



Buckinghamshire County Council
Select Committee
Children's Social Care and Learning

Date: Tuesday 21 March 2017

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: Large Dining Room, Judges Lodgings, Aylesbury

AGENDA

9.30 am Pre-meeting Discussion

This session is for members of the Committee only. It is to allow the members time to discuss lines of questioning, areas for discussion and what needs to be achieved during the meeting.

10.30 am Formal Meeting Begins

| Agenda Item | Time | Page No |
|--|--------------|----------------|
| 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE | 10:30 | |
| 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To declare any Personal or Disclosable Pecuniary Interests. | | |
| 3 MINUTES To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 31 st January 2017 | | 5 - 12 |
| 4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS | | |



Public Questions is an opportunity for people who live, work or study in the county to put a question to a Scrutiny Committee about any issue that has an impact on their local community or the county as a whole.

Members of the public, who have given prior notice, will be invited to put their question in person.

The Cabinet Member and responsible officers will then be invited to respond.

Further information and details on how to register can be found through the following link and by then clicking on 'Public Questions'.

<http://democracy.buckscc.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=788>

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| 5 | CHAIRMAN'S REPORT For the Chairman of the Committee to provide an update on recent scrutiny related activity including an update and discussion on the scoping and timing of an Inquiry into school exclusions. | 10:35 | |
| 6 | COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATES For Members to update on any issue they are investigating on behalf of the Committee. | | |
| 7 | CABINET MEMBER UPDATES i) Mr Zahir Mohammed, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills. ii) Lin Hazell, Cabinet Member for Children's Services. | 10:45 | |
| 8 | THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) STRATEGY 2017-2020 For Members to examine the new Special Educational Needs and Disability Strategy. Contributor <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms Gill Shurrock, Head of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities | 10:55 | 13 - 76 |
| 9 | EDUCATION STANDARDS OVERVIEW 2016 For the Committee to consider an overview of education standards across the County for 2016. This is an initial overview in advance of a more detailed report being available later in the year. Contributors <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Zahir Mohammed - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills | 11:20 | 77 - 112 |

- Mr Nick Wilson – Service Director Education.

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| 10 | BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LEARNING TRUST (BLT) For Members to look at the performance of the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust (BLT) | 11:45 | 113 - 140 |
| | Contributors | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Zahir Mohammed – Cabinet Member for Education and Skills. • Mr David Johnston – Managing Director Children’s Social Care and Learning Business Unit. • Mr Nick Wilson – Service Director Education. | | |
| 11 | CHANGE FOR CHILDREN (C4C) - 5 YEAR PLAN To give Members the opportunity to review and comment on the 5 year programme of re-configuration projects across the Children’s Social Care and Learning Business Unit. | 12:05 | 141 - 154 |
| | Contributor Mr P Dart, Programme Director - Change for Children | | |
| 12 | COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME To discuss the Committee work programme | 12:25 | 155 - 156 |
| 13 | DATE OF NEXT MEETING To note the next meeting of the Children’s Social Care and Learning Select Committee on 18 th July 2017, Mezzanine Room 1, New County Offices, Aylesbury. | 12:30 | |

Purpose of the committee

The role of the Children’s Social Care and Learning Select Committee is to hold decision-makers to account for improving outcomes and services for Buckinghamshire.

The Children’s Social Care and Learning Select Committee shall have the power to scrutinise all issues in relation to the remit of the Children’s Social Care and Learning Business Unit. This will include, but not exclusively, responsibility for scrutinising issues in relation to:

- Nurseries and early years education
- Schools and further education
- The Bucks Learning Trust
- Quality standards and performance in education
- Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- Learning and skills
- Adult learning
- Children and family services
- Early intervention
- Child protection, safeguarding and prevention
- Children in care (looked after children)

- Children's psychology
- Children's partnerships
- Youth provision
- The Youth Offending Service

** In accordance with the BCC Constitution, this Committee shall act as the designated Committee responsible for the scrutiny of Education matters.*

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For further information please contact: Kevin Wright on 01296 387832, email: kwright@buckscc.gov.uk

Members

| | |
|------------------|----------------|
| Mrs P Birchley | Mrs W Mallen |
| Ms J Blake | Mr R Stuchbury |
| Mr D Dhillon (C) | Vacancy |
| Mr P Gomm | Vacancy |
| Mr P Irwin | Ms K Wood |
| Mrs V Letheren | |

Co-opted Members

Mr D Babb, Church of England Representative
 Mr M Moore, Roman Catholic Church
 Ms M Nowers, Primary School Sector



Buckinghamshire County Council
Select Committee
Children's Social Care and Learning

Minutes

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE AND LEARNING SELECT COMMITTEE

Minutes from the meeting held on Tuesday 31 January 2017, in Large Dining Room, Judges Lodgings, Aylesbury, commencing at 10.30 am and concluding at 12.25 pm.

This meeting was webcast. To review the detailed discussions that took place, please see the webcast which can be found at <http://www.buckscc.public-i.tv/>
The webcasts are retained on this website for 6 months. Recordings of any previous meetings beyond this can be requested (contact: democracy@buckscc.gov.uk)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mrs P Birchley, Ms J Blake, Mr D Dhillon (Chairman), Mr P Gomm, Mr P Irwin, Mrs V Letheren, Mrs W Mallen, Mr R Stuchbury and Ms K Wood

CO-OPTED MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr M Moore

GUESTS PRESENT

Lin Hazell and Mr Z Mohammed

OFFICERS PRESENT

Ms A Byrne, Ms C Douch, Mr J Fowler, Mr D Johnston and Ms L Nankin

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mr D Babb.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.



3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2016 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

The following updates were provided to actions from the previous meeting:

The Chairman informed the Committee that:

- The SEND Strategy had been deferred until the next Committee meeting on 21st March 2017.
- A communication had been received from a company called Everlief Child Psychology Ltd highlighting that the information about their hourly charging policy discussed in the webcast of item 9 - Educational Psychology Service at the previous Committee meeting on 6th December was incorrect. The company requested that it be noted that they did not operate in the way described. The Chairman confirmed that a note would be made in the minutes of the meeting of 6th December 2016.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services informed the Committee of the following in relation to foster carer resignations during 2015/16:

- There were some foster parents looking after family members who had now turned 18 years of age and therefore would be removed from the foster carer register. Over the last year, 8 short term foster carers had left, either because of a change of circumstances or illness or because fostering was something they no longer wanted to do.
- Any foster carer who resigned was visited at home to undertake an exit interview and discuss any issues they may have had during their time as a foster carer.
- The fostering allowance needed to be competitive with neighbouring Local Authorities.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills confirmed that he would be able to bring a more in depth report on bullying to the Committee.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman updated the Committee as follows:

- The Voice of the Child and Young Person Inquiry had now been presented to Cabinet. The majority of recommendations had been agreed by Cabinet and two had been agreed in part. The Chairman thanked the Committee for their work on the inquiry.
- He had attended an informative seminar on Child Sexual Exploitation which included stories from survivors. He was concerned that there seemed to be not enough support for survivors in the longer term.

- Nominations would be sought for the parent governor roles that were available on the Select Committee. Emails would be sent to Parent Governors on 20 February 2017 and articles would be published in Governor Times and Schools Bulletin.

6 COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATES

Mr R Stuchbury noted that there had been an increase in the take up of the Duke of Edinburgh award at schools in his area as well as an increase in A level achievement. He commented on the strong leadership and closer working within those schools and congratulated one pupil who had taken up a place at Oxford University.

Mrs V Letheren had visited the Action 4 Youth Headquarters last week and had been impressed with the work they were doing with mainstream children as well as those not in education, employment or training (NEET). Mrs Letheren added that the staff were very committed and there was a new Chief Executive in post.

Mr P Gomm noted the success of the new outreach work being undertaken with different Children's Centres in his area.

7 CABINET MEMBER UPDATES

The Chairman welcomed:

- Mr Z Mohammed, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.
- Lin Hazell, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.
- Mr D Johnston, Managing Director for Children's Social Care and Learning.
- Ms C Douch, Service Director, Children's Services.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills updated the Committee on the following:

- The national funding formula (second phase of the consultation) had been received on 14 December 2016. An additional £10m would be made available to Buckinghamshire schools if the changes were implemented.
- 85% of schools in Buckinghamshire would gain from this additional money, but 15% would lose out.
- Nationally, 46% of schools would lose funding and 54% would gain.

The following points were made during the discussion:

- The additional £10m would mean that teacher numbers would increase
- Over the last two years there had been approximately an additional £18m per year made available which had supported more teachers.
- The 15% of schools that were losing out were mainly primary schools with small pupil numbers and the amounts were relatively small. There would be mitigation in the first year with a cap of 1.5% on losses.
- The Government took into account a number of factors, for example free school meals and deprivation in the new formula.

- Secondary schools had already had discussions with the Council to look at the level of reserves available to help mitigate any losses to funding and to look at what other Local Authorities were doing.
- The Council met with the primary schools through a Primary Executive Board as well as Schools Forum.
- Members agreed that the item would need to come back to the Committee for a fuller discussion at a future meeting.

ACTION: Governance Advisor.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services updated the Committee on the following:

- The Children's Services improvement journey was continuing and so far there had been a positive response from the press.
- There was now a focus on the reconfiguration of the service, known as 'Change for Children' which included four separate work-streams.
- There was a focus on integrating disability and special educational needs services.
- The priority was always to maintain a strong service for children during both the improvement journey and the reconfiguring of services. The Committee would be kept updated with progress.

The following points were made during the discussion:

- The Munro system was not being completely disbanded but there would be a reduction in the number of teams to ensure that there was enough resilience.
- The improvements had not happened as quickly as the service would have liked; however; there had been a lot of hard work already undertaken to ensure changes were sustainable in the longer term.
- Buckinghamshire was looking at providing residential accommodation situated within the county as a way of reducing the number of out of county placements. A business case was currently being worked up for this.
- The improvement plan work was focused on ensuring the best outcomes for children; the transformation process was to prepare the service for the future.

8 PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS - FOCUS ON PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Chairman welcomed:

- Ms Laura Nankin, Head of Fair Access and Youth Provision

Ms Nankin highlighted the following:

- The report focussed on permanent exclusions from the primary school sector and the results of research that had been undertaken last year.
- There had been a large increase in the number of permanent exclusions from primary schools last year from 6 up to 24 with the majority being pupils with special educational needs (SEN).
- Schools had different thresholds for exclusion for example one school's interpretation of persistent disruptive behaviour may be different from another.

- A high percentage of pupils being excluded were known to social care.
- There was less free support for schools to help manage behaviour issues and an increased focus on behaviour by Ofsted which placed schools under more pressure to deal with behaviour issues.
- A permanent exclusion avoidance plan had been developed to focus on reducing the numbers.
- There had been some reduction in permanent exclusions (including in primary schools) during the current school year and a Task and Finish Group had been set up specifically looking at Secondary Schools exclusions due to weapons.

The following points were made during the discussion:

- To help reduce exclusions, there was now better communication and sharing of information between social care and education following a protocol that was rolled out in 2016. There was also a shared database where social care and education issues could be viewed together.
- In the secondary sector, if a pupil was excluded twice in a 3 year period they could not return to mainstream school.
- The Local Authority reserved 10 places in the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) for excluded pupils. There were 32 places overall which meant there was an additional opportunity to spot purchase places as necessary and subject to the space being available.
- The process for challenging a permanent exclusion followed guidance set by central government and schools could not be forced to readmit children, however they could be charged £4,000 if a child was not readmitted.
- Some Members of the Committee considered that the appeals process appeared ineffective and should be an issue on which to lobby central government.
- Schools had to follow central government guidance when permanently excluding pupils and the Council would challenge a school if it thought the guidance had not been adhered to. Guidance was slightly ambiguous for schools but some cases did get overturned by governors.
- Permanent exclusions were spread across a number of schools, none stood out as having a particularly high number.
- There were some instances of physical assault in primary schools which had led to exclusion.
- The Committee considered that this subject would be useful to consider as a one day inquiry and could be added to the forward plan.

ACTION: Governance Advisor.

9 BUCKINGHAMSHIRE YOUTH SERVICE

The Chairman welcomed:

- Mr James Fowler, Youth Service Manager.

The Committee noted the report and the following points were made during the discussion:

- There had been a reduction in the budget for the Connexions Service and this had impacted on the type of support that young people could access. There had not been

an increase in the number of schools buying in careers advice packages but this was the responsibility of schools.

- Street based youth work involved a team working directly with The Community Safety team and neighbourhood policing to help identify young people needing support and build relationships. There was good information sharing and partnership working with other organisations and key stakeholders and agencies.
- The Youth Service was a key partner with other teams within Children's Services including Early Help and in statutory discussions with individual children and young people.
- The service had been proactive in dealing with a reduced budget by restructuring the service into the current configuration working more closely with key partners.
- There was a training programme in place for volunteers and officers who worked in the service which included safeguarding training, Action 4 Youth also provided training to support the programme.

10 MISSING AND CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION SERVICES

The Chairman welcomed:

- Ms Alison Byrne – Early Help and Education Commissioner.

The Committee noted the report and the following points were made during the discussion:

- The match funding from Barnado's followed a rigorous tendering process which encouraged bidders to come in and talk to Commissioners. Barnado's considered they were in a strict competition.
- Because of a lack of clarity about the split of financial responsibilities between the contractor and the Council the TUPE costs were high under the current contract and this had discouraged some of the other potential bidders. The new contract made the responsibilities much clearer which would address any TUPE issues in future.
- More return interviews for missing children were now being completed within the national standard of 72 hours and this included face to face conversations. Commissioners were still working with Barnado's to further improve this area of the service.
- Buckinghamshire Children's Safeguarding Board focused on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and monitored initiatives such as Hotel Watch to ensure they were being effective. Partnership working on CSE and missing children had improved significantly

11 CHILDREN'S WORKFORCE INQUIRY

The Chairman went through the progress of recommendations of the Committee's Children's Workforce Inquiry 6 months on. The following points were made:

- Recommendations 1 and 3 had been implemented now and there appeared to be good progress on recommendations 2 and 4.

The Committee agreed that the Chairman RAG rate the recommendations as follows



Implemented



On track



May not be fully implemented



Not implemented

- Recommendation 1 – Tick
- Recommendation 2 – Green
- Recommendation 3 – Tick
- Recommendation 4 – Green

RESOLVED

The Committee AGREED the status of implementation of recommendations from the Children's Workforce Inquiry (6 months on) as above.

12 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members noted the future work programme.

13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is on 21st March 2017 10.30am in Large Dining Room, Judges Lodgings, Aylesbury.

CHAIRMAN



Buckinghamshire County Council Select Committee

Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee

Report to the Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Title: | The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2016 |
| Committee date: | 21 st March, 2017 |
| Author: | Gillian Shurrock, Head of SEN |
| Contact officer: | Gillian Shurrock, 01296 382109 |
| Cabinet Member sign-off: | Zahir Mohammed |

Purpose of Agenda Item

To inform the Select Committee with regards to the SEND strategy that was agreed by Cabinet on 6th February 2017.

Background

On September 20th 2016 the Cabinet Member and Officers from the SEN Service presented a report to the Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee on the outcome of the SEND review that had taken place between February to July 2016 and proposals for consultation on the draft improvement priorities that would provide the framework and focus for the next three years in the new SEND Strategy.

Consultation on the improvement priorities took place during October 2016, with 142 individuals making contributions and responses.

On Tuesday 6th December, 2016 Gillian Shurrock, Head of SEN updated the Committee on the continuing development of the new SEND Strategy and made the following points:

- There had been a good level of engagement with parents and carers as well as young people with Special Educational Needs to help develop the strategy.
- The review was timely given the pressures that Local Authorities were currently under.
- The general opinion was that the strategy had identified the correct priorities.



- There would be outcomes within the strategy with an explanation as to how they would be achieved.
- The strategy would be brought to Cabinet on 9th January 2017 and published on the Council's website.

A Member suggested that the SEND Strategy should be brought to the Select Committee once it had been to Cabinet.

Summary

The previous SEND and Inclusion Strategy covered the period 2013 – 2016. In order to inform the focus and priorities of the new strategy, a SEND review was commissioned and took place between February and July in 2016. It considered the recurrent overspends against SEND budgets as well as the implementation of recent SEN Reforms. The review involved significant discussion and contact with a wide range of stakeholders and a detailed analysis of financial and SEND related data.

Statutory guidance expects that local authorities should ensure that children, young people and parents feel they have participated fully in review and development processes and have a sense of co-ownership. This is often referred to as 'co-production' and this approach has been an important part of the process of review and development leading to the new SEND Strategy.

There is a significant agenda for action. Strong leadership is needed to secure the improved performance and transformation needed, within the context of no revenue growth, and some possible budget reductions that may arise from changes to the way in which High Needs funding is distributed to Local Authorities.

Key issues

1. A SEND Review took place between February and July 2016. At the time there were significant concerns about recurrent overspends against the High Needs budget which is part of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Schools were also raising concerns about sufficiency of specialist provision and special schools in particular were concerned to have greater clarity about their role in Buckinghamshire.
2. Hitherto, it has been possible, subject to the agreement of the Schools Forum, to increase the size of the High Needs Block with money from the Schools Block. The Government is progressing its plan to put in place a national funding formula for schools, describing the current system as "*unfair, transparent and out of date*". It consulted in 2015 on proposals that would remove the facility for local authorities to subsidise over spends from the High Needs Block from the Schools Block. The second phase of consultation started on December 14th 2016 where the details of Government proposals to adjust the distribution of High Needs funding between local authorities are set out.

3. In 2015-16 Buckinghamshire spent 1.5 times as much per pupil on High Needs than the national position and 1.8 times as much as its statistical neighbours (15-16 planned spend). A new High Needs funding settlement under a national formula is expected to result in a different allocation, but with statutory obligations and provision to sustain. Whilst Phase 2 of the Government's High Needs funding proposals say that there will be no cash losses to local authorities as a result of the high needs formula, the detail and practical implications have not yet been explored.

The links between the statutory SEND process and financial expenditure from the High Needs Budget

4. The SEND Review looked in particular at the financial impact of the administration of the statutory SEND process. Decisions in the statutory SEND process almost always have a financial implication. The profile in Buckinghamshire is of an escalation of children and young people to higher levels of a tiered process, with fewer being provided for in universal provision (known as SEN support and funded through schools' delegated budgets). The key indicators are:
 - a. Spend
 - b. Numbers of Education Health and Care (EHC) assessments and EHC Plans
 - c. The percentage of the pupil population with a statement of EHC Plan
 - d. The percentage of the pupil population in special schools
 - e. The percentage of all pupils at SEN Support
5. In order to become the subject of an EHC Plan (or a statement prior to September 2014), a child or young person requires an intensity and level of provision that would not be normally available in a mainstream school. Schools must follow a graduated response approach, demonstrating the work they have done with the child and its impact, prior to asking for an EHC assessment. An EHC assessment is typically requested by parents, schools and settings, and if agreed, will usually, but not always, result in an EHC Plan. An EHC Plan leads to the provision of additional funding to a school, whether a mainstream or special school. The additional funding is called "Top-Up" funding and varies according to the provision needs of the child. If a child or young person attends a special school, a place costs £10,000 a year. Financial benchmarking data shows that in 2016-17, Buckinghamshire's planned spend on "top-ups" was at a level 1.6 times more than statistical neighbours.
6. The number of EHC assessments has increased by 12% over the last 5 years, exceeding the population increase of 8%. 3.1% of Buckinghamshire resident children and young people have an EHC Plan or statement of SEN. This is higher than the national average of 2.8%.
7. The number of first time EHC assessments and EHC Plans is also increasing – from 257 (statements) in 13/14 academic year to 388 (EHC Plans) in 15/16 academic year. This is an increase of 50%. The increased volume has led to difficulties in completing assessments and issuing plans within the statutory timeframe. It has also led to specialist SEND professionals being committed to completing statutory reports

for EHC assessments, and restricting their time to engage in preventative work in schools and settings.

8. Mainstream schools and academies identify proportionately fewer children at “SEN Support” than nationally. This is universal and targeted provision that that schools make from their delegated budgets and using external advice that is available without the need for a statement or EHC Plan. 9.4% of primary aged children in Buckinghamshire are at SEN Support compared to 13% nationally, and 8% of secondary aged young people compared to 12.4% nationally. Most children with SEND are at SEND support.
9. There is a higher dependency on special school provision in Buckinghamshire than nationally. Although numbers of placements in independent and non-maintained special schools had reduced in 2015, they have started to increase in 2016 as has the cost. Benchmarking data on planned spend shows an increase of 9% in this area between 15-16 and 16-17 financial years.
10. There is significant pressure for Buckinghamshire special school places. There is a bigger population of children with moderate learning difficulties in Buckinghamshire special schools than is the case nationally. The costs of special school education are increasing. Between April 2013 and January 2016 there was a 35% increase in the “Top-Up” funding that is allocated in addition to the £10,000 place funding already in the school. The number of funded places has increased by over 100, with much of this being unplanned.
11. Over 2015 and 2016 there has been increasing pressure from schools to seek financial support for children and young people with SEND but without an EHC Plan whose educational provision, the school says, is beyond the school’s financial capacity to fund. In December 2016, the spend in this area had increased by 57% compared to the same period in the previous year. This is a relatively new and growing area of expenditure.
12. Thus there is a pattern of demand for higher level provision that is different than what would be expected when looking at national, and in particular, statistical neighbour trends and spend. Demands are made through the statutory SEND process and continue to lead to unplanned increases in expenditure against a budget that is expected to be capped for future years. Even if the drive for a national funding formula did not include the High Needs Block, the Schools Budget would be unlikely to be able to underwrite further overspends on High Needs. The statutory underpinning of pupil level spending decisions is such that the Council would retain the responsibility for provision and be bound to fund provision that was specified.

