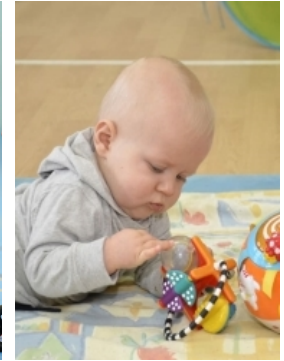


Dorset Local Area SEND Partnership Plan



17th May 2024

The Dorset Local Area Partnership Context

We have co-produced and agreed a framework across the Dorset Council area for all key strategic partners to collaboratively work to achieve the best outcomes for Children and Young People.

Our partnership ensures that children, young people and their families have ongoing opportunity to meaningfully participate in the decisions that affect them.

Our partnership works together to understand the needs of local children, young people and their families, so that we can commission and provide services that are inclusive and supportive, always keeping children and young people at the heart of all we do.

Our strategic partners are Dorset Council, NHS Dorset Integrated Care Board and the Dorset Parent Carer Council. Collectively, we are ambitious for our children and young people with SEND and increased vulnerabilities and are committed to providing a great education and supporting strong life outcomes.



Our aspirations for our children, young people and families

Our vision for Dorset:

"We want Dorset to be the best place to be a child, where communities thrive, and families are supported to be the best they can be.

Our Strategic Alliance has been working together since 2020. We have made real progress in many areas, despite facing a truly challenging few years. We are all too aware that the pandemic has disproportionately affected our children and young people who missed out on a lot to protect the health of the nation.

As a partnership, we are committed to building on what we have already achieved to create a bright and ambitious future for our children and young people. We have committed to working together and with our children, families and communities to ensure that Dorset is a place where all children thrive.

We passionately believe that strengthening families and communities - 'working with' not 'doing to' - is the key to unlocking potential and aspiration and this plan sets out how we will do that together.

Children and young people have generously given their feedback, shared their ideas and told us what it important to them. Their voices have shaped this plan, and we will work hard over the next 10 years to deliver their vision for Dorset."

Our Children, Young People and Families Plan can be accessed here:

[Children, Young People and Families' Plan 2023 to 2033](#)



Local Area SEND Inspection

In February to March 2024, Inspectors from Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission, visited Dorset to undertake the 'Local Area SEND Inspection. The inspection was a 3-week programme reviewing the impact of SEND services across the partnership to support children, young people and families with special educational needs or disabilities.

The Inspection made the following judgment:

'The local area partnership's special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) arrangements typically lead to positive experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The local area partnership is taking action where improvements are needed.'

We are delighted with these findings and remain dedicated to enhancing and further strengthening our partnerships to guarantee that every child, young person and their family receives exceptional experiences and outcomes they deserve. We will review and update our Partnerships' **SEND Strategy** by September 2024.

This document identifies our plans to progress these improvements.

SEND Inspection Plan

Dorset's SEND Inspection Plan sets out the partnership actions we are progressing to further strengthen and improve the effectiveness of services supporting children, young people and families with SEND.

A fully detailed Delivery Plan, with all operational activity and delivery, is held by the Strategic SEND Partnership. This Inspection Plan identifies the progress against the areas for improvement, noted in the recommendations in the published report, in Dorset's Local Area SEND Services 2024.

The SEND Partnership Board is responsible to oversee the implementation of the Delivery Plan, reporting into the Education Board and the Strategic Alliance, our executive level Partnership Board.

For each action, the plan identifies:

- The recommendations for improvement
- The actions we are taking to improve
- The outcome of the actions, which will be evidence based, reported to the SEND Partnership Board
- The timescales for completing actions

SEND Inspection Plan – Recommendation 1

Recommendation 1.0: Leaders across education, health and social care should strengthen their use of the robust qualitative and quantitative information they hold. This will enable them to continually analyse and evaluate the impact of their, often innovative, work to improve the outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

