 10.3 We will develop a communication plan to ensure that there is both clarity and visibility of the implementation of the strategy for all stakeholders. This communication plan will seek to:
- Inform stakeholders about the plan, what it will deliver, and keep them updated about progress
 - Keep everyone informed about any changes made
 - Ensure those working with children, young people and families understand how the implementation plan will affect them and what they are being asked to do to support the changes
 - Ensure children, young people and families understand how the activities in the implementation plan will affect them
 - Ensure that everyone knows how to get involved

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Appendix 1 – Governance diagram