Stakeholder views and understandings

13. A key feature of the SEND review was the extent of the dialogue with key stakeholders. In particular, this has involved detailed and open discussions with parent representatives (using the co-production approach referred to above).



14. A number of discussions and seminars have also taken place with head teachers about the links between the SEND statutory process and the financial implications of the position as set out above. School leaders understand these matters, and made constructive suggestions about how they could be resolved. The three main areas of comment were:
- a. Determining the provision that schools should make for all children with SEND at SEN Support, as a means to stem the escalation to EHC Plans
 - b. Improving decision making on the statutory process
 - c. Making all specialist support available without the need for an EHC Plan or statement
15. School leaders also commented on what they saw as an insufficiency of their delegated budgets generally, and they felt that this was a key reason that led to escalating pupils through the statutory process to secure more funding. In a survey of over 100 Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) , the majority view was that securing extra funding, or a special school place, was the prime motivator in seeking an EHC Plan.
16. Parents commented on their lack of confidence in mainstream education. Some wanted there to be more support for and commitment to their children in mainstream schools, as well as more expertise and higher skills levels. Others wanted it to be easier to secure a special school placement.
17. There is a sound understanding of the strategic challenges facing the Council by the Parent Carer Forum, which is the statutory route for dialogue and consultation with parents and carers of disabled children and those with SEND.
18. A SEND Board includes representatives from all stakeholders, is supported by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, and has contributed throughout the process of the review, the development of emerging Priorities and in the consultation on the SEND Strategy.

Consultation on the building blocks for the new SEND Strategy

19. At the conclusion of the SEND Review a series of eight Improvement Priorities were drawn together. A draft Vision was prepared, reflecting the views and aspirations expressed during the review. These provided the basis for the consultation.
20. The eight Improvement Priorities were grouped under 4 areas of Strategic Focus:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Children, young people and families | Developing provision and supporting schools and settings |
| Planning ahead | Strategic Leadership and Management |



21. Consultees were asked to comment on a draft Vision, and on the Improvement Priorities. 142 separate individuals made whole or partial responses to the consultation questions. They were:
- 37 children and young people, both with and without SEND
 - 33 parents and carers
 - 46 professionals from education, health, social care
 - 26 who described themselves as “other” and which included school governors, and private business providers
22. Responses from a number of consultees were detailed and constructive, offering alternative text and explaining their own experiences and why their views were as they were. Young people gave highest priority to:
- a. being supported by high quality professionals who listened to them and involved them in decisions;
 - b. a well-planned, complete and individualised education, and
 - c. being successful as an adult.
23. Many respondents did not understand the content of the Priorities that were grouped under the strategic focus of “Strategic Leadership and Management”. Taking account of consultation comments, the three Improvement Priorities under this section were streamlined and reduced to two. This meant that there was then a total of seven Improvement Priorities rather than the original eight.
24. In planning for the future, the themes arising from other comments are important. They reflect the current position and indicate the challenges in moving forward to improving the way in which SEND provision is led, organised and delivered across Buckinghamshire, whilst working towards a lesser budget.

The SEND Strategy

25. The SEND Strategy is attached. It provides the framework to link the management of the High Needs Block and other SEND Budgets, with the statutory SEND framework as set out in Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, and the SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 years (January 2015).
26. It remains framed within four areas of Strategic focus, and the Improvement Priority areas are as below:

| CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES | |
|--|--|
| Priority 1 | Improve the experiences of families, children and young people of the statutory SEND processes. |
| DEVELOPING PROVISION AND SUPPORTING SCHOOLS AND SETTINGS | |
| Priority 2 | Develop greater confidence, competence and skills in mainstream settings, schools and academies, providing stronger leadership and support for |



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| | SENDCOs and others, across schools and settings. |
| Priority 3 | Refocus specialist SEND provision, such as special schools and Resourced Provisions, on those children with the most significant and complex SEND. |
| Priority 4 | Improve the leadership, co-ordination, deployment and collaborative working of specialist SEND specialist teaching, advisory and educational psychology services. |
| PLANNING AHEAD | |
| Priority 5 | Develop and implement improved approaches to planning and securing specialist educational places for those children with the most significant and complex needs. |
| STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT | |
| Priority 6 | Strengthen the management of the statutory SEND processes and related decision making. |
| Priority 7 | Develop improved approaches to monitoring and accountability, especially in relation to the use and impact of High Needs funding in schools and other educational settings. |
| | |

27. Supplementary action plans and performance measures will be used to monitor the implementation of the Strategy. As activity towards change and improvement takes place, it is likely that aspects of action plans will be refined. The Strategy must lead to a financially viable approach to ensure that provision for individual pupils is secure and sustainable.
28. The strategic analysis that has been focal to the review, will contribute to the evaluation of the Council's contribution to the Local Area's approach to identifying, assessing and providing for children and young people with SEND, which will be the subject of inspection by CQC and Ofsted.
29. Regular reports will be provided for the cabinet to review the implementation of the strategy. The SEND Board will provide a focus for partnership working, accountability and implementation.

Resource implications

The resource implications are significant. If new approaches are not put in place, and if recurrent overspends against the High Needs budget continue, the shortfall will require a continued readjustment of the schools funding block. This is currently subject to Government consultation.

Some progress has been made in 15-16 financial year leading to an adjusted and reduced spending plan for 16-17. Buckinghamshire's section 251 budget plan for 16-17 reduces the differential with other local authorities with the total High Needs planned spend now being 1.4 times as much as the national and statistical neighbour position. However more radical change is needed to secure the financial

targets that need to be put in place. These will be set when the Strategy is confirmed and detailed financial planning can be aligned with other actions.

There is a significant programme of change – actual and cultural – to lead. There may be the need for enhancement of current leadership capacity to secure this.

Capital Implications

Although there are no immediate or direct capital implications the following priorities may lead to budget considerations:

- Priority 5 will lead to the detailed construction of a 5 year place planning strategy for SEND. Whether or not there will be capital costs arising from the strategy is unclear at this point. There are opportunities for schools and academies to use academy status or apply for free school status. These would not necessarily create a capital cost for the Council.
- Priority 3 may require some adaptations to the fabric of special schools, as they include children with more severe and complex needs who have hitherto attended out of county special schools.
- Priority 2 may lead to minor adaptations being needed in some mainstream schools as they include children of a level of need currently in special school, but most schools and academies would meet minor adaptations through their Equality Act responsibilities.

Next steps

The progress of the SEND Strategy will be monitored through:

- A stakeholder SEND Board attended by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
- The Children's Services Leadership Team
- Annual reports to the Children's and Social Care Select Committee
- Annual stakeholder and ad hoc update reports through the Local Offer
- Regular reports to Cabinet

Appendices

- **SEND Strategy 2017-20**
- **Final report of the SEND Review**
- **Equality Impact Assessment**





Buckinghamshire County Council

Special Educational Needs
and Disability Strategy
2017-2020

Executive Summary

In 2016 Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) conducted a review into aspects of provision and arrangements for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). The commissioning of this review was driven by the growing pressures faced by BCC and partner SEND services. During the course of the review the need to rebalance the high needs block funding to eliminate the recurrent overspend became apparent. The review team worked with parents and schools to develop plans to rebalance the budget in order to provide suitable services and provision.

This strategy sets out overarching priorities to address the challenges and opportunities identified during the review.

BCC and partners have a statutory responsibility to assess and plan for any child or young person between the ages of 0-25 year olds with SEND needs. The council also has a budgetary responsibility to ensure funding is available through the high needs block of the Dedicated Schools Grant to schools, parents and settings. Funding is not keeping pace with increased demand in SEND, which is creating significant capacity and affordability challenges for Buckinghamshire. If left unchecked, these pressures will likely have a detrimental impact on the wellbeing of children and families who rely on these statutory services..

BCC and its partners have developed aspirational outcomes to meet these future challenges. They have been designed to put the child, young person with SEND and their families at the centre of what we do. The outcomes will empower children, young people and their families. The previous SEND Strategy spanned the period 2013 – 2016. Over that time, a number of new approaches to working were put in place, following the publication of the new SEND Code of

Practice. The new arrangements are known as the “*SEND Reforms*” and making these happen was the major focus of the previous SEND Strategy.

All state funded schools must explain how they provide for children and young people with SEND. Special educational provision is available for children and young people with SEND between birth and 25 years, for those who need it. The Buckinghamshire Local Offer describes the health, education and social care provision that it expects to be available for children and young people and their families.

Over the past three years, council funded services and partners have worked with parent representatives to shape and influence a new way of working with children and young people with SEND and their families. The incorporation of personalised experiences and feedback from many different stakeholders has led to a delivery design that is more person centred, based on clearer expectations about what mainstream schools and settings will provide for the majority of children and young people with SEND, is better integrated with health and social care services and that is more aspirational – focusing, from at least age 14, on future employability and independent living for young people as they move from education into their adult lives.

Whilst we have not achieved everything that we had hoped to, we have made significant progress in implementing the SEND reforms, working with schools, parent representatives and professionals in health and social care services. We still need to do better in meeting statutory time lines for issuing EHC Plans and completing EHC assessments, and in monitoring the impact of high needs funding that is given to schools for named children and young people.

In 2016 a SEND review took place. The review process involved talking with and listening to a large number of stakeholders and service users, including parents, carers and children and young people with SEND. It identified our areas for improvement over the next three years: 2017 – 2020. In October 2016, we consulted on these, and on a Vision, and were encouraged by the numbers of people who made a response.

The Vision for the new Strategy is:

All our children and young people with SEND will:

- *achieve the very best they can*
- *attend a school or educational setting as close to their home as possible*
- *be taught and supported by skilled professionals who have high expectations for their progress and learning potential*
- *enjoy learning, feel valued and be confident*
- *be actively involved in decisions that affect them*
- *fulfil their potential as confident adults in their chosen community, and*
- *be allocated resources to best effect,*

These are the seven “*Improvement Priorities*” that will guide SEND work between 2017-2020. They are:

1. Improve the experiences of families, children and young people of the statutory SEND processes.
2. Develop greater confidence, competence and skills in mainstream settings, schools and

academies, providing stronger leadership and support for SENDCOs and others, across schools and settings.

3. Refocus specialist SEND provision, such as special schools and Resourced Provisions, on those children with the most significant and complex SEND.
4. Improve the leadership, co-ordination, deployment and collaborative working of specialist SEND specialist teaching, advisory and educational psychology services.
5. Develop and implement improved approaches to planning and securing specialist educational places for those children with the most significant and complex needs.
6. Strengthen the management of the statutory SEND processes and related decision making.
7. Develop improved approaches to monitoring and accountability, especially in relation to the use and impact of High Needs funding in schools and other educational settings.

Over the next three years, the multi-stakeholder SEND Board will play a part in monitoring the progress and implementation of the SEND strategy, as will senior officers in the education, health and social care services.

Each Improvement Priority will be supported with performance indicators that will help us to see the progress that is being made.

Regular updates will be posted on the Local Offer.

Buckinghamshire County Council

SEN and Disability Strategy – 2017 – 2020

| Paragraphs | Contents |
|------------|--|
| | Executive Summary |
| | Introduction |
| 1.1 | Introductory comments |
| 1.11 | Structure and sections of SEND Strategy |
| | The SEND Vision |
| 2.1 | SEND Code of Practice Principles |
| 2.3 | The Buckinghamshire Vision for SEND |
| | The National Context for SEND |
| 3.2 | Statutory responsibilities |
| 3.3 | Strategic planning responsibilities |
| 3.8 | Person Centred Approaches |
| 3.10 | Where do children and young people with SEND go to school? |
| 3.12 | EHC Plans |
| 3.13 | The SEND Code of Practice |
| 3.17 | National Inspection Framework |
| | The Local Context |
| 4.1 | Facts and figures |
| 4.5 | Where do children and young people with SEND go to school? |
| 4.15 | Types of SEND |
| 4.16 | Costs and affordability |
| | The Future – Strategic Priorities for 2017 – 2020 |
| 5.1 | Framework of Improvement Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvement Priority 1 - Improvement Priority 2 - Improvement Priority 3 - Improvement Priority 4 - Improvement Priority 5 - Improvement Priority 6 - Improvement Priority 7 |
| | Glossary of Terms |

1 Introduction

1.1 Buckinghamshire Children and Young People's Partnership has agreed a Vision of what it aspires to deliver for all children and young people who live in Buckinghamshire.

'Children and young people are healthy and safe, feel valued and value others, are treated fairly, have lives filled with learning, achieve their potential and are able to enjoy life and spend quality time with family and friends.'

1.2 Our previous SEND Strategy spanned the period 2013 – 2016. It focused on implementing the new SEND Reforms and sought to improve the continuum of educational provision for children and young people with SEND. In particular, it aimed to reduce the need for children to attend school outside Buckinghamshire.

1.3 We have made much progress in the last three years. Significant work has taken place to implement the new systems and approaches needed by the SEN Reforms. Many children and young people who had Statements of SEN or Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDAs) now have Education Health and Care (EHC) Plans. New systems are in place with health and social care services for their part in contributing to assessments and EHC Plans. Our dependency on independent special schools outside Buckinghamshire has reduced.

1.4 We have worked closely with parent organisations in planning for and implementing SEND reforms. However, the volume of new work has meant that we have been challenged at times to complete EHC assessments within the timeline that is expected, but we are improving. Throughout there has been ongoing engagement and joint working with parent representative support and advice organisations.

1.5 Our Local Offer is located on the Council's website ¹ and explains what services are available to children and young people with SEND, and their families, in Buckinghamshire.

1.6 We have worked with schools and early education settings to support them in implementing the new SEND Code of Practice. Schools have restructured their internal assessment, teaching and support arrangements from School Action and School Action Plus, to SEN Support. SENDCOs and other school staff play an active role in the process that transfers Statements of SEN to EHC Plans.

1.7 The previous SEND strategy was monitored through the SEND Board – a group of representatives from schools, specialist professional services and parent / carer organisations. The Deputy Cabinet Member for children and young people also attends, reflecting the importance to the Council of understanding and listening to the views of children and young people with SEND and their families, as well as those of local professionals.

1.8 The new SEND strategy spans the period 2017 – 2021. It has been developed following a detailed SEND Review that took place between January and September in 2016.

¹ www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/localoffer

- 1.9 We worked closely with FACT Bucks, the Parent Carer Forum for Buckinghamshire, during the review, and in drafting this strategy. We also listened carefully to what Buckinghamshire SEND IAS (Information, Advice and Support) Service told us about the views of parents and young people who had been in touch with them. We met with head teachers and SENDCOs, professional services who work with children, young people and their families at home and in schools and settings, and read responses to web-based enquiries and comments. This has meant that our Vision has benefited from both widespread and personalised perspectives, allowing it to adaptably address extensive and individual needs.
- 1.10 In October 2016, we consulted widely on our proposals for the building blocks for the new SEND Strategy, and called them Improvement Priorities. This consultation provided an insight into many respondents' personal experiences. Views expressed in the Consultation have contributed to this Strategy.²

² A summary of consultation responses is available from SENDreview@buckscc.gov.uk

Our SEND Strategy for 2017 – 2020 has different sections.

Introduction to the SEND strategy

The Vision

National Context for SEND

Local context for SEND

4 areas of strategic focus

Children, young people and families

Developing provision and supporting schools and settings

Planning ahead

Strategic Leadership and management

7 Improvement Priorities

Improve the experiences of families, children and young people of statutory SEND processes

Develop greater confidence, competence and skills in mainstream settings, schools and academies, providing stronger leadership and support for SENDCOs and others, across schools and settings.

Refocus specialist SEND provision, such as Special Schools and Resourced Provisions, on those children with the most significant and complex SEND.

Improve the co-ordination, leadership, deployment and collaborative working of SEND specialist teaching, advisory and educational psychology services.

Develop and implement improved approaches to planning and securing specialist educational places for those children with the most severe and complex needs.

Strengthen the management of the statutory SEND process and related decision making

Develop improved approaches to monitoring and accountability, especially in relation to the use and impact of High Needs funding in schools and other educational settings

GOVERNANCE AND MONITORING

2 The SEND Vision

2.1 In September 2014, the Children and Families Act became law, and Part 3 of the Act sets out the responsibilities for Local Authorities, schools and health services. Section 19 of the Act sets out the general principles³ that the Council, health services, schools and educational settings must have in regard to their work with children with SEND. These are:

- *the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and the child's parents*
- *the importance of the child or young person, and the child's parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions*
- *the need to support the child or young person, and the child's parents, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood*

2.2 This Vision draws together views expressed during a recent SEND Review and consultation in October 2016 from parents, carers and professionals working with children and their families, incorporating respective personal perspectives and responsibilities. It reflects young people's views. The SEND Vision supports and compliments the Vision of the Children and Young People's Partnership, setting down outcomes that we believe are important for children and young people with SEND.

2.3 We will ensure that all professional staff who work with children and young people with SEND in Buckinghamshire are familiar with our Vision and are expected to take account of it in the part they play, in the lives of children and young people. We recognise that parents and professionals want to work together collaboratively. Despite this, it was noted in the consultation that it doesn't always feel as if this has worked. As such, going forward we hope that parents, carers and young people will be empowered and expect that their experience will be as articulated in the Buckinghamshire SEND Vision.

The Vision

Our Vision for all children and young people with SEND is that they will:

- achieve the best they can
- attend a school or educational setting as close to their home as possible
- be taught and supported by skilled professionals who have high expectations for their progress and learning potential
- enjoy learning, feel valued and be confident
- be actively involved in decisions that affect them
- fulfil their potential as confident adults
- be allocated resources to best effect
-

³ S19 Children & Families Act 2014; Ch 1 SEND Code of Practice (DFE2015)

3. The National Context for SEND

3.1 There is a lot happening in education at the moment. The strategic direction of the Government’s proposals reduces the role of local authorities in education support and provision, but continues the role in delivering assessment, planning and provision for children and young people with SEND.

Statutory responsibilities

3.2 The Council’s responsibilities relate to children and young people with SEND who live in Buckinghamshire. A child is between 0 and compulsory school age. At the end of the academic year in which a child becomes 16 years old, he or she is then known as a young person. This is important because a young person with SEND can make their own decisions about their education (rather than their parents) unless the young person does not have capacity⁴.

Strategic planning responsibilities

3.3 The Council has strategic planning responsibilities, as well as its duties to individual children and young people with SEND. The strategic duties include keeping under review the education, training and social care provision made for disabled children or those with SEN, and making sure that there is sufficient financial provision to meet the needs of children and young people.⁵

3.4 The new Children and Families Act was supported with a new SEND Code of Practice, which explains in detail the different roles and responsibilities of all of those involved in planning for, commissioning, assessing and making provision for children and young people with SEND. There are a large number of state funded organisations that have statutory responsibilities. They are:

| | | |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Local Authorities | NHS Commissioning Board | Hospital education settings |
| NHS Trusts | Health and Wellbeing Boards | NHS foundation trusts |
| SEND Tribunal | Early years education settings | Mainstream Schools |
| Special Schools | Alternative Provision providers | Further education colleges |
| Pupil Referral Units | Independent special schools | Sixth form colleges |
| Academies | Independent specialist colleges & providers | Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) |

3.5 The health service also has statutory responsibilities. Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and NHS Trusts must let the Council know if they believe that a child is disabled and has or probably has SEN⁶. Health, education and

⁴ See Mental Capacity Act 2005

⁵ S27 CC&F Act

⁶ S23 C&F Act

social care managers work together on a Health and Wellbeing Board and ensure that there is coherence in the way that services are commissioned, integrated⁷ and delivered for vulnerable groups of people. This includes children and young people with SEND.

- 3.6 The Children and Families Act 2014 and the Care Act 2014 requires that statutory services in an area will work together co-operatively, including at the transition of young people into adult services. Joint commissioning arrangements must cover services for 0-15 year-old children and young people with SEN or disabilities.
- 3.7 The Council must publish and maintain a Local Offer⁸: information that describes the health, education and social care provision that it expects to be available for children and young people with SEND.

Person Centred approaches

- 3.8 Maintaining a person-centred approach and active engagement of young people with SEND and their parents in their education, and in contributing to decisions that affect their education, all have a significant emphasis in the new national framework for SEND. Local Authorities are expected to develop or co-produce new approaches, policies and plans with parent representatives.
- 3.9 Parent Carer Forums are locally based groups of parents and carers of disabled children who work with local authorities, education settings, health providers and other providers to make sure the services they plan and deliver meet the needs of disabled children and families. They also have responsibilities enabling them to reflect and/or represent the views of parents and carers who they know. SEND Information and Advisory Services (formerly known as Parent Partnership Services), provide independent advice and support to young people and their parents in relation to their education and SEN related matters.

Where do children and young people with SEND go to school?

- 3.10 The Children and Families Act is based on a presumption for mainstream education. In Buckinghamshire, a higher percentage of children go to special school than the national position.
- 3.11 A very small proportion of children and young people have such high needs for support that they need the Local Authority to determine the educational provision they need, by writing down what a school or education setting will do, including the special arrangements. These details are written into an Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan. More information about this is found on the Local Offer site⁹. Nationally 2.8% of the pupil population have EHC Plans. In Buckinghamshire this is 3.1 %.

Education Health and Care (EHC) Plans

⁷ S25,26 C&F Act

⁸ S30 C&F Act

⁹ <https://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/kb5/buckinghamshire/fsd/localoffer.page>

3.12 Many of the legal requirements for statements now apply to EHC Plans but there are some important differences. EHC Plans:

- can be maintained when a young person is in college, or on an apprenticeship or not in education, employment or training
- can continue up to the age of 25 years
- must include enforceable aspects of health and social care arrangements.