Ref	Action	Outcome	Owner	Timescale
R1.1	We will review our partnership response to early years notifications (known as Section 23 notifications) enabling sharing of relevant information to ensure and support planning for these children.	Improved quality of plans from sharing information, working together enabling better multi-agency planning and support for children and families in Early Years.	Designated Clinical Officer for SEND, NHS Dorset	July 2024
R1.2	We will establish a Task and Finish Group, led by NHS Dorset, to strengthen data to ensure effective planning and pathways. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Task and Finish Group will analyse data to inform how we use resource and enable oversight of practice 	Health needs are identified and suitable support is put in place to support learning and development.	Designated Clinical Officer for SEND, NHS Dorset	August 2024
R1.3	We will ensure data, including voices of children, families and practitioners is appropriately shared across the partnership to improve clarity of planning to deliver services earlier to meet the needs of children, young people and families with SEND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Task and Finish Group will provide evidence to the SEND Partnership Board of how the use of data is leading to effective interventions and improved outcomes 	Voices of children and families will continue to influence and shape the services as the partnership will be fully cited on their views. Utilising data will further provide assurance to the partnership about the satisfaction of effective and timely services to our families Inspection reports identify strong information and data sharing across the partnership.	Head of Children Thriving in Education, Dorset Council	December 2024

IMPACT: Children, young people and families with SEND have access to the right service at the right time because the partnership understands need and can respond in a timely way.

SEND Inspection Plan – Recommendation 2

Recommendation 2.0: Leaders across the partnership should ensure that their quality assurance and annual review processes, particularly in relation to preparation for adulthood, are as robust, precise and of the same high-quality as seen in the more recent education, health and care plans.

Ref	Action	Outcome	Owner	Timescale
R2.1	<p>We will ensure Dorset Council provide reminders and, where appropriate, support to educational settings to ensure reviews are held at an appropriate time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SEND Partnership Board will have oversight of performance of Annual Reviews held on time. 	Statutory timescales are met for phased transfers.	Strategic Lead SEND, Dorset Council	September 24
R2.2	<p>Dorset Council will ensure partners, setting and families receive a schedule of all EHCP Annual Reviews to ensure multi-agency partnership engagement. As part of this we will help the partnership understand which are a priority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The partnership will have responsibility to prioritise attendance at the priority Annual Reviews. We will record and measure attendance, reporting to the SEND Partnership Board. 	<p>Annual Reviews are high quality, evidenced through multi-agency quality assurance audits and dip samples.</p> <p>There is evidence of high levels of attendance of partners at Annual Reviews in audit and dip sampling.</p>	Strategic Lead SEND, Dorset Council	December 2024
R2.3	<p>We will strengthen quality assurance for children preparing for adulthood as part of our Quality Assurance service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will ensure there are regular and recurring multi-agency audits of EHCPs for children from Year 9. We will co-produce, implement and report on a specific multi-agency audit tool for our partnerships' Birth to Settled Adulthood Programme. We will provide assurance through the SEND Partnership Board that EHCP reviews are of consistent, high quality. 	Children, young people and families with SEND have Annual Reviews that continue to improve outcomes, reflecting the services required to meet their needs.	Head of Quality Assurance, Dorset Council	September 2024
R2.4	We will ensure appropriate reports are shared with the SEND Partnership Board, enabling performance oversight of both quality and preparation for adulthood is achieved, including annual review timeliness.	<p>Feedback from families identifies improved satisfaction of effective and timely services.</p> <p>Families report that EHCPs make a difference to understanding their child's needs and long-term outcomes</p> <p>Inspection reports identify strong information and data sharing across the partnership.</p>	Head of Children Thriving in Education, Dorset Council	December 2024

IMPACT: EHCPs are identified as high quality through our quality assurance processes. Young people are ready for adulthood and experience good outcomes in their adult life.

There are 8 areas the partnership will strengthen:

Area 1.0: There remains work to do to ensure timely and effective reviews of EHC plans, particularly in older plans and to support the early identification of aspirations and provision post-16 and beyond. This is necessary to ensure that sufficiency of provision beyond post-16 can be carefully considered and planned.