3.13 In order to become the subject of an EHC Plan (or a statement prior to September 2014), a child or young person requires an intensity and level of provision that would not normally be available in a mainstream school. Schools must follow a graduated response approach, demonstrating the work they have done with the child and its impact, prior to asking for an EHC assessment. An EHC assessment is typically requested by parents, schools and settings, and if agreed, will usually, but not always, result in an EHC Plan. An EHC Plan leads to the provision of additional funding to a school, whether a mainstream or special school. The additional funding is called “Top-Up” funding and varies according to the provision needs of the child

The SEND Code of Practice

3.14 Schools must have a SENCO. It is a statutory post. Schools must operate a graduated response known as APDR (Assess, Plan, Do, Review). Most children and young people with SEND do not have EHC Plans and a SEN Support and are following a graduated response approach, supported with approaches, interventions and support that are part of the school’s provision for SEND.

3.15 All state funded education providers must have regard to the SEND Code of Practice. In addition to making information available about how they make arrangements for children and young people with SEND, they must show how they make their own arrangements for children and young people with SEND but for who an EHC Plan is not necessary – these are children and young people provided for by the school or setting, and who are at “SEN Support”. Most children with SENDs do not have a statement of SEN or an EHC Plan and are at SEN Support.

3.16 Nationally the population of children at SEN Support is 13.4% of all primary aged pupils and 12.7% of all secondary aged pupils. In Buckinghamshire there are lower percentages than the national position, with 10.5% of primary aged and 8.8% of secondary age pupils¹⁰. The overall % in Buckinghamshire is 8.2% (at January 2016) compared to a national average of 11.6%, and with only 4 local authorities with a smaller proportion of pupils at SEN Support.

¹⁰ SFR29-16(DFE)

- 3.17 A SEND Ofsted / CQC Local Area SEND Inspection¹¹ has commented on a similar scenario, on a shire county with a low, but not as low, SEN support profile¹²:

“The local area identifies relatively low numbers of pupils needing school support for their special educational needs, while identifying relatively high numbers requiring statements or EHC plans. Leaders have rightly identified that this indicates weaknesses in the early identification of special educational needs.”



Buckinghamshire schools identify lower numbers of pupils needing provision at SEN Support than would be expected.

National Inspection Framework

- 3.18 Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC), with local authority officers, are responsible for carrying out Local Area Inspections where they will look at the effectiveness in the area of how new SEND duties are fulfilled. Areas of focus include the experience of parents and young people with SEND and the arrangements that are in place for them, and how children and young people are supported to get the best possible educational and other outcomes.¹³

4. The Local Context

Facts and Figures

- 4.1 In Buckinghamshire, one quarter of the population is under the age of 20. There is less poverty and homelessness than the national average. The health and wellbeing of Buckinghamshire children is better than the England average. The rate of hospital admission for young people under 18 who have self-harmed, has reduced.¹⁴
- 4.2 Changes to the education system nationally are reflected locally. For example, most secondary schools and a small number of primary schools and two special schools are now Academies. The Council, in its role as champion for children, continues to build on established relationships with schools and other education providers to make sure that as changes happen, all Buckinghamshire children and young people have the opportunity to reach their potential.¹⁵
- 4.3 The Children and Young People’s Plan 2014-18 emphasises the need to support children and young people with SEND in its Priority4: “Provide

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-area-send-inspection-outcome-letters>

¹²

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/575666/Joint_local_area_SEND_inspection_in_Surrey.pdf

¹³ The framework for the inspection of local areas’ effectiveness in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities – Ofsted/CQC 2016

¹⁴ Buckinghamshire CYP Plan 2014-18

¹⁵ CYP Plan 2014-18

opportunities for children and young people to realise their full potential'. A strong local relationship with schools and other education providers will be increasingly important not just to raise overall levels of achievement but also to ensure a special focus on those pupils who are underperforming and close the gap between the attainment of all children and those with SEND.

- 4.4 We know that the majority of children and young people with SEND perform academically at a level lower than their peers. So we need to be sure that the progress that all children with SEND make, is their best and that they are receiving the right teaching and following the right curriculum programmes. The move away from national Curriculum levels appears may have created difficulties for parents and at school level in communicating levels of attainment and progress relative to other children.
- 4.5 When requests for EHC assessments are refused, a mediation process is available.

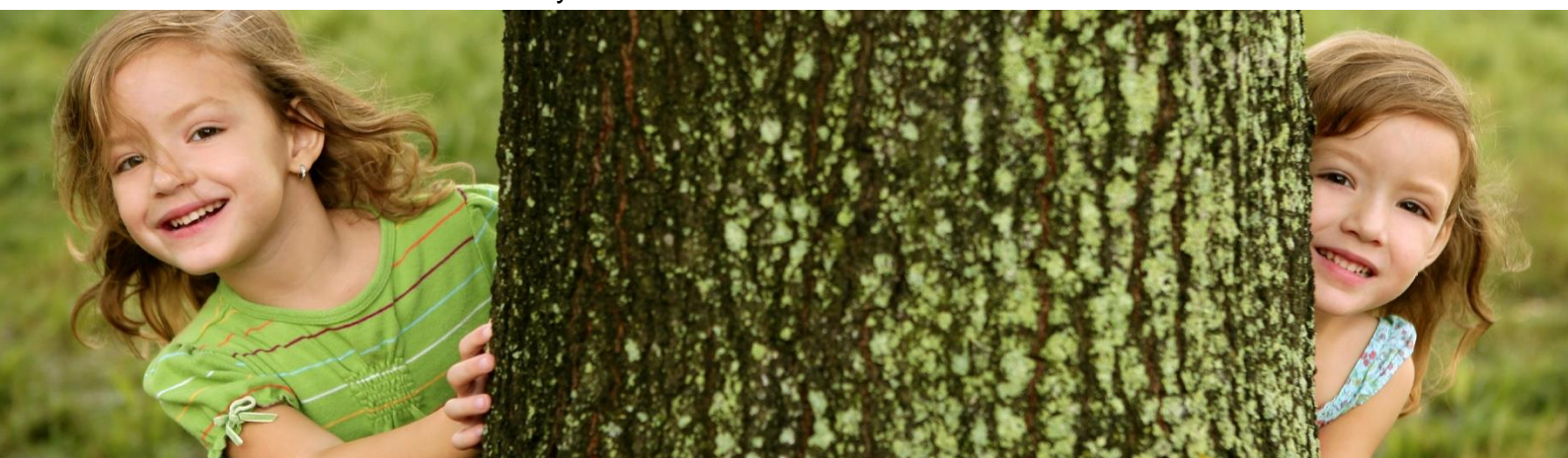
Where do children and young people with SEND go to school?

- 4.6 The SEND Review looked at how specialist SEND services were supporting children and schools. It found that we can do better in our co-ordination of the specialist education support services, and that the services can and should intervene earlier and work with schools to include as many children as possible in their local schools.
- 4.7 The SEND review found that more children who go to school in Buckinghamshire go to special schools than other local authorities. The review did not find a higher level of need in Buckinghamshire than elsewhere.
- 4.8 It also found that twice as many Buckinghamshire children attend special schools in other Local Authority areas, than children from other local authorities who attend Buckinghamshire special schools. So Buckinghamshire has a higher dependency on special schools than would be expected.
- 4.9 In Buckinghamshire, the numbers of children leaving mainstream schools during their school career to attend special schools is increasing – from 84 in school year 2013-14 to 139 in school year 2015-16. Also, the numbers of Buckinghamshire children and young people who are being permanently excluded from their local schools is increasing and most of these are recorded as having special educational needs.
- 4.10 The number of Buckinghamshire children with EHC Plans and statements is bigger than would be expected, and in particular, the number of first time EHC Plans is increasing. Between March 2011 and March 2016, the total number of Buckinghamshire resident children with statements or EHC Plans increased by 12%, when the pupil population increased by 8%.¹⁶ There are 3,355 pupils¹⁷ with statements of SEN or EHC Plans. They do not all go to school in Buckinghamshire.

4.11 The SEND Review found that this unusual profile of the identification of SEND and where children with SEND go to school, was most likely to relate to:

- funding pressures in mainstream schools,
- inconsistent approaches from external specialist input to support SEND in mainstream schools
- lack of parental confidence in the ability of mainstream schools to provide for SEND, and
- an established culture in mainstream schools that children and young people with more complex needs were better placed in special schools.

4.12 Whilst there are more pupils with statements and EHC Plans than would be expected, there are fewer children and young people (7,510)¹⁸ identified at SEN Support. This is where mainstream schools engage external advice and construct personalised programmes for children and young people, so that they can receive targeted interventions and support. Mainstream schools are funded to provide this according to a funding approach that applies to all schools nationally.



4.13 Also, the percentage of the overall population of children with statements and EHC Plans who attend special schools has increased from 41% of all statements in 2013 to 44% of all statements and EHC Plans in 2016.

4.14 More Buckinghamshire resident children and young people with EHC Plans go to school in other authorities, than children and young people who live in those authorities coming to school in Buckinghamshire. This means we have a higher dependency on other local authority schools than they do on Buckinghamshire schools. This can make planning for the future complicated.

4.15 In the Autumn Term of 2016, 187 pupils attended independent special schools. This is 8 more than the year before.

Types of SEND

4.16 The profile of types of SEND and where children with those needs go to school, is also different to most authorities. In Buckinghamshire there is a

lower proportion of children with moderate learning difficulties in mainstream schools and a higher proportion in special schools. This is the opposite to most local authorities and may again suggest a lack of parental and professional confidence in mainstream settings.

Costs and affordability

- 4.17 It usually costs more for a pupil to attend a special school than to attend their local mainstream school, especially when the pupil lives beyond the statutory walking distance and is entitled to transport. It almost always costs more for a pupil to attend an independent special school than a state funded special school. The higher numbers of children with EHC Plans and statements, who attend special schools and the lower numbers in mainstream probably account for the very high spend on specialist provision, which is increasing year on year.
- 4.18 The cost of top-up funding statements and EHC Plans in mainstream schools and settings is also increasing. More recently the amount of extra funding provided to schools and settings for pupils without statements or EHC Plans has also increased significantly, where increasing numbers of individual allocations have been made.
- 4.19 All of this has led to a position where Buckinghamshire spends almost one and a half times more on provision and support for SEND (above the funding that is already in mainstream schools) than the national average. In the past the budget for all schools, known as the Schools Block, has made good recurrent overspends on the High Needs Block. This is no longer possible, and national legislative change is expected to confirm this. The Government has indicated its expectation that all Local Authorities look at this over 2017-18. Buckinghamshire has already done significant work on this through the SEND review which will assist its planning for 2018-19.¹⁹

5. The Future – Strategic Priorities for 2017 - 2020

- 5.1 Following the SEND Review, a consultation took place in October 2016. The results of this have led to a framework of four Strategic Priority areas and seven Improvement Priorities. These are:

| CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES | |
|--|---|
| Priority 1 | Improve the experiences of families, children and young people of the statutory SEND processes. |
| DEVELOPING PROVISION AND SUPPORTING SCHOOLS AND SETTINGS | |
| Priority 2 | Develop greater confidence, competence and skills in mainstream settings, schools and academies, providing stronger leadership and support for SENDCOs and others, across schools and settings. |
| Priority 3 | Refocus specialist SEND provision, such as special schools and Resourced Provisions, on those children with the most significant and complex SEND. |
| Priority | Improve the leadership, co-ordination, deployment and collaborative |

¹⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-needs-strategic-planning-fund>

| | |
|--|---|
| 4 | working of specialist SEND specialist teaching, advisory and educational psychology services. |
| PLANNING AHEAD | |
| Priority 5 | Develop and implement improved approaches to planning and securing specialist educational places for those children with the most significant and complex needs. |
| STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT | |
| Priority 6 | Strengthen the management of the statutory SEND processes and related decision making. |
| Priority 7 | Develop improved approaches to monitoring and accountability, especially in relation to the use and impact of High Needs funding in schools and other educational settings. |
| | |

5.2 The outcomes that we seek are set out under each Improvement Priority. Some activities overlap, and that is why some outcomes appear against more than one Improvement Priority.

5.3 For each Improvement Priority, the way it will be implemented and monitored is through:

- Describing the outcomes we commit to seek
- Explaining how we will monitor progress and performance, through
 - specifying milestones and outputs
 - setting performance indicators

6. Keeping you informed

6.1 The Local Offer web-site will have a page where the SEND Strategy will be published and termly reports of progress will be published. It will be the route for you to ask questions or make suggestions.



Improvement Priority Framework

Improvement Priority 1

Improve the experiences of families, children and young people of statutory SEND processes

The outcomes that we commit to seek are:

1. Children and young people with SEND know they are at the centre of processes that assess their special educational needs and plan their provision.
2. All reviews of their provision and progress involve children and young people directly. This practice will allow for personalised feedback to be incorporated into decision making processes, and will help keep children and young people at the heart of all our SEND policy decisions.
3. Early education settings, schools and colleges will listen carefully to what children and young people at SEN Support and with EHC Plans communicate about their experiences, respecting their personal responsibilities to contribute towards SEND decision making processes.
4. That children and young people who are moving between phases of education will have been supported through collaborative planning between both educational settings and relevant specialist professionals.
5. Professional staff who work to support and advise educational settings, and those who make final decisions that affect the child and young person, will ensure that they understand the views of children and young people, and their parents. This will help empower all involved to fulfil their personal responsibilities towards carrying out SEND policies and contributing towards decision making processes, ensuring the policies remain child, young people and family centred.
6. That professionals will explain processes, procedures and practice clearly and with empathy and patience, including when it may not be possible to provide all that a family hopes for.
7. That professional staff who administer or take part in the statutory SEND process to keep in regular contact with parents and young people who are going through the EHC assessment, planning or review process, and explain what will happen next and when it will happen, and if they can't do it by the expected date, will let them know so that they are not waiting and wondering.

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY 1: EXPECTED IMPACT

The above would lead towards a more personalised service that develops SEND policies that are centred on children, young people and family needs.

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY 2

Develop greater confidence, competence and skills in mainstream settings, schools and academies, providing stronger leadership and support for SENDCOs and others, across schools and settings.

The outcomes that we commit to seek are:

1. The majority of children and young people with SEND are fully included into their mainstream school or settings.
2. All mainstream schools, early education settings and colleges of further education provide high quality assessment, planning, review processes and teaching for children and young people at SEN Support ensuring they are effectively identifying children and rigorously putting strategies, support and interventions into place.
3. Mainstream schools and colleges of further education undertake a self-review of their arrangements for SEND, using an approach validated by the Local Authority and supported with comparative data from the LA.
4. A SENDCO support programme will be put in place, and will reach every SENDCO in Buckinghamshire, preparing a County wide programme of mentor and training support.
5. SENDCOs know where they can go for specialist support and advice, and that this will be high quality, and available within specified timeframes.
6. Every school and setting will be able to plan their SEND priorities for support on an annual basis through one co-ordinated dialogue or meeting with representatives from specialist support services.
7. Children and young people with moderate learning difficulties will increasingly have their needs met in their local mainstream school or college of further education.
8. There will be opportunities for special schools and mainstream schools to work together to sustain mainstream placements.
9. Parents and carers will have increased confidence in mainstream schools and local colleges of further education for meeting their personalised special educational needs of their children and young people. This will help ensure each teaching and learning establishment provides an individualised approach

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY 2: EXPECTED IMPACT

The above would lead towards the establishment of greater accountability regarding decision making, and stronger relationships between schools and their stakeholders, including parents.

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY 3

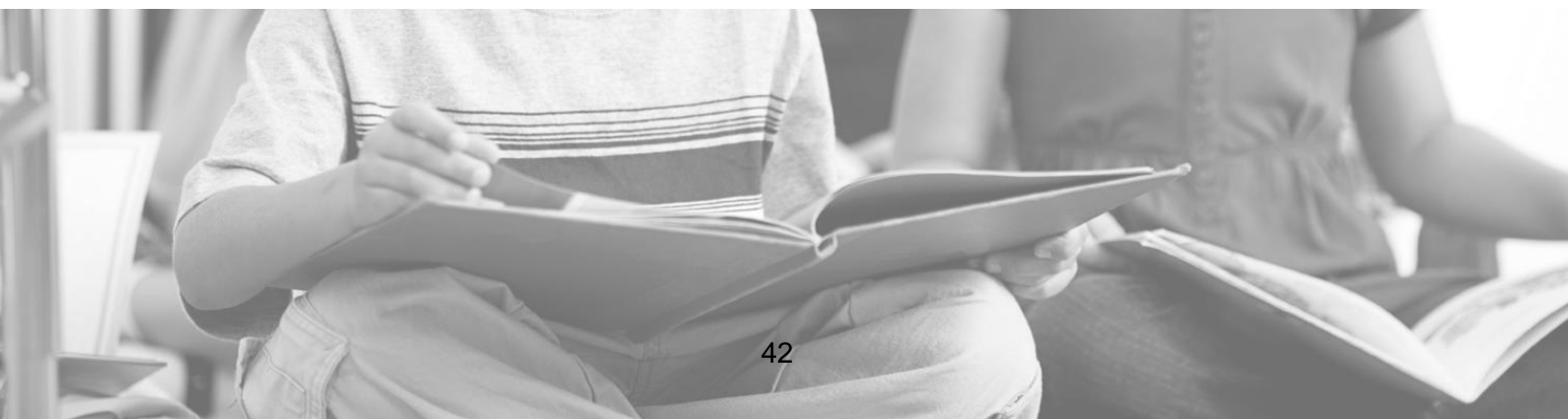
Refocus specialist SEND provision, such as Special Schools and Resourced Provisions, on those children with the most significant and complex SEND.

The outcomes that we commit to seek are:

1. The number of specialist places that are commissioned each year from special schools, special academies and resourced provisions, will match with predicted placement needs.
2. Mainstream schools, early education settings and colleges of further education can deliver integrated SEND provision where the work of therapists, psychologists, specialist teachers and others is effectively co-ordinated and effectively used for those children and young people whose programmes require it.
3. Specialist SEND staff and advice from special schools will enable the development of improved provision for pupils with moderate learning difficulties in mainstream schools and colleges of further education.
4. The range of complexity and severity of need currently provided for in some, but not all, special schools, will include children and young people who are currently placed in the non-maintained or independent special school sector.
5. The future of boarding provision within two Buckinghamshire special schools, and the use of boarding provision in out of county provision will be reviewed, and a related plan put in place for the future.
6. An audit of facilities and staff experience and qualification in resourced provisions will take place.
7. Termly meetings / structured conversations, take place between a nominated local authority lead officer or professional with each resourced provision.
8. A reducing dependency on non-maintained and independent special schools and colleges.

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY 3: EXPECTED IMPACT

The above would lead towards a more financially sustainable service that has a personalised approach towards addressing the requirements of children and young people most in need.



IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY 4

Improve the co-ordination, leadership, deployment and collaborative working of SEND specialist teaching, advisory and educational psychology services.

The outcomes that we commit to seek are:

1. Improved co-ordination and leadership is put in place across the full range of SEND support services that support and advise mainstream and special schools.
2. SEND support services are available for all children with and without statements or EHC Plans.
3. A "Support around the School" approach is developed so that a more transparent and coherent service is experienced by schools and settings, and so that the targeting and impact of additional resources better managed.
4. A robust structure for identifying schools and settings that need targeted improvement support for SEND, is put in place.
5. Specialist support services can demonstrate enhanced skills and competences, so that their advice, guidance and intervention adds value to the current position in the school.
6. Earlier intervention will avoid escalation of difficulties, including transfers to independent schools, exclusions, placement breakdown and school refusal.
7. A more effective integration of the role and priorities of specialist teaching services with the Local Authority's statutory SEND responsibilities is put in place, so that any related perverse incentive for EHC assessment is removed.
8. The role and contribution of special schools is explored as part of the cross county approach to increase the capacity of mainstream schools and settings for SEND.
9. There will be continuity in the provision of specialist support and advice to children and young people as they move through their early education, to school and then to College or other post 16 options.

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY 4: EXPECTED IMPACT

The above would lead towards a more financially sustainable service that has a more personalised approach towards addressing the requirements of children and young people most in need.

PLANNING AHEAD

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY 5

Develop and implement improved approaches to planning and securing specialist educational places for those children with the most severe and complex needs.

The outcomes that we commit to seek are:

1. A dedicated workstream will drive a rolling five year specialist place planning strategy that will forecast numbers; monitor and explore trends and develop systems that link:
 - SEND assessment numbers
 - SEND placements
 - Specialist place availability
 - Post 16 course planning
 - SEND type
 - Year cohort information
 - Place costs
 - Top-up costs
 - Transport costs, including effective management of demand for transport
 - Decision making on the statutory SEND process
2. Higher cost provision will be targeted on those children and young people with the most significant and complex needs.
3. Through continuing commissioning dialogue and case discussion, health, social care and education services will work collaboratively to create and enable local solutions for children and young people with the most significant and complex needs.
4. Improved support to schools and settings will reduce placement fragility and build confidence and skills.
5. Those children and young people who attend school a long way from Buckinghamshire, or outside the public sector, are closely monitored with at least annual visits to check on the provision made by the school, its impact and its value for money.
6. Through proactive planning, post 16 courses at pre-entry, entry level and level 1 will be available for those young people who need them, in a location local to their home, and which will include internships and pathways to employability programmes.

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY 5: EXPECTED IMPACT

The above would lead towards a more financially sustainable service that has a more personalised approach towards addressing the requirements of children and young people most in need.

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY 6

Strengthen the management of the statutory SEND process and related decision making

The outcomes that we commit to seek are:

1. Parents and carers, and other professionals develop increased confidence about the management of SEND casework and the way in which decisions are made.
2. EHC Plans are issued on time, including those that must be finalised at specific times in years of transition from one phase of education to another.
3. EHC assessments are completed on time, and Annual Review decisions are issued on time.
4. There is a personal discussion between the SEND officer and the parents and carers of every child for whom an EHC assessment is requested.
5. Correspondence with parents, carers and young people is improved, so that where a decision is that an EHC assessment will not take place, or a place in the preferred school is not confirmed, the reasons for the decision will be carefully recorded and explained to the parent and young person.
6. When requests for EHC assessments are refused, a mediation process is available.
7. Parents report a positive experience of their contact with the central SEND team, know the name of their nominated SEND officer and know how to contact them.
8. The content of draft EHC Plans is agreed by the majority of parents and young people.
9. Social care and health information is submitted on time during an EHC assessment or as part of an annual review.
10. Decision making on all aspects of the statutory SEND process is robust, consistent, moderated with stakeholders and explained to parents, carers and young people. Within this, individual decisions are linked to affordability and financial plans, in recognition of BCC's budgetary responsibilities within this area.

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY 6: EXPECTED IMPACT

The above would lead towards a more transparent, robust, and firm decision making process.

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY 7

Develop improved approaches to monitoring and accountability, especially in relation to the use and impact of High Needs funding in schools and other educational settings

The outcomes that we commit to seek are:

1. The financial impact of decisions does not lead to an overspend on the High Needs budget.
2. All schools and settings can demonstrate the use and impact of their funding for SEND, including national SEN funding in mainstream settings.
3. There is a reduction in the allocations of High Needs funding to schools, for pupils without statements or EHC Plans.
4. An annual series of sample audits takes place, to explore the use of SEN Funding in:
 - a. mainstream schools
 - b. special schools
 - c. alternative provision
 - d. early education settings
 - e. colleges of further education
5. A review takes place of the way in which top-up values are allocated, to consider approaches that would:
 - a. move away from describing top-ups for mainstream by teaching assistant hours,
 - b. reduce the number of top-up bands to create more stability, less bureaucracy and more flexibility at school / setting level
 - c. allocate funding values that are compatible with salary ranges in different types of settings
6. A review takes place of approaches that allocate enhanced pupil level funding to schools for pupils without EHC Plans, undertaking a thorough audit of a sample of schools and settings.
7. Consideration is given to an approach that simplifies the banding system for Top-Up funding to mainstream and special schools.
8. Regular feedback to school leaders and Schools Forum on the actual and potential financial impact of placement trends and pressures, by phase, geographical area and a short analysis of case features.
9. Termly reports to the Schools Forum and SEND Board on predicted spend against the High Needs Budget.

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY 7: EXPECTED IMPACT

The above would lead towards the establishment of a more integrated approach to the management of the SEND budget, where possible.

Glossary of Terms

| | |
|---|---|
| APDR | Assess, Plan, Do, Review – a continuing cycle of assessment, planning, review and doing (action) that schools and settings must show before considering seeking extra help through an EHC assessment. |
| Buckinghamshire Children and Young People's Partnership | The Children and Young People's Partnership is made up of the Children and Young People's Joint Executive Team supported by three Local Children and Young People's Partnership Boards which operate across the District Council boundaries, with Chiltern and South Bucks combined. Its purpose is to bring agencies together so that they communicate better, jointly plan, commission, deliver and improve services for children, young people and families in Buckinghamshire |
| CCGs | Clinical Commissioning Groups – created in 2013, replacing primary care trusts and are clinically-led statutory NHS bodies responsible for the planning and commissioning of health care services for their local area. |
| Children and Families Act | Part 3 of the Act sets out the responsibilities for Local Authorities, schools and health services in relation to SEND. Section 19 of the Act sets out the general principles that the Council, health services, schools and educational settings must have regard to in their work with children with SEND. |
| CQC | Care Quality Commission - The independent regulator of all health and social care services in England. The Care Quality Commission monitors, inspects and regulates hospitals and care services. |
| EHC (Education Health and Care) assessment | An assessment of the educational, health and social care needs of a child or young person, where there is evidence that special educational provision may be necessary to be made at a level that is over and above what a school or setting can provide. |
| EHC (Education Health and Care) Plan | A legal document that describes a child or young person's special educational, health and social care needs. It explains the extra help that will be given to meet those needs and how that help will support the child or young person to achieve what they want to in their life. It is where the child or young person needs provision that cannot be met by what is usually available in a setting, school or college. |
| FACT Bucks | Families and Carers together in Buckinghamshire – the Parent Carer Forum for Buckinghamshire. It makes sure your views and concerns are heard by those who plan and manage the services you and your child or young person relies on. It used to be known as the Parent Consultative Group (PCG). www.factbucks.org.uk |
| High Needs funding | The high needs funding system supports provision for pupils and students with SEN and disabilities (SEND), from their early years to 25. It is intended to provide support packages for pupils and students special educational needs (SEN) in a range of settings, taking account of parental and student choice, whilst avoiding perverse incentives to over identify high needs pupils and students. The funding is allocated to schools, settings and colleges, with some being available for personal budgets where appropriate and agreed. It provides for the cost of a place in a specialist setting as well as the pupil related "top-up" allocation for pupils with statements and/or EHC Plans. It can be used, exceptionally, for pupils with high needs for whom an EHC Plan has not been issued. (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-needs-funding-arrangements-2016-to-2017/high-needs-funding-2016-to-2017) |
| Improvement Priority | One of 7 areas for attention in the next 3 years of the SEND Strategy. Each Improvement Priority is supported with outcomes, outputs and actions and performance indicators to monitor progress and success. |
| LDA | A Learning Difficulty Assessment – a plan for learning provided for school leavers with SENs who may have had a statement of SEN. Some students who have been the subject of an LDA may be issued with an EHC Plan. |

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Local Offer | The LA must publish information of about all the services and support it expects to be available for children and young people with SEN and/or a disability for whom it is responsible. This must include details of any schools, colleges or services both within Buckinghamshire and across the borders, that the LA might use or expect to be available for those children or young people. It includes services from health, social care, the voluntary sector and others, as well as information on transport and on support for preparing for adulthood and independent living. |
| Ofsted | Office for Standards in Education – regulates and inspects services that care for children and young people and services providing education and skills for learners of all ages. |
| SEN Support | A level of intervention and support where schools and settings make their own arrangements from children and young people with SEND from within their own budgets and resources. |
| SEND | Special Educational Needs and Disabilities |
| SEND Board | A group of representatives from schools, specialist professional services and parent / carer organisations and an Elected Member, who provide stakeholder contribution to the monitoring of the SEND Strategy and advice and comment on a range of other SEND related matters. |
| SEND Code of Practice | Statutory guidance to which all those professionals, parents, young people and others must have regard when considering the special educational needs and provision of children and young people. |
| SEND IAS | Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service - formerly known as Parent Partnership Services), provide independent advice and support to young people and their parents in relation to their education and SEN related matters |
| SEND Reforms | Changes introduced by Part 3 of the 2014 Children and Families Act. |
| SENDSCO | Special educational needs and disability Co-ordinator. (A preferred terminology in Buckinghamshire from the previous SENCO). Most SENDCOs are required to have undertaken and passed the National SENCO award. |
| Statements of SEN | An earlier version of the EHC Plan, but where the entire focus was education and there was no statutory aspect to the inclusion of health and social care needs and provision. Statements are being transferred to EHC Plans for the majority of pupils. |
| Top-up funding | A pupil level financial allocation to the school or setting, or through personal budget for defined educational provision - mostly for pupils with EHC Plans or statements, that supplements the level of resources already in the school or setting and enables provision specified by the Local Authority to be delivered. |
| Tribunal | Part of the First Tier Education, Health and Social Care Chamber, and part of Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service. Hears appeals against some decisions made by the Local Authority. |

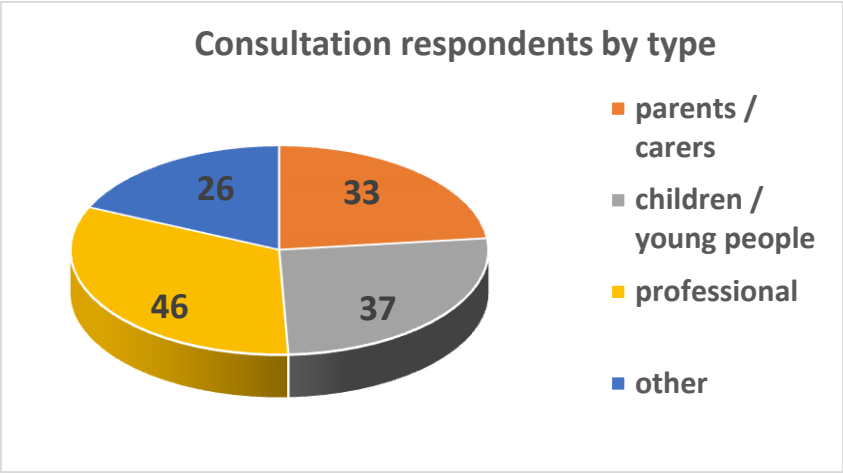
SEND REVIEW – FROM CONSULTATION RESPONSES TO SEND STRATEGY

Introduction

1. Following a review into aspects of provision and arrangements for SEND in Buckinghamshire, whose purpose was to identify priorities for the SEND strategy for the period 2017 – 2020, a consultation took place on the draft priorities for improvement that emerged from the SEND Review.
2. The process of the review itself was consultative, engaging in a continuing iterative dialogue with a range of stakeholders, throughout which common issues, concerns and priorities were identified. A series of Interim Feedback Seminars outlined key findings of the review and asked stakeholders to consider the implications for the future development of strategic priorities. A diagram setting out the process of the Review can be found at paragraph 54.
3. A schedule of Stakeholder Engagement is included at the end of this report.
4. In October a consultation was started where views were sought on a framework of 8 Improvement Priorities, a draft Vision Statement and with an opportunity to make related comments.
5. This report:
 - Analyses consultation responses
 - Highlights themes in consultation responses
 - Proposes an updated Vision Statement (paragraph 28)
 - Sets out the next steps in moving from Review findings, to Improvement Priorities to an SEND Strategy and action plan. (paragraph 29 provides a diagram of this)

Who responded to the Consultation?

6. Comments were sought through a web-based response portal, where individuals were able to complete a survey form on-line, or to download it, complete it and respond by email. Others used the consultation questions and made written responses. All responses, including a number that were received after the deadline, were accepted and analysed within the structure of questions. Where individuals did not stick to the given structure, every attempt was made to factor their comments into the analysis of responses.
7. 142 separate individuals made whole or partial responses to the consultation questions. They were asked to identify whether they were parents / carers, young people, professionals or “other”. Those who described themselves as other included school governors, parent support group co-ordinators, service providers and a business charity. It appears from the consultation responses that most parents have children or young people with statements of SEND or EHC Plans and that most of these attend special schools . In January 2016 there were 3,353 Buckinghamshire resident children and young people with statements and EHC Plans and so the parental response is 0.1%. However, SENDIAS and FACT Bucks (the Parent Carer Forum) who responded, are able to reflect and/ or represent the views of parents and carers who they know.



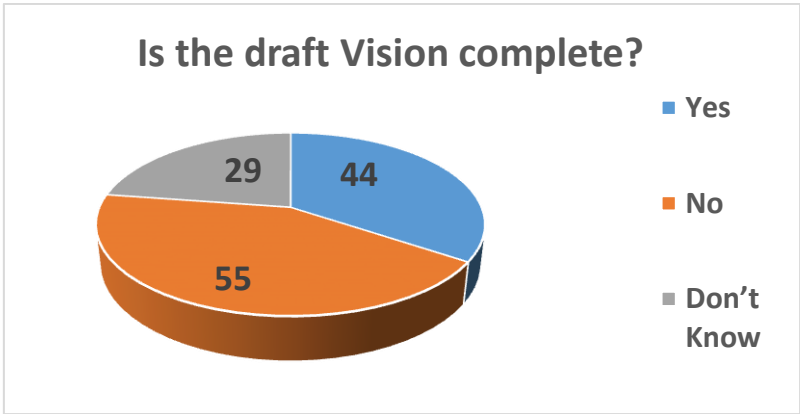
Is the draft Vision complete?

- 8. A draft Vision was included in the consultation to seek comments. It was drafted to take account of the aspirations of many of the stakeholders who had contributed to the Review.:

Our vision for the future for Buckinghamshire children with SEN and disabilities, is that they will:

- Be able to attend their local early education setting, school and college, and develop as an included and integrated member of their local community
- Follow a smooth pathway through their education, supported by teachers and others with expertise and confidence and who will have high expectations of their learning potential
- Be supported and assessed by high quality professionals who listen carefully to their views, and those of their parents, and involve them in decisions about their lives and learning
- Receive a well-planned, complete and appropriately individualised education
- Be happy, feel confident, feel welcome and valued at school and make the best progress possible
- Be successful as an adult, living independently or with support, and engaging in purposeful and rewarding activity, in employment, positive and voluntary activities or work experience

- 9. Comments were sought on whether or not this draft Vision was complete, with respondents being asked to say if they agreed, disagreed or didn't know. 128 respondents commented as below:



10. 26 individual respondents made suggestions for alternative text. 19 of these were emails and within the emails there was a series of responses with identical or almost identical text. Some proposed a shorter, sharper statement. Others preferred something longer and more descriptive. 60 of the 128 made suggestions for how the Vision could be improved. There was a small collection of duplicate responses that proposed *“Be able to attend the early education setting, school or college that it best able to support their needs.”* A Parent Advice service proposed a focus on the principles of section 19 of the Children and Families Act. The young people’s responses also made suggestions about important words and emphasis.
11. Inevitably, respondents’ comments on the draft Vision provided an insight into many of their personal experiences. Some of the same suggestions and comments were extended into their comments about the priorities.
12. One respondent said that the draft Vision lacked aspirations for disabled children. Another felt that there should be reference to a shift in attitudes of professionals. A recurrent theme of *“what does severe and complex mean”* arose in responses about the Vision (although it is not a phrase in the draft vision), where some parents in particular were concerned that the Vision would focus on those with the most severe needs at the expense of those with less severe needs.
13. Some respondents were concerned about the interpretation of *“local community”* preferring to use the word *“appropriate”* rather than *“local”*. Others wanted to use *“most appropriate”* and *“nearest appropriate”*. One respondent proposed *“Be able to attend the early education setting, school or college that it best able to support their needs.”* One group of young people with SEND expressed concerns that they might not have been able to attend their local college, as well as saying that they wanted to be directly involved in decision making.
14. Decision making was commented by other (adult) respondents who felt that being listened to and being involved in decision making was not enough, and that they should jointly make the decision.
15. There were comments about the concept of young adults with SEND being successful, with this being challenged as an inappropriate concept, and that it should be replaced with *“fulfilling their potential”* or *“reaching their potential”*. Another respondent felt that the Vision was too simplistic for the reality and parents and carers, explaining that *“many know that their children and young people cannot achieve these ambitions however well meant.”* proposed that the Vision should reflect the aspirations of the Children and Families Act and say *“...that they will have the opportunity to enjoy as normal life as possible.”*, and that the approach would *“...minimize the effect of their special educational needs and disabilities”* ... with a focus of working with children and families to *“.. discern aspirational outcomes in each case”*. The young people’s responses showed that being a successful adult was important for those young people both with and without SEND.
16. One respondent felt that the Vision did not take into account that the culture in education in Buckinghamshire might not want to change to support the Vision, and felt that the Vision could usefully talk about directly tackling a cultural position in mainstream that is *“more inclined to expel special needs children rather than use limited resources on ‘expensive’ ‘difficult’ children.”* There were a number of expressions of low confidence in mainstream

schools from parents and professionals. The young people from the mainstream school did not express any lack of confidence in their school.

17. Many respondents found it hard to comment on the Vision without exploring the steps towards achieving it, with one saying the Vision should be directly linked to SMART targets. Another respondent said the Vision needed to include more practical considerations and that *“As it stands it is a series of platitudes with no significance”*. The same respondent felt that the Vision should make specific reference to ages, in particular post 16 and post 18 and that there should be an explicit reference to financial parameters.
18. One respondent felt that there should have been a detailed report to accompany the consultation in order that the connection between the large amount of data and information collected by the review could be connected with the Vision. Another said that the consultation should be about a Plan, not a Vision.

A group of young people from Princes Risborough School

19. A group of young people who attend an Upper School in Buckinghamshire, but who do not have SEND, commented on the draft Vision. They felt that the best way to help disabled young people is to support them reach their goals, and that these could be whatever the young person wanted their goals to be. Another young person felt that there needs to be more work to help SEND young people fit in with everybody else, and discussed the need for more work to stop the stereotypes of disabled people, and that this may need more education and awareness for people.
20. One young person explained that their brother has Autism and they felt that he is treated differently because of his disability, however he is very able and doesn't want to be treated any differently. The young person said that if people had a better understanding of the disability then it would help young people with SEND fit in better in the community.

Aylesbury College – students with SEND

21. The young people at Aylesbury College said they would have been upset if they could not have attended their local college. They commented on the importance of their teachers in helping them to move from one educational setting to another, and spoke passionately about the need to make their own decisions. The group felt that an individualised education was very important to them and described how the teaching and learning establishment needs to make variations to meet their individual needs.
22. In talking about the word “happy”, they said that they are not happy every day for lots of reasons but that was acceptable. They agreed that it is more important to be comfortable and safe in their surroundings and that feeling welcomed and valued would help their self-development.

23. When discussing being successful as an adult, the young people felt that this could be split into 2 different visions – one for living independently and one for employment. One student said that they like to be respected and treated like an adult, and the encouragement to be more employable helps her to do that. Another student felt that it was more important to be ready for work than living independently.
24. When asked to consider the draft vision, the responses of the two groups of students had areas of similarity and difference. Each group of young people was supported to apply measures of importance to each bullet point in the Draft Vision. 6 is very important. 1 is not important. One group assigned numbers. The other allocated low, medium and high priorities. The chart below aims to show areas of commonality. The third group of young people focused on the Priority Framework and did not comment on the Vision.

| Bullet Point | | Group with no SEND | Group with SEND |
|--------------|--|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Local education setting, integrated member of local community | 3 | 5 |
| 2 | Smooth pathway through education | 4 | 4 |
| 3 | High quality professionals who listen and involve them in decisions | 3 | 6 |
| 4 | Well planned, complete & individualised education | 3 | 6 |
| 5 | Be happy, confident, felt valued and welcome and make the best progress possible | 5 | 5 |
| 6 | Be successful as an adult | 6 | 5 to 6 |

25. Both groups of young people gave similar importance to Bullet points 2 (smooth pathway through education); Bullet Point 5 (Be happy, confident etc) and Bullet Point 6 (Be successful as an adult).

Proposal for Vision

26. It is clear from consultation responses that there are many different views about the detail that a Vision Statement should include. The SEND Strategy should set the context for the Vision, and explain its purpose: to be aspirational, include statements of value, and include an indication of time frame.
27. Definitions of and commentary about a Vision Statement have been included below, because there were a range of different interpretations of what a Vision statement should be, in the consultation responses. Three definitions are:

“An aspirational description of what an organization would like to achieve or accomplish in the mid-term or long-term future. It is intended to serve as a clear guide for choosing current and future courses of action.” www.businessdictionary.com

“A vision statement can be as simple as a single sentence or can span a short paragraph. Regardless of the individual details and nuances, all effective vision statements define the core ideals that give a business shape and direction.” www.businessnewsdaily.com (April 16)

“A vision statement, or simply a vision, is a public declaration that schools or other educational organizations use to describe their high-level goals for the future—what they hope to achieve if they successfully fulfil their organizational purpose or mission. A vision statement may describe a school’s loftiest ideals, its core organizational values, its long-term objectives, or what it hopes its students will learn or be capable of doing after graduating.