Ref	Action	Outcome	Owner	Timescale
A1.1	<p>We will work with settings, partners and children, young people and families to provide consistent, high quality EHCPs in a timely manner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will share learning from multi-agency audits across the partnership, with recommendations for further improvements We will share best practice and impact at our partnership workforce development events. 	Children, young people and families report satisfaction on the EHCP process and timescales. Quality Assurance have a robust evidence base of the provision and production of high quality EHCPs. Children and young people receive services that meet their needs.	Strategic Lead SEND, Dorset Council	December 2024
A1.2	<p>We will purposefully gather information regarding children and young people's aspirations through EHCPs and strengthen provision beyond post 16. We will also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold a focused Let's Talk session on post 16 to better understand the lived experiences and concerns of parents and carers Hold locality / setting-based sessions with parents and carers of children in Year 9 + with SEND Have a focused Education Board on post 16 provision and outcomes to inform a detailed plan Ensure the partnership informs the development of provision for further education and the merger of Kingston Maurward College and Weymouth College Increase supported internships Review and enhance the post 16 curriculum across the education community ensuring there is sufficient vocational opportunities 	More young people with SEND have planned next steps to move into education, employment or training beyond 16-years of age.	Service Manager Young and Thriving, Dorset Council	August 2025
A1.3	<p>We will update existing EHCs at the Annual Review to ensure they include aspirations and provision for post-16 and beyond.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will analyse the early identification of the needs of children post-16 to be able to provide suitable provision and sufficiency 	More young people with SEND progress into suitable post-16 provision.	Strategic Lead SEND, Dorset Council	December 2024

IMPACT: EHCPs are identified as high quality with a focus on achieving good outcomes. Young people are supported early in preparation for adulthood and do so in a planned and supported way. There are a breadth of opportunities in education and employment for our children and young people with SEND and sufficient provision.

Area 2.0: Academic outcomes for children and young people, including those with SEND, at key stage 2 and key stage 4, are lower than national outcomes. Leaders have correctly identified specific aspects to focus on, particularly within key stage 2, such as girls' understanding of mathematics and boys' writing skills.

Ref	Action	Outcome	Owner	Timescale
A2.1	<p>We will deliver our Key Stage 2 (KS2) plans, being progressed through our Education Strategy 2024-27 to improve KS2 attainment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact review of Girls' Maths project to identify areas to strengthen and redelivery to targeted schools. • Raise awareness of anxiety around maths and support schools to address this through training. • Support all schools to access the English Hub for phonics and English Hub reading culture training. • Through our Chesil literacy project and book week. • Through the Chesil phase transfer project. • Ensure high quality CPD is available for EYFS, KS1 and KS2 teachers in literacy, to include a strong focus on writing outcomes at KS2. • Implement a Phase transfer project across all localities focused on KS2 writing. • Deliver a programme of support for all schools to address writing outcomes, facilitated by Hampshire Advisory Service. • Delivery of the Primary Ekklan course, Specialist Reading Practitioner Course and supporting literacy needs and dyslexia in the classroom for schools, through specialist teachers. • Strengthen current task and finish groups and priorities in the education strategy, through the DFE, CEO of Trusts, Local Authority and Diocese Group, enhancing collaboration through strategic leadership across the school community. 	<p>Academic outcomes and attainment improve.</p> <p>Improved outcomes that meet, if not exceed national standard at KS2 maths.</p> <p>Improved outcomes that meet, if not exceed national standard at KS2 for reading.</p> <p>Improved outcomes that meet, if not exceed national standard at KS2 for writing.</p> <p>Improved outcomes in English specifically for children with SEND.</p> <p>Improved outcomes for children with SEND.</p>	<p>Lead Best Education for All, Dorset Council</p>	<p>September 2025</p>
A2.2	<p>We will deliver our Key Stage 4 (KS4) plans, being progressed through our Education Strategy 2024-27 to improve KS4 attainment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A full curriculum review of KS3 and 4 curriculum will be carried out to quality assure the intent, implementation and impact of each subject. • We will focus on specific curriculum areas where attainment is below national average and using both local, regional (hubs) and national support, work with schools to address and influence academic data over time. • We will draw upon regional and national best practice around the teaching of young people with SEND to ensure the best adaptive strategies are in place to meet need. 	<p>Academic outcomes and attainment for young people with SEND show a continual upward trajectory towards meeting and exceeding national outcomes.</p> <p>Individual curriculum areas are robust with a clearly mapped out intent, effective implementation and clear impact end progression points that outline the core disciplinary knowledge that all students must have secured by the end of each year group.</p> <p>KS4 curriculum attainment outcomes are in line with national averages or above, year on year.</p> <p>Teaching staff feel confident to be able to adapt their teaching plans to suit the needs of all learners.</p>	<p>Lead Best Education for All, Dorset Council</p> <p>Education Challenge Leads</p> <p>Specialist Teachers</p> <p>Special School outreach team.</p>	<p>December 2025</p>

IMPACT: Academic outcomes and attainment improves to meet and ideally exceed national standards, with the gaps between children and young people with SEND and their peers closing.