Generally speaking, a vision statement expresses a hoped-for future reality, while a mission statement declares the practical commitments and actions that a school believes are needed to achieve its vision. While a vision statement describes the end goal—the change sought by a school—a mission statement may describe its broad academic and operational assurances, as well as its commitment to its students and community.” www.edglossary.org – glossary for educational reform

28. It is proposed that the Vision Statement should be sharper, shorter, aspirational with a more well defined and explained link between the building blocks for the future – the Improvement Priorities. The Strategy should then expand the Vision into actions and emphasis, with an indication of time frame and performance measures.(see paragraph 29)

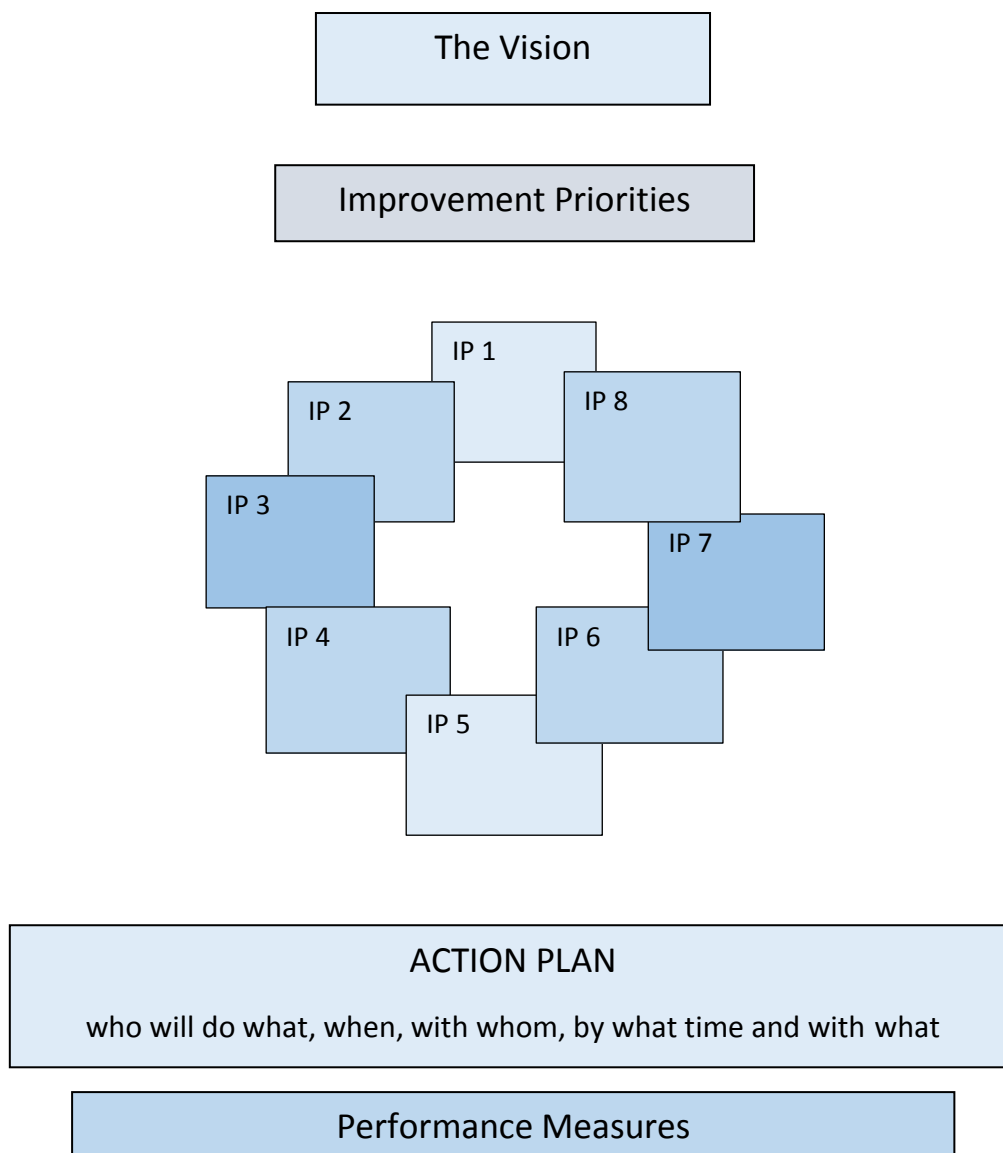
Proposed amended Draft Vision

Our vision is that all our children and young people with SEND will:

- achieve the very best they can*
- attend a school or educational setting as close to their home as possible*
- be taught and supported by skilled professionals who have high expectations for their progress and learning potential*
- enjoy learning, feel valued and be confident*
- be actively involved in decisions that affect them*
- fulfil their potential as confident adults in their chosen community*

Framework for the SEND Strategy

29. The Improvement Priorities would then develop from the Vision in the following way, thus providing the framework for the SEND Strategy.



Improvement Priorities

30. All respondents were asked to answer whether they agreed that the 8 Priorities covered the most important things that we needed to improve. 75 people responded to this question.
31. Respondents were then asked if they had any suggestions for Priorities that may have been missed. Not all respondents responded to this, but where they did, the following were common themes:
- Explicit reference to early years and Colleges of further education, as well as schools.

- b. The integration of a graduated response across all services so that families and professionals are clearer about what is delivered by which service and when
- c. Strategic leadership of the whole SEN area
- d. Investment in preventative work
- e. Accountability of those organisations that receive funding, for its use and related outcomes
- f. Bringing disparate organisations and systems together

Delivering the Improvement Priorities

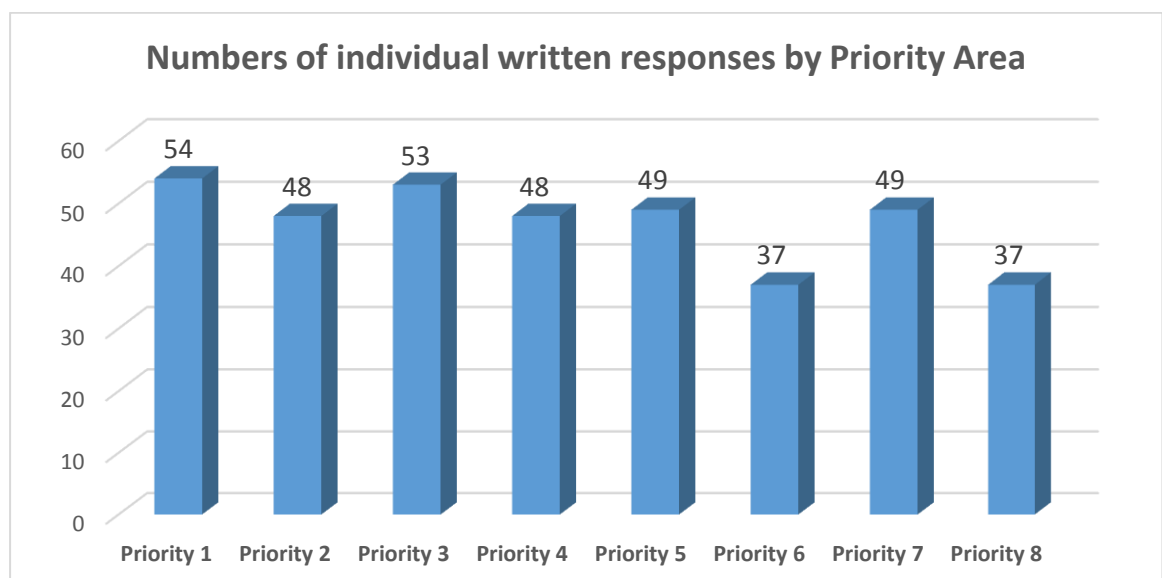
32. 56 responses were received to the question “How do you think we could deliver the priorities?”. Comments and suggestions ranged from “don’t know” or “show me your plans and I’ll comment...” to those seeing increased funding for schools as the answer. Some suggested reducing waiting times for external specialists, or making traded support services no-cost. A number of respondents referred to the need for better training for mainstream schools and SENCOs, with others seeing collaborative working with a range of specialists as important.

33. Making better use by the local authority of the Parent Carer Forum, SENDIAS and working with parents and other parent groups was proposed, with one respondent asking what plans the Council had to create a SENDIAS service, and others suggesting the convening of parent groups to discuss issues and concerns. Openness and transparency was a common theme across some responses.

34. A strong theme was collaboration in moving forward. Some respondents wanted the Local Authority to be more directive in their approach with schools and governing bodies, setting out their duties and responsibilities, with an emphasis on financial accountability.

Comments on Individual Priorities

35. Respondents were asked to comment on each improvement priority. The numbers of responses by each Priority varied.



36. A group of young people with SEND who attend Alfriston Special Academy commented on the Improvement Priorities. They indicated which words in the Improvement Priorities were most important to them and gave some ideas for related action.

37. The words that they chose to help them in their discussions were:

Words identified as important by 12 young people from Alfriston Special Academy

| Priority | | | | |
|----------|--|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Enhance | Families | Young people | |
| 2 | Greater confidence, competence, skills | Leadership | Schools | |
| 3 | Special schools | Resourced provision | children | Complex SEND |
| 4 | Leadership | Co-ordination | Collaborative working | |
| 5 | Educational | Significant | complex | |
| 6 | Strengthen | Statutory | SEND | |
| 7 | High Needs | Educational | settings | |
| 8 | Understanding | relationship | | |

38. The young people made a number of comments that are important in relation to progressing action arising from the review:

- a. Young people should help other young people because they can give advice and support
- b. Most mainstream settings, including colleges, do not have the skills that a special school has
- c. Everyone has a right to education, even if you need 1:1 support
- d. There needs to be someone good in charge, who gets involved and understands them, rather than someone who sits in an office making decisions
- e. People who work in SEND need to be patient and skilled
- f. There was a difference in opinion in the group on whether or not a specialist college was needed to get the right level of skills in the staff, or whether a department in a mainstream college is a positive thing and the young person wouldn't be labelled
- g. The young people realised that it was important to know what High Needs funding was spent on as there was not endless funding available

39. Comments on each priority follow. The comments lent themselves to recording under separate headings, particularly as many respondents however pursued the same theme across each priority. The headings used to organise Priority by Priority responses are:

- Local authority leadership and oversight
- Communication and clarification
- A person centred approach
- The statutory process
- Children and young people

- Supporting parents
- Training
- Schools and settings
- Financial matters

40. Many of the comments made by respondents indicate those areas that they are worried about, or have experienced a scenario that they have found difficult, or been involved in a process that was unsatisfactory for them or have received a decision that they did not agree with or feel they were not fully involved in. It is important to ensure these concerns are taken account of in the development of Performance Indicators that will help to monitor the impact and success of the new Strategy.

Priority 1

Enhance the experience of families, children and young people of the statutory SEND processes

41. All respondents who commented agreed with this priority. Some specific suggestions and comments were made:

Local authority leadership and oversight

- This should be the key priority.
- Effective strategic leadership is needed and it should encompass all areas of SEND.
- An approach to systematic measurement of success is needed
- Keep the Local Offer up to date

Communication and clarification

- We need to understand what “*Enhance*” looks like – perhaps use the word “*improve*” instead.
- Jargon free language please.
- Can SEND officers be better at communicating with parents?

A person centred approach

- Parents also need to understand the process, and should not need to chase for information.
- Ensure parents are kept informed
- Adopt a caring, active listening approach in meetings

Children and young people

- Young people should be able to help and support other young people

The statutory process

- A realistic timetable of actions is needed, with only exceptional reasons meaning timescales are missed.
- Offer meeting to all parents for each EHC assessments

Supporting parents

- Approaches to support networking between parents would help.
- Support and work with the PCF (FACT Bucks)

Training

- Increased training for mainstream schools is a must, with a focus on early identification and intervention for early signs of SEND.
- Local Authority staff need to be trained as well as SENCOs

Schools and settings

- SENCOs are vital and need supporting.
- They need to be giving the same messages as SEN Officers.
- SENCOs can falsely raise parents hopes by suggesting independent provision or other high cost provision that the LA would not support

Priority 2

Develop greater confidence, competence and skills in mainstream settings, schools and academies, providing stronger leadership and support for SENCOs and others, across schools and settings.

42. There was agreement from all respondents with some supplementary and explanatory comments:

Local authority leadership and oversight

- There needs to be a minimum provision guarantee from mainstream schools that is developed and agreed between schools and the LA.
- Does the LA have any “teeth” where provision in mainstream schools is inadequate
- Need a link EP to each school and setting
- Recruitment and retention is an enormous issue – specialist provision should be used to support mainstream

Children and Young People

- People who work in SEND need to be patient and skilled
- Sometimes you get “labelled” if you go to a special school or college
- Mainstream settings do not have the skills that a special school has
-

Schools and settings

- SENCOs should be on school leadership teams
- Mainstream schools do not have the skills and/or adequate provision for the needs now present in mainstream schools
- Colleges do not have the skills that a special school has
- No practical support available to support SENCOs
- Difficult experiences with mainstream schools, including being encouraged to keep the child or young person at home
- Need to focus on early intervention and early education settings

Training

- Encourage and develop SENCO CPD
- Target SENDCOs who are new to Buckinghamshire for support.
- More training is key – using those with disabilities themselves is commended

Priority 3

Refocus specialist SEND provision, such as Special Schools and Resourced Provisions, on those children with the most significant and complex SEND.

43. There was broad agreement across all respondents that specialist provision was needed. Some respondents expressed a lack of confidence in mainstream schools and expressed their concerns about the vulnerability of children with SEND and a consequent incompatibility with mainstream education. Others felt that a greater clarity on which children should go to special schools and which should not, was needed. Others asked if Buckinghamshire needed all of the current specialist provision, and whether or not some specialist provision could close with a movement of children from special school to mainstream. Comments showed polarised views. Experiences seemed to be different. One respondent proposed the creation of an *“interdependence between mainstream and special schools with appropriate funding.”*

Local authority leadership and oversight

- The priority is clear and unambiguous
- A review of ARPs may be helpful
- Specialist provision must be fairly and equitably distributed between all children in accordance with their needs

Communication and clarification

- What does significant and complex mean?
- Proposal to change the words in the Priority to *“Focus on quality in specialist SEND provision, such as special schools and resourced provisions to meet the needs of the children who need it.”*

A person centred approach

- You have to treat each case as an individual case so you can support them efficiently
- We moved to Buckinghamshire to get our child a place in special school. She was unhappy in mainstream school and has flourished in special school.
- It is not enough to be listened to and be involved in making the decision – we want to jointly make the decision about what school.

The statutory process

- Those with additional needs may be denied access to specialist placements
- Parents are sourcing private diagnoses to present evidence to the LA for their EHC assessments

- Decision making on placement should involve health and social care professionals – very often it is the package of therapy and specialist support that is being sought
- Faster and accurate placement of children with SEND will avoid a later wastage of resources on children incorrectly or late diagnosed.
- A more efficient process of approving EHCPs, which is aligned to what happens in other comparable LAs, needs to be developed.

Children and Young People

- Children with MLD need the specialist provision in a special school
- There are already too many children in mainstream schools that cannot cope
- Worries that children with SEND in mainstream will be subject to bullying and abuse.
- A move to increase placement of children with SEND in mainstream schools would compromise the safety focus of the Children and Young People’s Plan
- Children are in special because they have failed to thrive in mainstream
- Some children and young people can’t cope with the physical environment of a busy mainstream school
- We already have too many children with anxiety, self-injurious behaviour and school phobia – would they be considered to have severe and complex needs?

Schools and settings

- Concerns at the implications for additionally resourced provisions (ARPs), that children with more complex needs may be expected to attend them
- Special Schools provide a place of physical and emotional safety.
- Outreach could be provided from special schools and resourced provisions to help to develop and spread skills to mainstream schools
- More provision is needed in the north of the County to avoid unnecessarily long journeys.

Training

- The upskilling of the mainstream teaching workforce to deal with more SEND-related issues within mainstream should result in the ability to apply greater focus and resources on the children with serious difficulties requiring a special school place.

Financial matters

- This priority is written to save money
- More funding is needed

Priority 4

Improve the co-ordination, leadership, deployment and collaborative working of specialist SEND specialist teaching, advisory and educational psychology services

44. There was agreement from all those who made additional comments, with some saying the intention is clear and others making specific comments about different services, and organisation and delivery of services. Some respondents referred to point of access to services – whether with or without an EHC Plan.

Local authority leadership and oversight

- Recruitment of the correct person in the leadership role is key for this priority to be achieved
- The Educational Psychology Service needs to have greater priority than to be put with specialist teaching services.
- There are difficulties in recruitment of specialist staff, especially educational psychologists
- Building relationships and trust between the local authority and schools / settings is important in a fast changing environment
- To achieve a more collaborative environment with a shared sense of purpose , there is firstly a need to build trust and respect between BCC SEND teams and Children’s Services leadership, with special and mainstream schools
- The current recommissioning of therapies has highlighted the need for coordination in key areas to prevent overlap or more importantly gaps, as well as variable service delivery.
- The strategy should reflect the reduction in local authority services
- Collaborative working includes with professionals in health and social care services

Communication and clarification

- Propose replacing *“Improve the leadership”* with *“Effective leadership should be implemented to ensure ...”*

A person centred approach

- There needs to be a more joined up approach fro the GP to the school to the hospital

The statutory process

- Whilst we understand that EHC assessments are putting a considerable burden on skilled staff, it is unacceptable not to provide a full EHC assessment when it is requested by teaching professionals
- Improve access to specialist teaching support, training, consultation and assessment /intervention without the need for EHC plan, especially in the areas of SLCN and ASD.
- It will make a huge difference if Specialist teachers are able to work with all children regardless of EHC plans, as then there would be preventative work supporting children much earlier on, which would truly support a graduated approach.
- EHC assessments should have a higher priority than other SEND work

Supporting parents

- Communication between schools and parents needs to be improved.
- Parents and professionals want to work together collaboratively – but it doesn’t always feel as if it has worked.

Training

- Provide professional training for SENCOs and CPD, through interaction with special school staff.

Schools and settings

- How are new approaches to be found that save money and still offer “support around the school”?
- Remember to use all expertise available, including the Portage Service

Financial matters

- Investment is needed in front line professionals
- Targeted High Needs funding to pupils without EHCPlans needs to be reviewed and educational settings need to be more creative with how they support SEND.

Priority 5

Develop and implement improved approaches to planning and securing specialist educational places for those children with the most severe and complex needs.

45. There was no real disagreement with this Priority. Comments related to how it might be implemented, and expressed views about specialist provision and shortages of places. Some respondents commented on the costs of an increasing dependency on specialist provision, with others commenting that specialist provision should not be restricted to those with severe or significant and complex needs. Comments are recorded below.

Local authority leadership and oversight

- Specialist placements need to be available for children with additional needs – not just significant and complex
- There are increasing trends for children to be taught in special school
- There is no suitable state funded school provision in Buckinghamshire for high functioning pupils on the autism spectrum
- There has been a lack of ability to forecast student numbers, particularly around ASD
- The behaviour strategy lacks leadership and direction
- What is the philosophy around special school places and academies
- What if students from other local authorities fill up places in special academies in Buckinghamshire?
- Need to know more about numbers of pupils being educated outside Buckinghamshire
- Need a more rigorous approach to only using school places outside Buckinghamshire if there is not provision in county
- Consider visiting current specialist educational establishments to research the pros and cons , so as not to make any obvious mistakes

Children and young people

- Many children are not given a place in their chosen school
- Families need to be supported if their child is taught at home (refers to high functioning ASD)

The Statutory Process

- Better representation at Tribunal to ensure affluent parents do not secure costly places in Dyslexia schools

Supporting parents

- Parents know their rights but can lack confidence and trust – this exacerbates the situation

Schools and settings

- Schools need more links with specialist provision and ARPs

Financial matters

- There has been a 15% increase in funded special school places in under 3 years.
- Do we need better negotiation with providers to ensure lower costs?
- Share financial limitations with all stakeholders

Priority 6

Strengthen the management of the statutory SEND process

46. There is full agreement with this as a priority for improvement. The majority of comments focus on leadership and management, with some referring to specific aspects of systems, such as decision making and mediation.

Local authority leadership and oversight

- These are predominantly internal management and financial oversight items which are the responsibility of the Local Authority and its Officers.
- Consider the current leadership's ability to deliver.
- Only the highest quality leadership will meet the challenges of increasing demand, diminishing resources and the moral purpose to secure the best outcomes for every child.
- There needs to be a shake up of SEN officers. Children are falling through the gaps due to workloads and high turn over.

Communication and clarification

- This priority may be redundant if you do what is required to achieve other priorities.

A person centred approach

The statutory process

- It is essential that the legal process is delivered effectively
- Processes must be fair, firm, robust and transparent and use rigorous decision making
- There needs to be a stronger "sell" of mediation before Tribunals develop
- There may be a need for stronger management of the decision making processes relating to individual cases.

- Do not impose placement of a pupil, without ability to deliver confirmed by Governing Body.
- Does monitoring need to be improved?
- The EHC process is supposed to encourage collaboration by all parties

Children and young people

- Remember the child

Training

- Lack of proper training in mainstream and lack of capacity to help
- All SENCOs should be aware of the process and all changes should be clearly fed to schools

Schools and settings

- Develop SEN and head workshops for mainstream schools, and explain the graduated response?
- Schools need to get on board more and learn. Learn, learn and support, support, support.

Financial

- There is a need to link individual decisions to affordability, financial budgets and plans. This implies far greater access and transparency of data.
- Ensure funding is available to schools and settings for any defined responsibilities.

Priority 7

Develop improved approaches to monitoring and accountability, especially in relation to the use and impact of High Needs funding in schools and other educational settings.

47. There was no disagreement about this as a Priority for improvement. As with other priorities, respondents made comments, suggestions and were keen to know how it would be implemented.

Local authority leadership and oversight

- Despite the need for a more integrated approach to the management of the SEND budget, BCC is not in charge of all the levers required to accomplish this due to the academisation process. In a situation where BCC has responsibility but no authority the only way forward is to develop a set of high level plans that can be agreed by the key providers/stakeholders and then maintain regular and transparent communications.

Communication and clarification

- Are we to assume this is to manage a reduction of income? If yes will need details and an open discussion between all stakeholders.

The statutory process

- Improved EHC Plans would enable more effective monitoring.
- Has there been an audit of recent plans?
- Funding needs to be brought in line with the 'outcomes highlighted in the education health and care plans. This will then reflect the provision required to meet a young person's needs

Training

- Improved training for SENCOs is essential

Schools and settings

- All SEN provision (including mainstream) should be audited as a baseline
- High Needs funding in schools usually has to be incorporated into existing LSA provision, as it is difficult to manage smaller sums of money, e.g. £800 unless it is for specific equipment or programme
- I like the idea of local groups of settings and schools looking at HNBF together and deciding current priorities. This feels like a good delegation of accountability. However, there would need to be really clear managerial support for decision makers to ensure they fully understood the purpose of HNBF and there was equity across different groups.

Financial Matters

- Top-up funding needs to reflect the provision required. Currently it is based on a young person's description of needs, rather than the cost of providing for those needs. Consideration also needs to be given to allocating funding for institutional costs as well as for individual pupils.
- This will need to be in line with the national agenda for adjustments to the fair funding and the national funding formula.

Priority 8

Develop a better shared understanding of the relationship between High Needs funding, current demands and volume and need.

48. Some respondents considered that this priority was an action that linked with other priorities. Some found it difficult to understand its meaning with one respondent suggesting that having a better understanding is not adequate for an ambition.

Local authority leadership and oversight

- There seems to be a lack of anything quantitative in terms of benchmarking or outcomes for students.

- This priority requires an honest discussion of how “selection has costs”.

Communication and clarification

- Alternative wording was suggested “*Ensuring that provision costs no more than is allocated through government funding.*”
- Communication pathways need to be set up clearly
- What SEND data do we have? Who will collate data, evidence efficacy and how will it be shared with stakeholders?

The statutory process

- reference to decision making which is reported to schools as being based on whether or not a school has provided 13.5 hours of support – feeling that the discussion should not be about hours – but the needs of the child.

General Comments

49. Respondents were asked if they had any other comments. These fell into a number of categories. These are summarised below.

50. There were comments about the way in which the consultation exercise had been undertaken:

- Disappointment at the brevity of the consultation text, because:
 - A detailed report including all review findings was not available at the point of consultation, and
 - more information on the way in which the Improvement Priorities would be put into place was not included.
- Both praise and criticism for the way in which the Review had been carried out, with a desire to conclude the process and put the resultant plan into action
- Concerns for the unknown and the impact this would have on children and young people, and in particular, special schools and the current population of children who attended
- That a Strategy needs to be presented before the Improvement Priorities can be finalised.

51. There were comments about schools and settings, the statutory process and support services.

- Little if any emphasis was given to those pupils at SEN support in schools, with a consistent emphasis on EHC Plans
- There seemed to be a reliance on the EHC assessment process to bring professionals together, when it is clear from the graduated approach in the SEN Code of Practice that this should be happening earlier.
- Recurrent frustration from schools and settings, and in SEND fieldwork services, about the shortage of some fieldwork support and the different ways of operating of others, including within the same service.
- A belief amongst parents and some specialist provider responses, that mainstream schools were unable to make the provision necessary for children with SEN, including (in some responses) those with more moderate needs.

- e. A belief amongst some parents that being involved in decision making, means that they expect to jointly making the decision – and that this leads to disappointment and frustration and does not build and strengthen relationships between parents and decision makers
- f. Parents want the best school for their child or young person. The words “suitable” or “appropriate” seemed to be provocative when used in written text.
- g. That early education and post 16 and further education needs explicit attention and emphasis in the SEND Strategy and action plan

52. There were also comments about confidence in the next steps:

- (i) A concern about the capacity of the current structure to deliver radical improvements across the local authority
- (ii) That Buckinghamshire has a history of well-meaning proposals that flounder expensively because of a lack of principled and focused leadership

The Application of Consultation Responses to the current framework of Vision and Improvement Priorities.

53. A new draft Vision has been proposed (see paragraph 27). Improvement priorities need to be supported with a structure of actions, milestones and performance measures / indicators. An overarching SEND Strategy needs to be prepared.

54. With the exception of Improvement Priority 8, all Improvement Priorities were largely understood. It is suggested that a change in the language used for Priority 8 is used, so that it reads:

Suggested new wording for Improvement Priority 8

Put in place a financial strategy that explains and ensures open and transparent links between:

- Demands arising from the statutory SEND Process (top-up funding, specialist placement and transport);
- Decisions made about EHC assessments, Plans and placement
- Funding available from Government in the High Needs Block and Council funded budgets
- Predictions linked to the pupil and student population, in terms of numbers of predicted levels and type of need

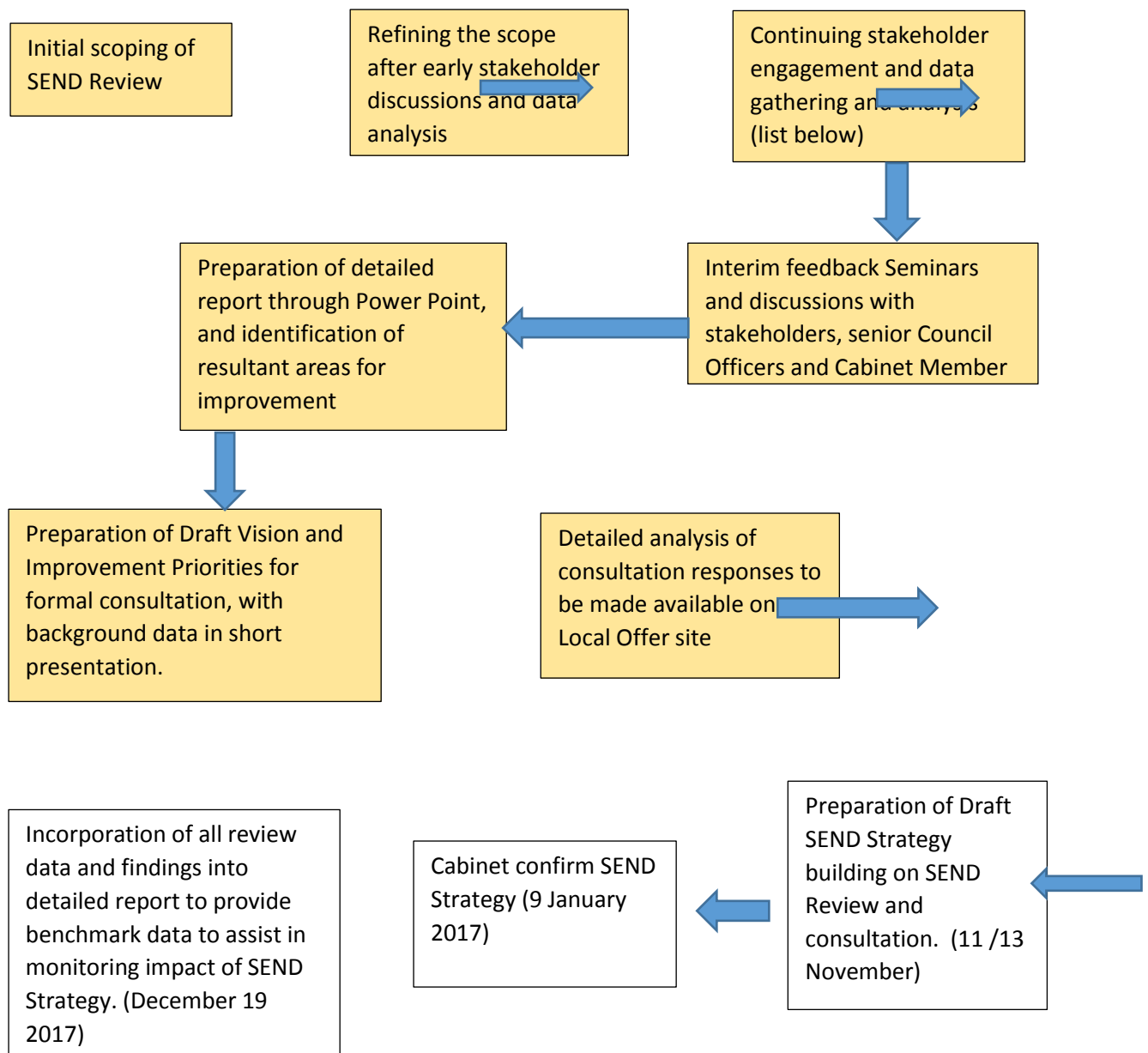
NEXT STEPS

55. It is suggested that:

- (i) A timeline is published on the Local Offer that sets out what will happen when over the next 2-3 months as the SEND Strategy becomes finalised and secures elected member comment and then approval.

- (ii) A summary “picture” is published that reflects on the review process and sets out the suite of documents under preparation, and those available now, so that stakeholders are able to extend their engagement from the successful Interim Feedback sessions in the summer, into the translation of findings into action with a view to turn the tide on some current trends in Buckinghamshire that are creating a significant capacity and affordability challenge.

An example of what such a picture might look like is set out below with yellow rectangles indicating available information documents.



SEND Review : Schedule of Stakeholder Engagement – January to July 2016

| Month | Stakeholder Group / Individual | Nature of engagement |
|----------|--|-----------------------------|
| January | SEN team manager | Individual discussion |
| January | SEN team manager | Individual discussion |
| January | PRU / AP Commissioner | Individual discussion |
| February | Health / social care commissioner (1) | Individual discussion |
| February | Member of SEND team | Individual discussion |
| February | Head of SEND | Individual discussion |
| February | SEND Board - meeting | Board meeting |
| February | Lead person – Buckinghamshire Parent Carer Forum (FACT Bucks) | Individual discussion |
| February | Primary Education Board – representative Primary Head Teachers | Board meeting |
| February | Parent Partnership Officer – SENDIASS Bucks | Individual discussion |
| February | Children’s Resources Panel | Decision making panel |
| February | Health and social care commissioner (2) | Individual discussion |
| February | Children with Disabilities Review Consultant | Individual discussion |
| February | Schools Funding Officer | Individual discussion |
| February | Bucks association of secondary head teachers (BASH) | Presentation & discussion |
| February | Special School Head Teacher (BP) | Discussion & school visit |
| February | Health – designated clinical officer | Individual discussion |
| February | Data and Performance officer | Individual discussion |
| February | Special School Head Teacher (SD) | Discussion & school visit |
| February | SENCO Conference | Input & questionnaire |
| February | Head of SEND for BLT specialist teaching teams | Individual discussion |
| February | Individual BLT specialist teachers and team leaders | Individual discussions |
| March | Special School head teacher (AS) | Discussion & school visit |
| March | Special School / PRU Head teacher (K) | Discussion & school visit |
| March | Special School Head Teacher (CWF) | Discussion & school visit |
| March | Special School Head Teacher (PS) | Discussion & school visit |
| March | Special School Head Teacher (HHS) | Discussion & school visit |
| March | Special School Head Teacher (FDS) | Discussion & school visit |
| March | Special School Head Teacher (WS) | Discussion & school visit |
| March | Special School Head Teacher (CGS) | Discussion & school visit |
| March | Special School Head Teacher (W Prim PRU) | Discussion & school visit |
| March | Head of SEND | Individual discussion |
| March | Schools Forum | Input & discussion |
| March | Transport Exceptions Panel | Observation & reflection |
| March | Senior commissioner – specialist placements | Individual discussion |
| March | BLT senior leadership team | Group phone discussion |
| March | Parent supporter | Phone discussion |
| March | Individual mainstream primary head teacher | Phone discussion |
| April | Director of Education | Individual discussion |
| April | SEN team managers | Group discussion |
| April | Educational Psychologist Team | Group discussion |
| April | Head Teacher and Lead of Primary ARP | Discussion & school visit |
| April | Head teacher and lead of Secondary ARP | Discussion & school visit |
| April | ARP leads – teachers or staff in charge | Group discussion |
| April | Extended SEND Board – Interim Feedback to confirm Scoping | Presentation and discussion |

| | | |
|----------|---|----------------------------|
| April | BLT Head of SEND for Specialist Teacher teams | Individual discussion |
| May | Learning, Skills and Prevention SLT – Interim Feedback | Presentation & discussion |
| May | PRU / AP Commissioner | Individual discussion |
| May | Special School Governors – Interim Feedback | Presentation & discussion |
| May | Director of Education and Head of SEND | Discussion and reflection |
| May | BASH – Interim Feedback | Presentation & discussion |
| May | Special School Head Teacher (PS) | Discussion |
| May | Schools Forum – Interim Feedback | Presentation & discussion |
| May | Special School Head Teachers – Interim Feedback | Presentation & discussion |
| May | One Council Board – Interim Feedback | Presentation & discussion |
| May | Therapy Commissioner | Individual discussion |
| May | SEND Panel observation | Observation & reflection |
| May | BLT specialist teacher – team leaders | Discussion & reflection |
| June | Therapy – service providers | Discussion |
| June | Parent Partnership Officer - SENDIASS | Discussion |
| June | Primary Head Teacher Hub (1) – Interim Feedback | Presentation & discussion |
| June | Primary Head Teacher Hub (2) – Interim Feedback | Presentation & discussion |
| June | Primary Head Teacher Hub (3) – Interim Feedback | Presentation & discussion |
| June | Schools Forum – Interim Feedback | Presentation & discussion |
| June | Special Schools Admission Panel | Observation and reflection |
| June | Secondary Head Teachers – Sub-group of BASH | Discussion on issues |
| Jan-July | Meetings of SEND Board – agenda item and update reports | Discussion on issues |

Equalities and Voluntary & Community Sector Screening

Member Portfolio: Children’s Social Care and Learning

Service: Education and Skills - Special Educational Needs

Line title/Description of Decision:

Buckinghamshire SEND Strategy

Following a SEND Review in 2016, and a formal consultation exercise, a new SEND Strategy to span the period 2017 – 2020 has been drafted. It is framed within the statutory framework for SEND as set out in Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and in the statutory guidance – the SEND Code of Practice – DFE 2014. The legislation is binding on education, health and social care services, including state funded education providers. It spans children and young people between the ages of 0 and 25 years.

Wide ranging dialogue with stakeholders took place during the SEND Review and formal consultation took place in October 2016.

Reports have been taken to Select Committee, One Council Board and to LAG.

Cabinet is asked to:

- note the current and future financial challenges
- agree the draft SEND Strategy
- determine that an annual report on progress and performance of the Strategy should be considered by the Children’s Social Care and Learning Select Committee

| | | | |
|--|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| Name of officer completing screening: | Gillian Shurrock | Date completed: | 28 Dec 2016 |
|--|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|

| Equalities Screening | | Yes | No | Maybe | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|------------|---------------------|------------------------------|------|--------------------|-----|--------------------|
| Q1 | Will the proposal have an impact on the public or service users directly (e.g. removing/reducing a service, changing mode/place of delivery or increasing charges)? | | x | | | | | |
| Q2(a) | Will groups of people be affected differently by the proposal because of a protected characteristic as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (see below), or because of their geographic location or economic status? | x | | | | | | |
| Q2 (b) | If “yes” or “maybe”, please indicate below by placing an X in the relevant box(es) below: | | | | | | | |
| | Age | Disability | Gender Reassignment | Pregnancy & Maternity Status | Race | Religion or Belief | Sex | Sexual Orientation |
| | | X | | | | | | |
| | Geographic location(s) (If any, please state): | | | | | | | |
| | Socio economic group(s) (If any, please state): | | | | | | | |

Equalities and Voluntary & Community Sector Screening

| | | | | |
|--|--|------------|-----------|--------------|
| Q3 | Will the proposal have an impact on how other services are delivered by the county council, external suppliers or other statutory agencies (e.g. increased demand/costs)? | | X | |
| Q4 | Will the proposal have an impact on our employees (e.g. redundancy, change of place/mode of delivery, usual working practices)? | | X | |
| Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) Screening | | Yes | No | Maybe |
| Q5 | Does the proposal have a direct impact on voluntary and community sector organisations either as a result of a reduction/cessation of funding (including where contracts are coming to an end and will not be renewed or new contracts are at lower cost)? | | X | |
| Equalities/VCS Screening – further information | | | | |
| Please include in the box below any information to help explain your answers to the screening questions. Where the proposal is a reduction please state what the total budget for the cost centre is prior to the proposal being implemented. | | | | |
| <p>The SEND Strategy aims to improve the experience of their pathway through education for children and young people with SEND. It aims to address the financial challenges of the past few years by securing improved decision making and strategic planning. It also aims to secure improved provision for children with SENs across mainstream schools reducing the need for a higher than average dependency on high cost and specialist educational provision.</p> <p>A full Equality Impact Assessment is not required as the review that led to the Strategy and the Strategy itself will reduce / remove risks of discrimination for disabled pupils / students.</p> | | | | |
| Do I need to complete a full impact assessment? NO | | | | |

Equalities and Voluntary & Community Sector Screening

You should be familiar with the context and the scale of the proposal when set against the service being provided and, therefore, be able to make an informed decision as to whether a full impact assessment is necessary. The text below should help confirm that decision.

If you have answered “No” to all of the equalities and VCS screening questions, you will not need to continue with a full impact assessment. This could be because relevance to equalities or the VCS has not been identified, or because the amount of the proposal is too insignificant when set against the cost centre/team budget to have any impact on the Council’s Public Sector Equality Duty (see below). Whatever your reason for not carrying out an assessment, please ensure this is explained in the further information section on the preceding page.

If you have answered “Yes” or “Maybe” to one or more of the equalities screening questions you should consider completing an equalities impact assessment (EIA). Your decision and your approach should be based on proportionality and relevance. Please read through the EIA proforma as this is designed to prompt your thinking about the relevant issues such as:

- How the proposal will affect service provision to service users and residents (both now and in the future)
- Any known existing inequalities in service delivery/outcomes for residents
- The risk and cost to the council’s finances and reputation if there is a judicial review of the decision to implement the proposal
- The scale of the proposal when set against the future resources to deliver the service (i.e. how likely is a £29k cut in a £3mn budget going to affect performance against the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which, in essence, is to:
 1. **Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation**
 2. **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not by:
 - a. *Removing or minimising disadvantage that people in the protected groups suffer because its connected to that protected characteristic*
 - b. *Take steps to meet the needs of people from the protected groups where these differ to those of other people*
 - c. *Encourage participation from protected groups in public life or other activity where their participation is disproportionately low*
 3. **Foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not by:
 - a. *Tackling prejudice*
 - b. *Promoting understanding*

If you have answered “Yes” or “Maybe” to the VCS screening question you should complete a VCS impact assessment (VCS IA).

Please ensure that your Cabinet Member has agreed the outcome of the screening exercise as these will be collated and presented to them for sign off.

Please return this completed screening assessment to Yvette Thomas, Policy & Equality Manager, 4th floor, New County Offices. If you’re unsure how to proceed after completing the screening, please ring on 01296 387483 to discuss or by email to ythomas@buckscc.gov.uk



Buckinghamshire County Council Select Committee

Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee

Report to the Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Title: | Education Standards in Buckinghamshire 2016 |
| Committee date: | 21 st March 2017 |
| Author: | Nick Wilson – Service Director Education |
| Contact officer: | Nick Wilson – Service Director Education c-nwilson@buckscc.gov.uk |
| Cabinet Member sign-off: | Zahir Mohammed |

Purpose of Agenda Item

For the Committee to consider an overview of education standards across the County for 2016. This is an initial overview in advance of a more detailed report being available later in the year

Summary

The report at appendix 1 includes information on the outcomes of OFSTED inspections and information and attainment for:

- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile
- Phonics Check
- Key Stage 1
- Key Stage 2
- Key Stage 4

Next steps

A more detailed report, including case studies, is being produced to supplement this overview and will be available later in the year.



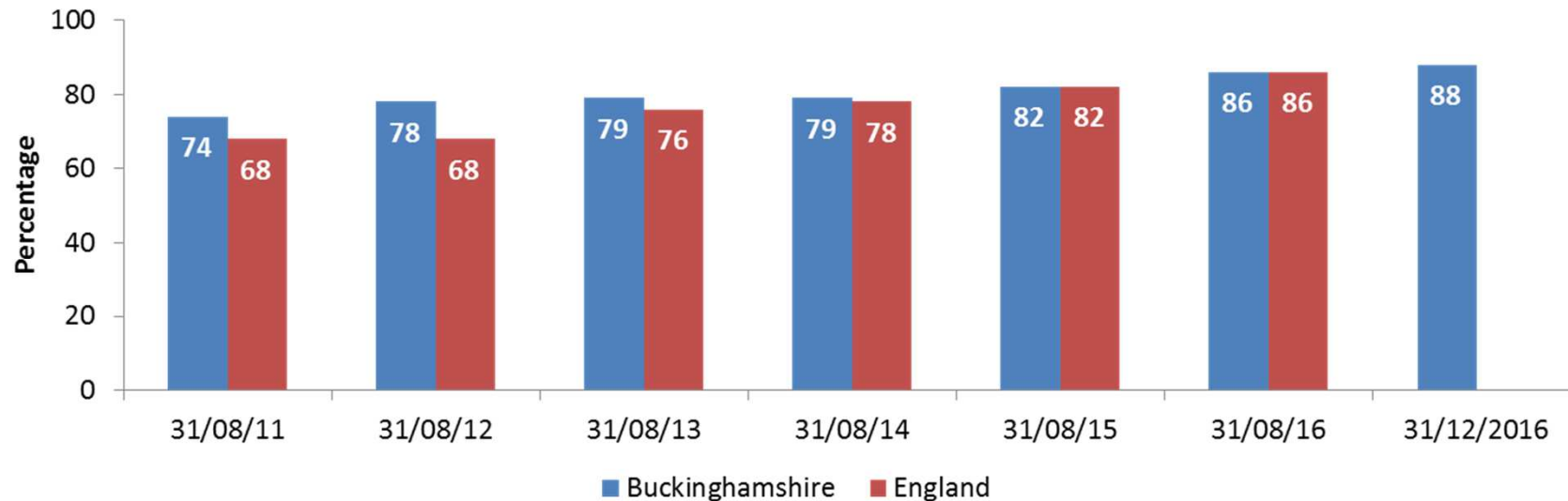
Education Standards in Buckinghamshire, 2016



Ofsted Inspections in Buckinghamshire



The percentage of pupils attending a school rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted is increasing



Schools are graded on a 4 point scale by Ofsted – Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement or Inadequate.