Area 3.0: The local area partnership has a wealth of data and information available which is not being used as well as it could be to plan future provision. Leaders acknowledge that there is more to be done to strengthen their quality assurance of the impact of their actions and decisions.

Ref	Action	Outcome	Owner	Timescale
A3.1	<p>The partnership will work together to develop shared data systems to ensure we have sufficient provision and services to meet needs when they are identified.</p> <p>We will develop a system for ongoing monitoring and quality assurance of providers across the system to inform commissioning plans</p> <p>We will quality assure providers and commissioned services through a co-produced key performance framework</p> <p>We will provide assurance that provision is meeting children's needs through the SEND Partnership Board</p>	<p>All partners know what provision is suitable to meet the range of children's needs.</p> <p>Children and young people will receive appropriate provision at the right time.</p> <p>Family and setting feedback tells us that the provision supports the child to progress in their learning.</p> <p>Provision for children and young people with SEND is commissioned from providers who can evidence positive outcomes and are of good quality .</p>	Head of Children Thriving in Education, Dorset Council	July 2025
A3.2	<p>The partnership will work together to review services and measures to ensure we know where and how we are making a difference.</p> <p>We will strengthen quality assurance of our decision making to ensure they are timely and are being used to plan for future provision.</p> <p>We will provide assurance that our services are impactful by reporting to the SEND Partnership Board.</p>	<p>Commissioning and delivery of interventions and services will be informed by impact evidence.</p> <p>The partnership will know when and how decisions lead to positive outcomes.</p> <p>The partnership will know what provision is needed and have a plan to implement it.</p>	Head of Children Thriving in Education, Dorset Council	December 2024

IMPACT: Children and Young People's needs will be identified as early as possible and met through high quality services and provision in a timely way.

Area 4.0: There is a recognised need to increase the availability of overnight short breaks for young adults with the most complex needs. Local leaders recognise that the current arrangements to identify, assess and support children’s emotional, social and mental ill health need improvement.

Ref	Action	Outcome	Owner	Timescale
A4.1	<p>We will work with partners, providers and families to improve the awareness and access to the options and provision for short breaks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will update our SEND Strategy to reflect the increased options to provide short break provision. We will strengthen our Joint Commissioning of SEND provision arrangements, reporting on the impact of commissioned provision through existing, established governance Boards. 	<p>Family feedback provides evidence of increased satisfaction of access to short break provision.</p> <p>Families will have access to short break provision that will best support them and particularly for families whose children have more complex needs.</p> <p>There is suitability of short break provision across the 14-25 age group.</p>	Head of Service, Birth to Settled Adulthood Service, Dorset Council	December 2024
A4.2	We will continue to transform Children and Young peoples’ mental health services so that any young person in Dorset is able to access the right type of support for their needs.	Children, young people and families are supported earlier and especially where children at risk of admission to a mental health bed.	Head of Children’s Services, Dorset Healthcare	August 2024

IMPACT: Families will have access to short break provision that will best support them and particularly for families whose children have more complex needs. Children and young people will also have access to appropriate support

Area 5.0: Waiting times for neurodevelopmental assessment for children remain too long. This causes some frustration for practitioners and families alike. Although cases are assessed according to need, elements of the multi-agency assessment pathway for school-age children may take place at different times. This adds to potential delays in the assessment process, which continue to cause families distress. Young people aged 16 years and above, who are referred to the neurodevelopmental pathway, are at risk of not being assessed before they are 18 years old. At that point, they would require a referral to adult pathways. As a result, this raises some concerns about this service being able to cater for their specific needs.

Ref	Action	Outcome	Owner	Timescale
A5.1	<p>We will deliver our partnerships' Children and Young People's Mental Health Transformation Plan already in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Social Care led review to progress new model aligned to place based delivery 	Children, young people, and their families report a positive experience mental health support, receiving timely assessment and support to meet their need.	Designated Clinical Officer for SEND, NHS Dorset	December 2024
A5.2	<p>We will implement the recommendations from our partnerships' 'All-Age Neurodevelopmental' Review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new model will be framed around four elements - access, assessment, support, and training. NHS Dorset will report on progress to our partnership and will inform the updated SEND strategy. 	Fewer Children and Young People will be waiting for assessment and will be able to access support whilst waiting.	Designated Clinical Officer for SEND, NHS Dorset	December 2024
A5.3	<p>We will include regular waiting times to the data reporting channels, accessible to the partnership and report on the waiting times into the SEND Partnership Board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dorset intelligence information System (DiiS) will include neurodevelopmental assessment waiting times – Alerting decision makers to intervene and ensure families are supported while waiting. 	Fewer Children and Young People will be waiting for assessment and will be able to access support whilst waiting.	Designated Clinical Officer for SEND, NHS Dorset	December 2024

IMPACT: Waiting times will reduce improving outcomes for children, young people and families as they receive support at the earliest opportunity.