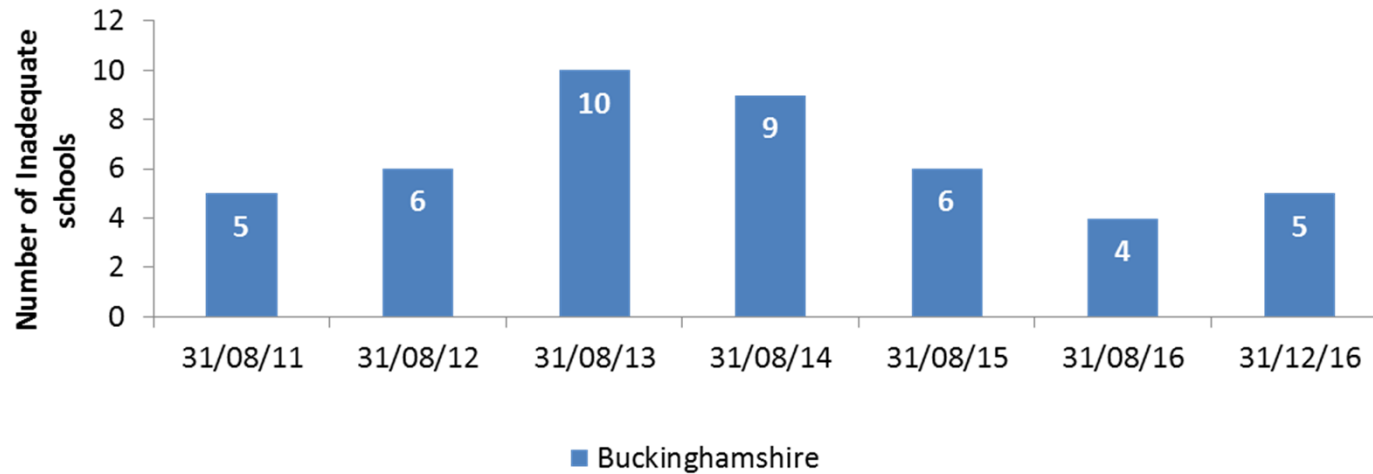
The percentage of pupils attending good or outstanding schools in Buckinghamshire increased by 4 percentage points over the last full academic year (from 31/8/15 to 31/8/16) and has increased by a further 2 percentage points up until the end of December 2016.



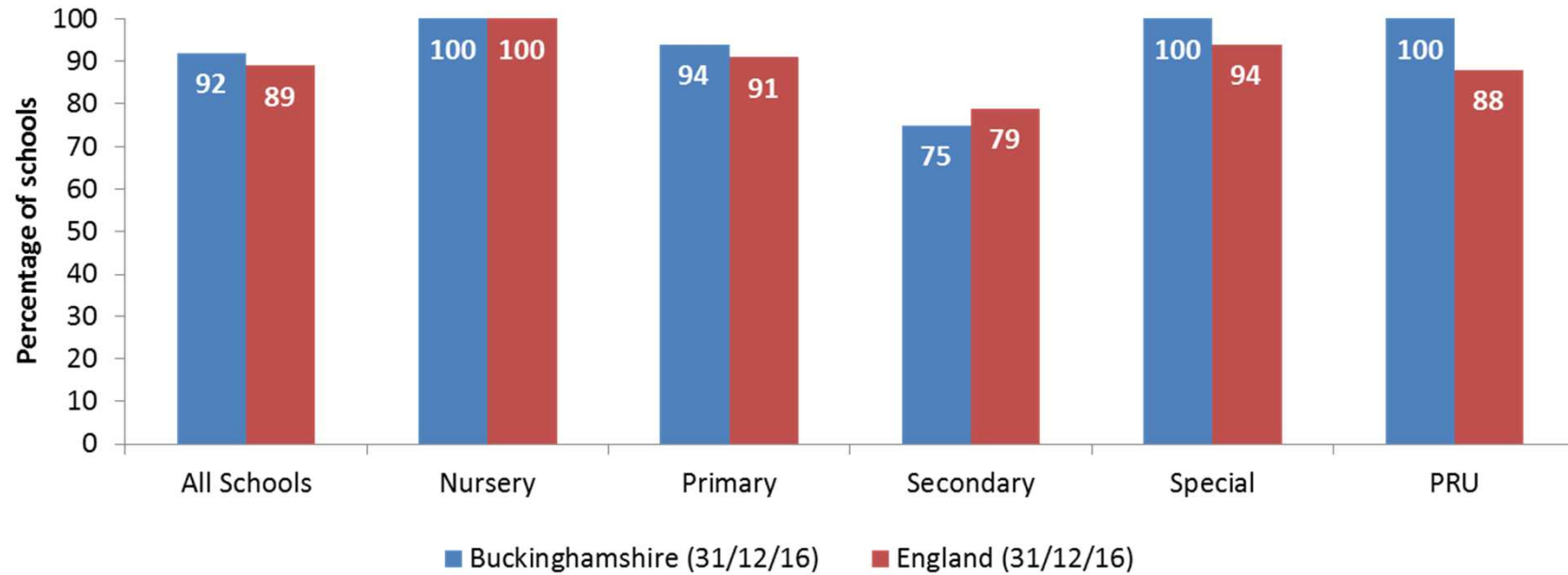
Five Buckinghamshire schools are judged as inadequate

Currently there are 5 schools in Buckinghamshire that are judged as Inadequate by Ofsted (2 academies and 3 maintained schools). This equates to 2.2% of schools in Buckinghamshire.

As at 31st December 2016, 2% of schools nationally were judged inadequate.



Every nursery and special school, as well as all pupil referral units, have been judged as good or outstanding



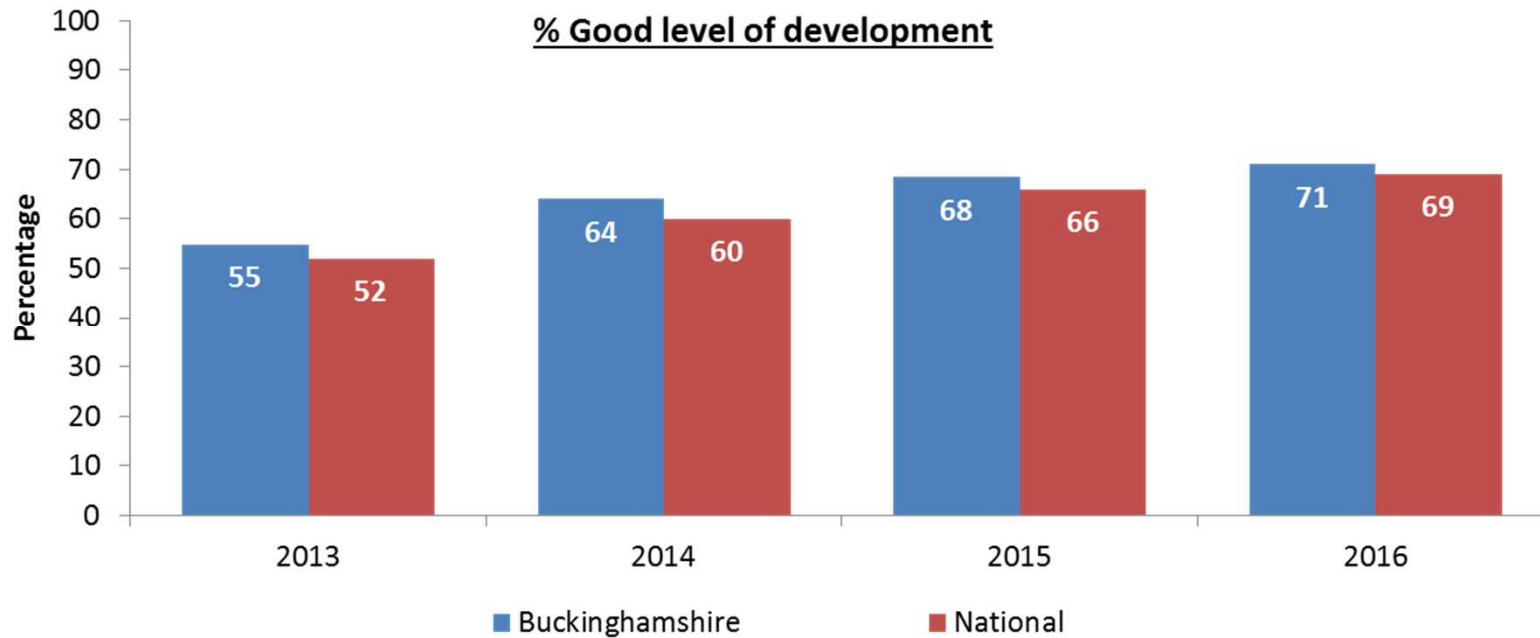
For all types of school apart from secondary schools, a greater percentage of Buckinghamshire schools have been judged as good or outstanding by Ofsted compared to national results. A lower proportion of secondary schools have been judged as good or outstanding compared to national.



Early Years Foundation Stage Profile



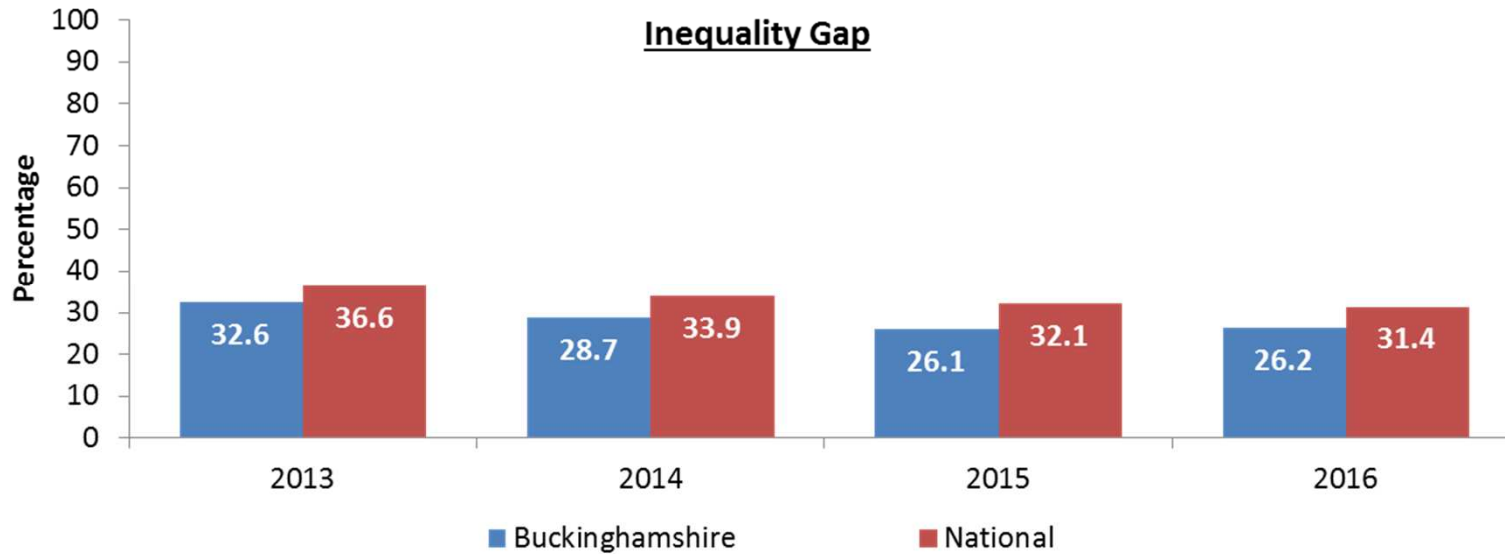
Attainment of a “Good Level of Development” has continued to increase and is above national



Buckinghamshire results increased from 68% in 2015 to 71% in 2016. National results increased at the same rate, improving by 3 percentage points. However Buckinghamshire results are still above national.



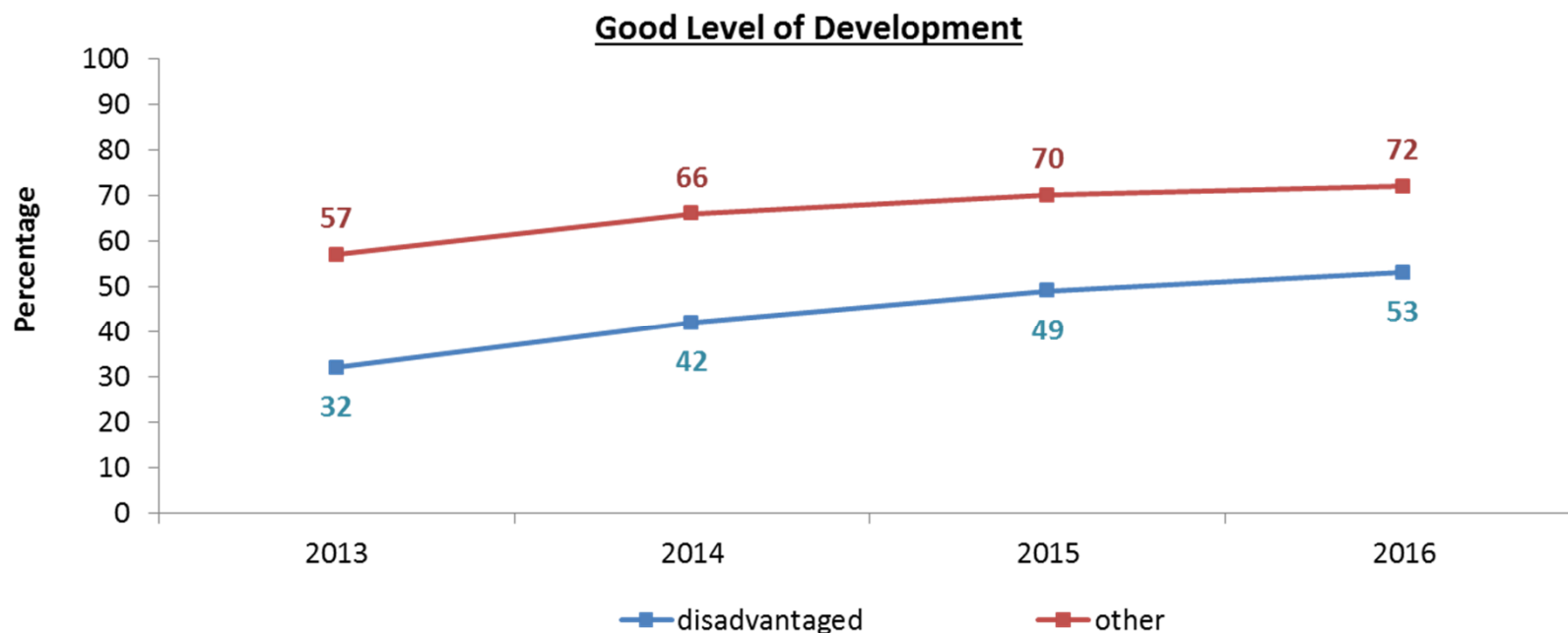
The EYFSP Inequality Gap has widened slightly, but remains smaller (better) than national



The inequality gap in Buckinghamshire has been improving, but 2016 has seen a very slight decline. Results remain smaller (better) than national.

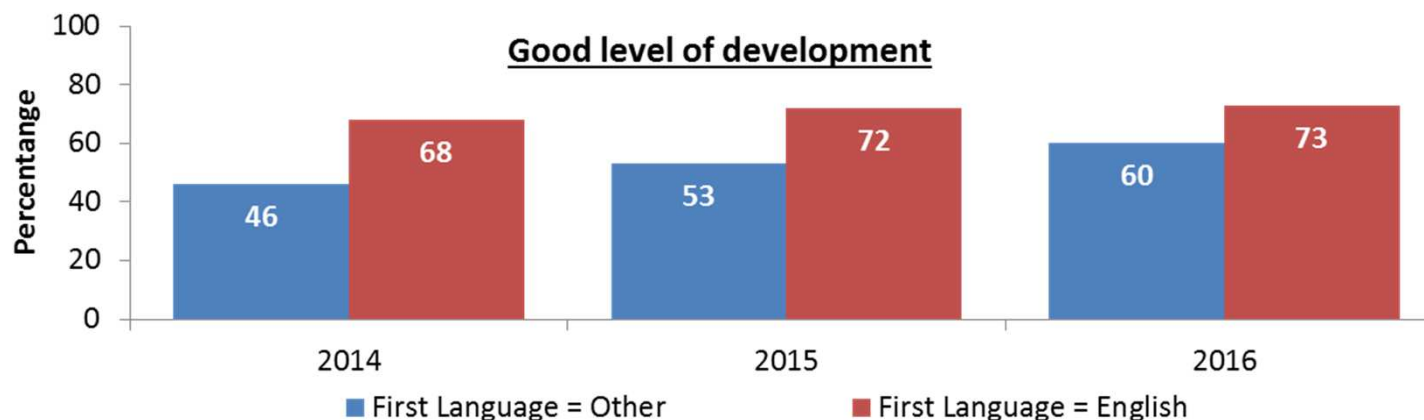


The gap between disadvantaged pupils and others has narrowed (improved) but it is still wide



The gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others in Buckinghamshire has improved, decreasing from 21 percentage points in 2015 to 18 percentage points in 2016.

The performance of children with a first language other than English continue to improve, and some ethnic groups continue to do better than others



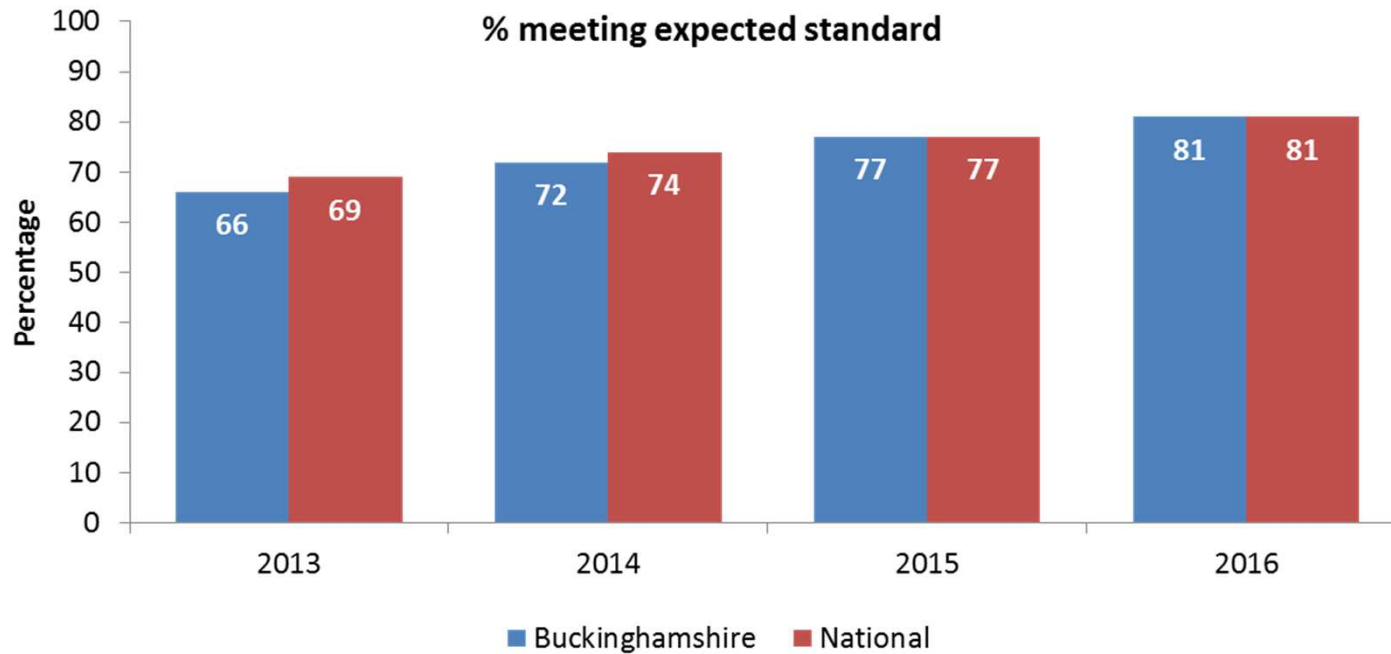
Results for children whose first language is not English continue to improve, increasing by 7 percentage points between 2015 and 2016 compared to a national increase of 1 percentage point.

Looking at the 3 groups that have been a particular focus within Buckinghamshire (Mixed White & Black Caribbean, Black Caribbean and Pakistani), results have increased for all 3 groups, and are above national for Black Caribbean pupils. However, results for a number of ethnic groups are still below national results for similar pupils – Mixed White & Black Caribbean, Mixed White & African, Pakistani and Indian.

Phonics Check



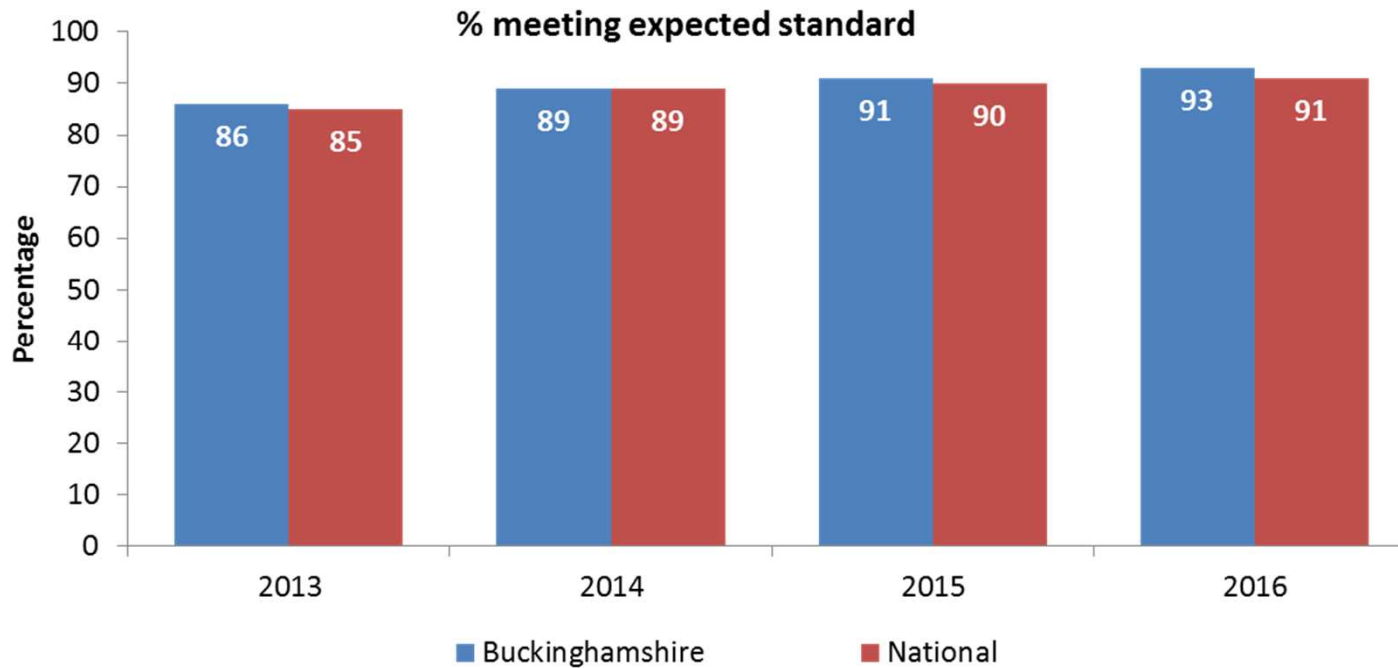
Attainment in the year 1 check has increased, and continues to be in line with national



Buckinghamshire and National results both increased by 4 percentage points between 2015 and 2016.