Area 6.0: There remain some weaknesses in the partnership’s monitoring of waiting times for children and young people accessing services, such as Gateway assessments or core child and adolescent mental health services. Local area leaders’ methods of recording and maintaining oversight of children at risk of attending accident and emergency rooms or mental health wards are not fully effective. Leaders recognise this is a gap and they have well-considered plans in place to increase the monitoring and evaluation of these processes to keep vulnerable children and young people safe.

Ref	Action	Outcome	Owner	Timescale
A6.1	<p>We will continue to monitor and report on waiting times for core assessments and improve the varied interventions offered by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To strengthen this work, we will create a Task and Finish Group to support system oversight and track performance data. • The Task and Finish Group will develop an action plan to improve recording practice, system configuration where possible, and routine reporting and visibility of mental health data amongst system partners. • The Children, Young People’s Mental Health Transformation Programme will consider the ways risk information is shared as part of the ‘Integrated Front Door’ work. 	<p>Improved visibility and understanding amongst system partners of key data regarding waits for assessment and intervention for the CAMHS pathway.</p> <p>Children, young people and families are supported earlier where children are at risk of attending accident and emergency or being admitted to a mental health beds.</p>	Head of Children’s Services, Dorset Healthcare	August 2024

IMPACT: Children, young people and families are supported earlier where children are at risk of attending accident and emergency or being admitted to a mental health bed.

Area 7.0: There are some challenges about the efficiency in referral processes. These can add unnecessary delays and barriers, such as the expectations for referrals to community paediatrics.

Ref	Action	Outcome	Owner	Timescale
A7.1	<p>We will review our referral process recommending improvements to the partnership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will refresh our delivery options in the update of the SEND Strategy in 2024 	<p>Children, young people and families will receive timely support at the right time and have access to support across the partnership</p>	<p>Designated Clinical Officer for SEND, NHS Dorset</p>	<p>December 2024</p>
A7.2	<p>We will review the impact of our Dorset Development and Behaviour Pathway, updated in March 2024, publishing a revised pathway in the SEND Strategy in 2024.</p>	<p>Children, young people and families will receive timely support at the right time and have access to support across the partnership</p> <p>Areas to improve process are shared across the partnership with recommendations to improve the pathways.</p>	<p>Designated Clinical Officer for SEND, NHS Dorset</p>	<p>December 2024</p>
A7.3	<p>We will continue to work closely with our strategic oversight group to identify and respond to areas of improvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback to be captured through family's experiences including the SEND annual survey. Updates to the pathway will be reflected in the updated SEND Strategy in 2024. 	<p>Family feedback will be used to monitor the impact and effectiveness of the pathways. Families will report an increase in satisfaction over time.</p>	<p>Designated Clinical Officer for SEND, NHS Dorset</p>	<p>December 2024</p>

IMPACT: Children, young people and families will receive timely support and have access to support across the partnership.

Area 8.0: The partnership is working towards establishing a more formal Dynamic Support Register (DSR) and the necessary key-worker roles that support this to fully comply with statutory guidance. This will ensure that there is more effective oversight of those vulnerable children and young people in line with NHS England guidelines.

Ref	Action	Outcome	Owner	Timescale
A8.1	We will further strengthen partnership working to explore producing a digital Dynamic Support Register (DSR). We will align this with the implementation of the Key Worker Service. Key workers will be allocated to families to support them through times of increased need.	Children, young people and families will receive the right type of support at the right time to meet their need.	Principal Programme Lead, NHS Dorset	December 2024
A8.2	We will communicate and share the revised digital DSR in the update of the SEND Strategy in 2024	Partners and families understand the DSR and how to access and use it.	Principal Programme Lead, NHS Dorset	December 2024

IMPACT: Our most vulnerable children, young people and families will receive timely support. Partners will have shared information to support families across the system.