Results for pupils by the end of year 2 have also increased

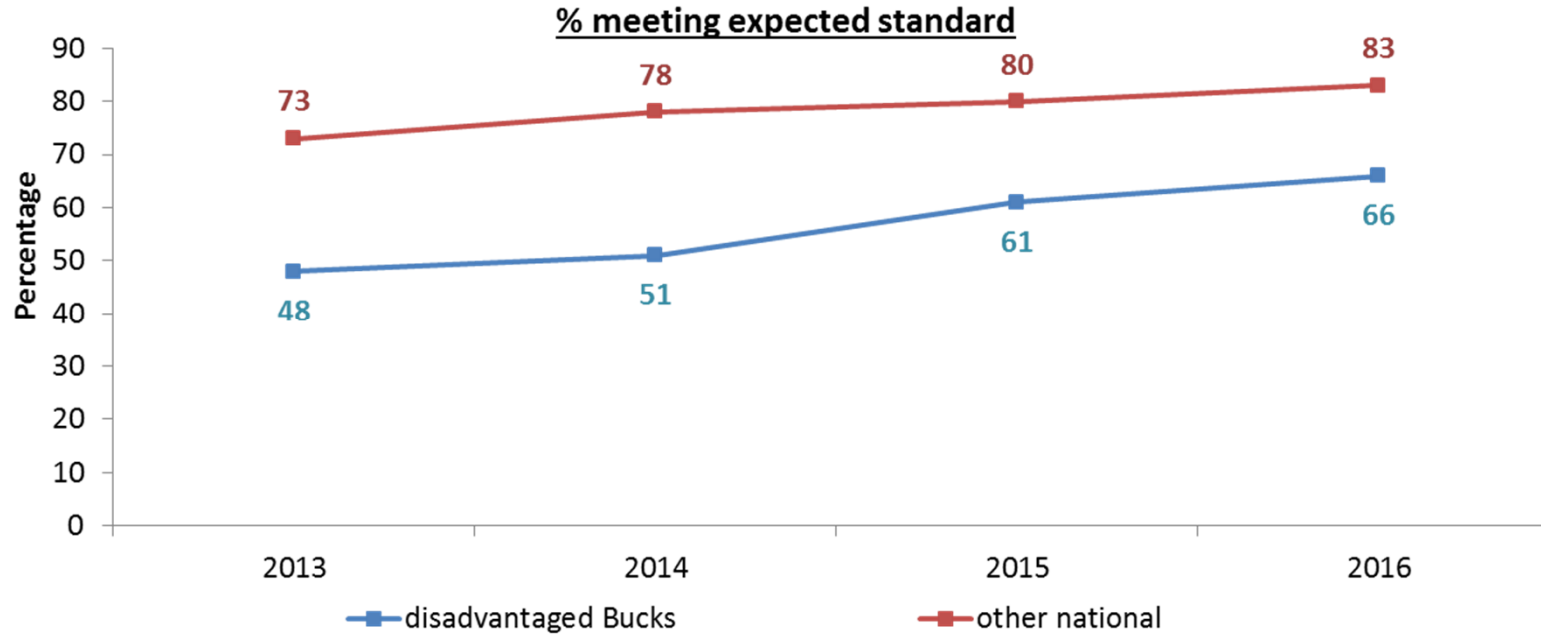


By the time pupils reached the end of year 2 93% had met the expected standard in phonics, either through the year 1 check or the year 2 re-check.

Buckinghamshire results increased by 2 percentage points from 2015, and are 2 percentage points above National.



Results for disadvantaged pupils have improved, but are still below national



The DfE now measures LA performance by comparing the results of disadvantaged pupils in the LA to other (non-disadvantaged) pupils nationally.

The difference between these two groups in 2016 is 17 percentage points, an improvement from 2015 when the difference was 19 percentage points



Some ethnic groups continue to achieve less well than others

Results for some ethnic groups are below national results for similar pupils – Other White, Mixed White & Black Caribbean, Pakistani, Black Caribbean and Black African pupils. Results for 2 focus groups, Mixed White & Black Caribbean and Black Caribbean, have decreased since last year.



Key Stage 1



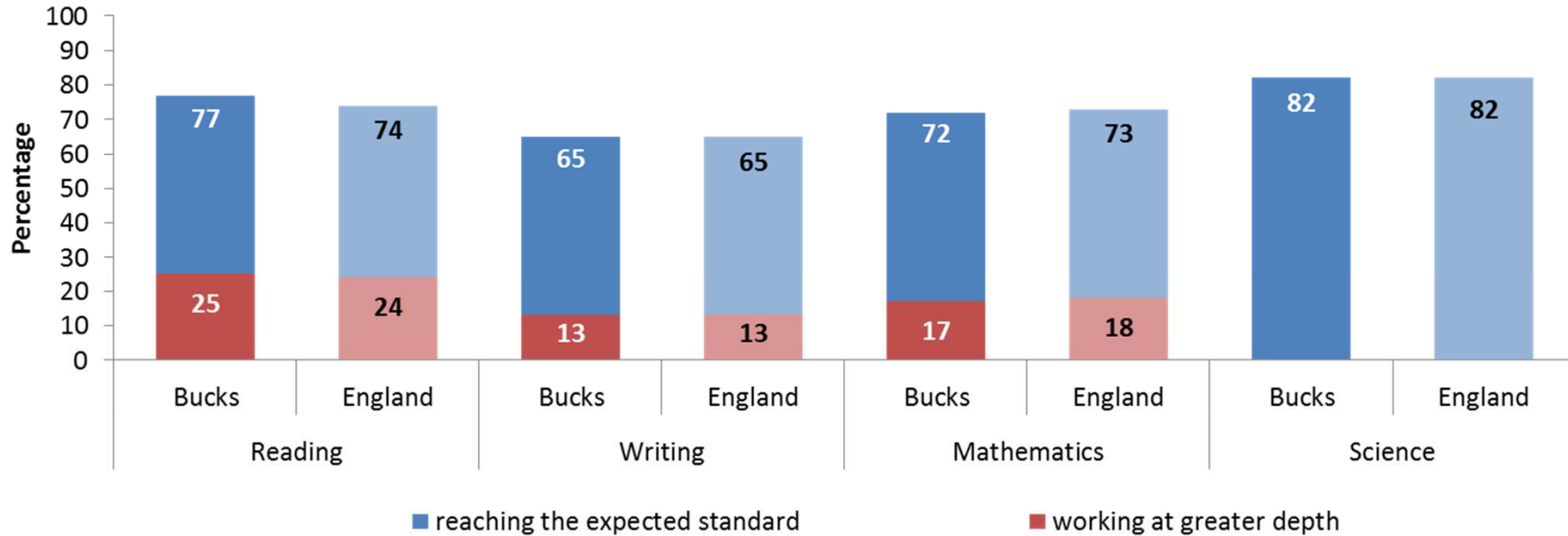
New assessments and headline measures for 2016

Pupils were assessed against the new more challenging curriculum, which was introduced in 2014, for the first time this year. Results are no longer reported as levels, and instead the interim frameworks for teacher assessment have been used by teachers to assess if a pupil has met the new, higher expected standard. Because of these assessment changes, figures for 2016 are not comparable to those for earlier years. The expectations for pupils at the end of key stage 1 have been raised.

Ofsted has stated that in this first year of the new curriculum and assessment: *“It may be that there is variability between schools in how they have interpreted the demands of the interim framework in this first year of its use. It may also be that there is variability in the way that local authorities have interpreted the demand when moderating against the interim framework for the first time”.*



Attainment is above national for reading, in line with national for writing and slightly below national for mathematics

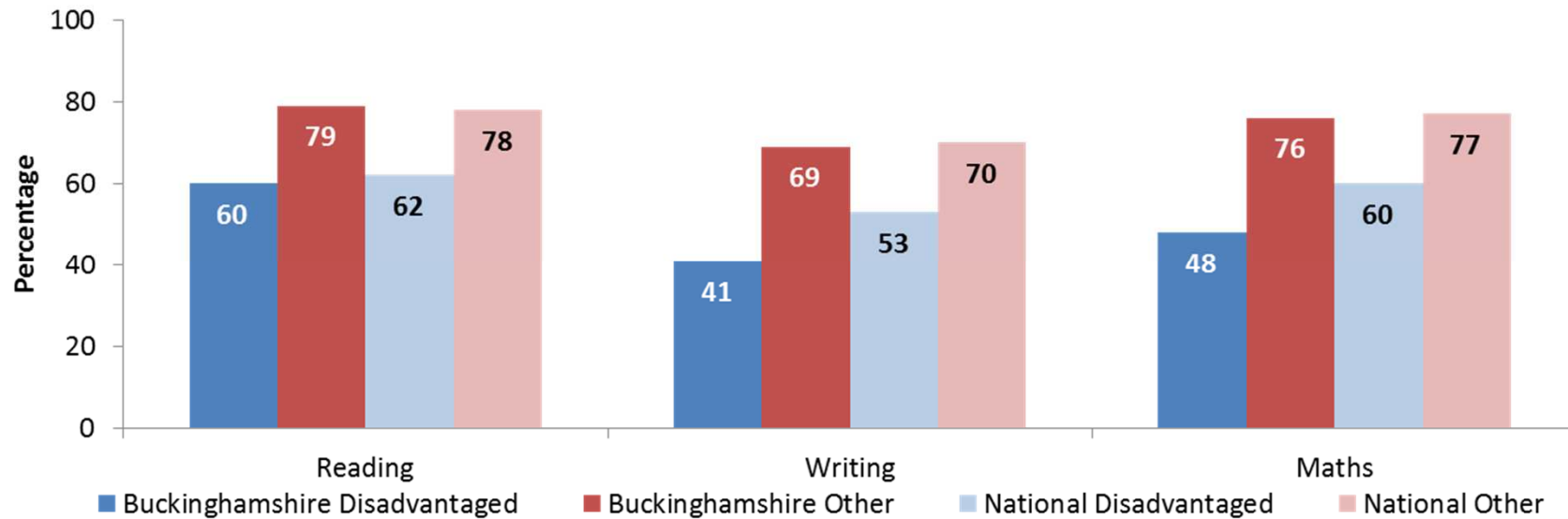


In Buckinghamshire 77% of pupils met the new expected standard in reading, 65% in writing and 72% in mathematics.

Attainment for both reaching the expected standard and working at greater depth for reading were above national. Results for writing were in line with national averages, and results for mathematics were 1 percentage point below national.

The difference between results of disadvantaged pupils in Buckinghamshire and others nationally is large

The DfE now measures LA performance by comparing the results of disadvantaged pupils in the LA to other (non-disadvantaged) pupils nationally. The difference between these two groups for the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard was 18 percentage points in reading, 29 percentage points in writing and 29 percentage points in mathematics. The national differences were 16 percentage points in reading and 17 percentage points in both writing and mathematics.



Some ethnic groups continue to achieve less well than others

4 groups perform less well than similar pupils nationally in all 3 subjects – Mixed White & Black Caribbean pupils, Pakistani pupils, Other Asian pupils and Black Caribbean pupils. Results for Mixed White and Asian pupils are below similar pupils nationally in both writing and mathematics. 3 additional groups are also below similar pupils nationally in writing (Other White, Other Mixed and Black African pupils).



Key Stage 2



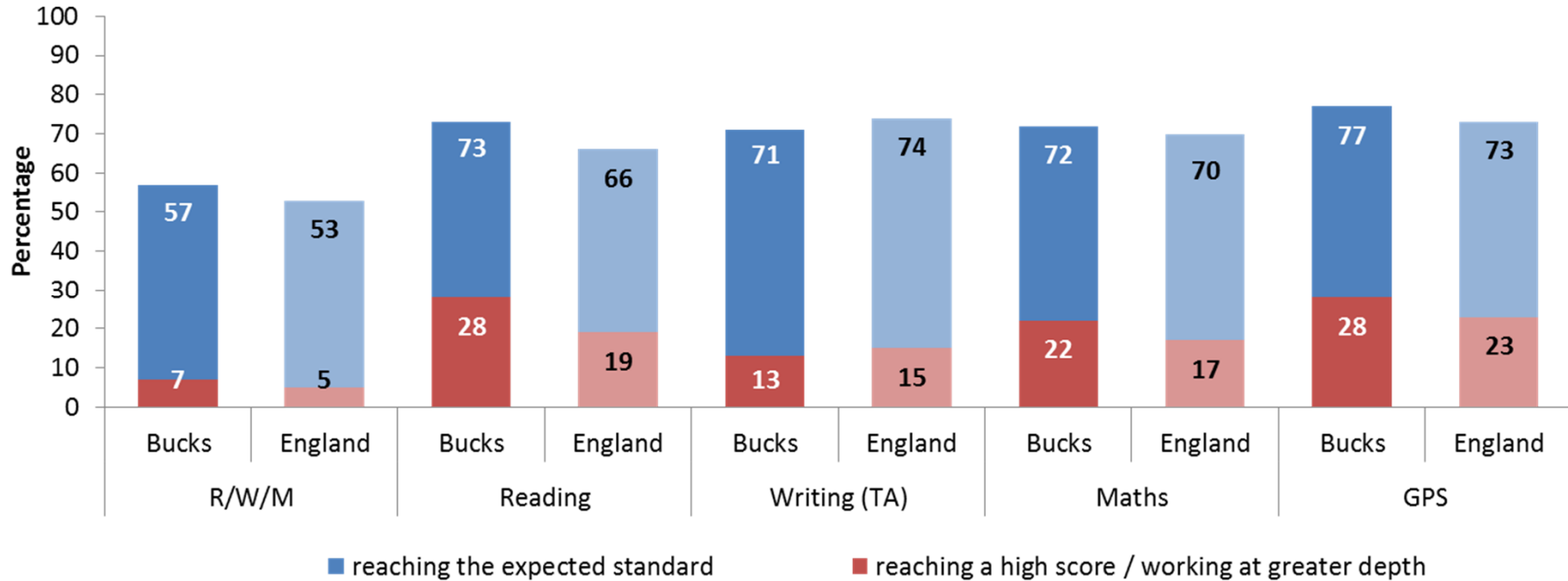
New assessments and headline measures in 2016

The key stage 2 assessments are the first which assess the new, more challenging national curriculum which was introduced in 2014. New tests and frameworks for teacher assessment have been introduced to reflect the new curriculum. Results are no longer reported as levels, and each pupil now receives their test results as a scaled score and teacher assessments based on the standards in the interim frameworks. New accountability measures have also been introduced. Because of the changes to the curriculum, figures for 2016 are not comparable to those for earlier years.

Ofsted has stated that in this first year of the new curriculum and assessment: *“It may be that there is variability between schools in how they have interpreted the demands of the interim framework in this first year of its use. It may also be that there is variability in the way that local authorities have interpreted the demand when moderating against the interim framework for the first time”*.



57% of pupils in Buckinghamshire reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics



In Buckinghamshire 57% of pupils reached the expected standard in all of reading, writing and mathematics.

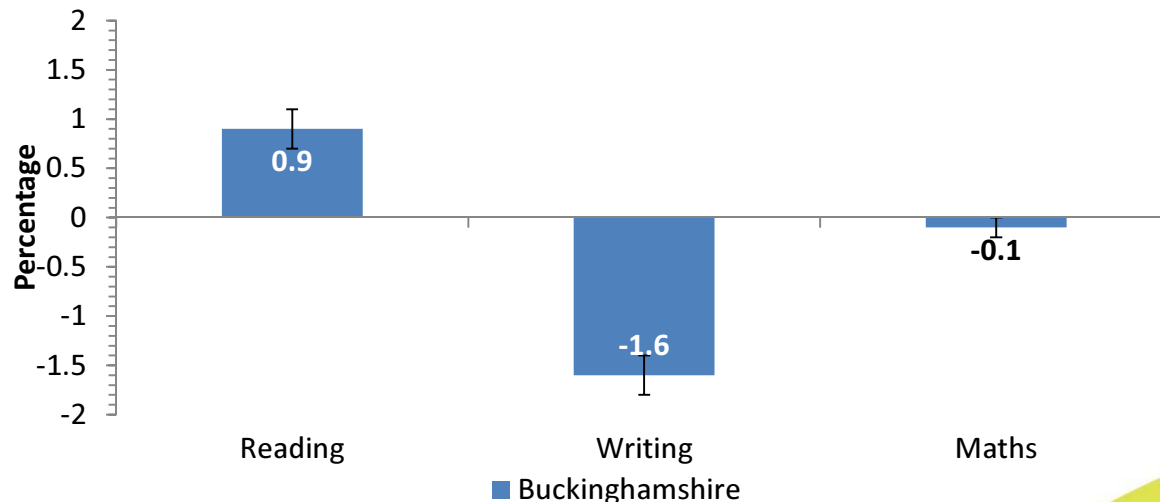
Buckinghamshire results were above national results for the reading test and the mathematics test and for reading, writing and mathematics combined measure. National results were higher than Buckinghamshire results in the writing teacher assessment



Progress in reading is significantly above national, while progress in writing is significantly below national

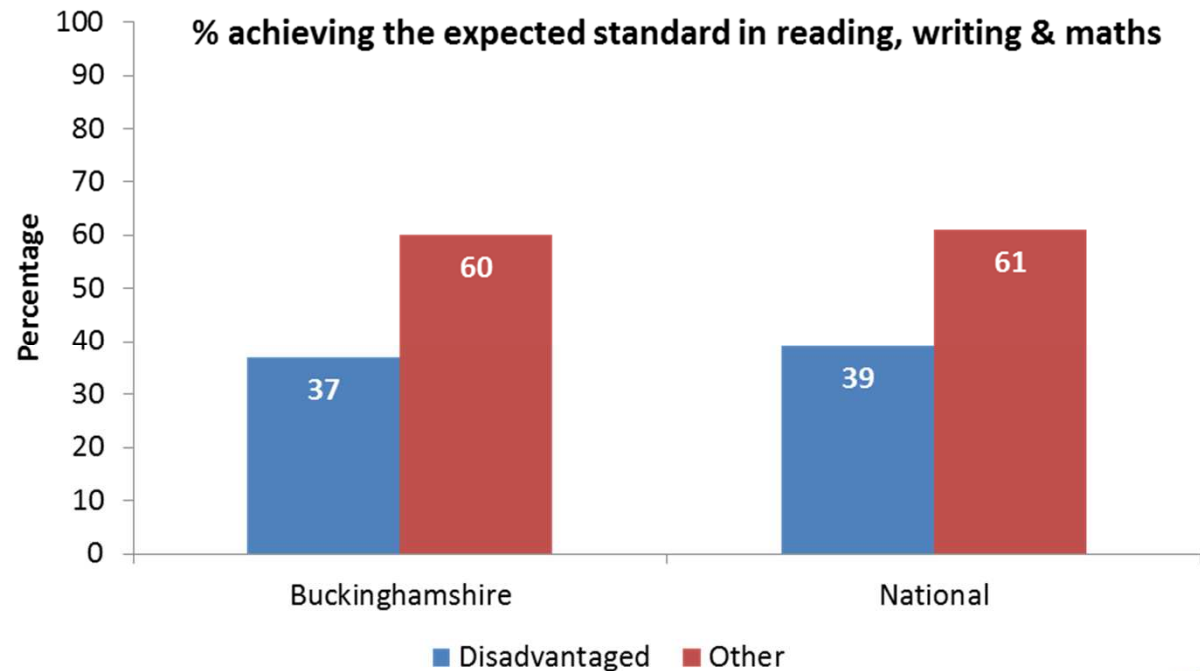
Progress scores are calculated for each of reading, writing and mathematics. They are a type of value added measure, which means that pupils' results are compared to the actual achievements of other pupils nationally with similar prior attainment. Confidence intervals (as shown in the chart) can be used to show where progress is significantly above or below national.

In Buckinghamshire the progress measure for reading is significantly above national. The mathematics progress measure is in line with national, and the writing measure is significantly below national.



The gap between disadvantaged pupils and others is wider than national

The DfE now measures LA performance by comparing the results of disadvantaged pupils in the LA to other (non-disadvantaged) pupils nationally. The difference between these two groups for the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard was 24 percentage points, compared to a national difference of 22 percentage points.



Some ethnic groups continue to perform less well than others.

Of the larger ethnic groups in Buckinghamshire, 5 achieved results that were lower than those for similar pupils nationally - Mixed White & Black Caribbean, Mixed White & Asian, Pakistani, Black Caribbean and Black African.



Seven schools are below the primary school floor standard

Seven Buckinghamshire schools are below the new primary school floor standard (see section 4 for definition). This represents 5% of state-funded mainstream schools included in the floor calculations. This is in line with national results, where 5% (665 schools) are below floor standard. In 2015, 3 (2%) Buckinghamshire schools were below floor standard compared to 5% nationally.



Key Stage 4



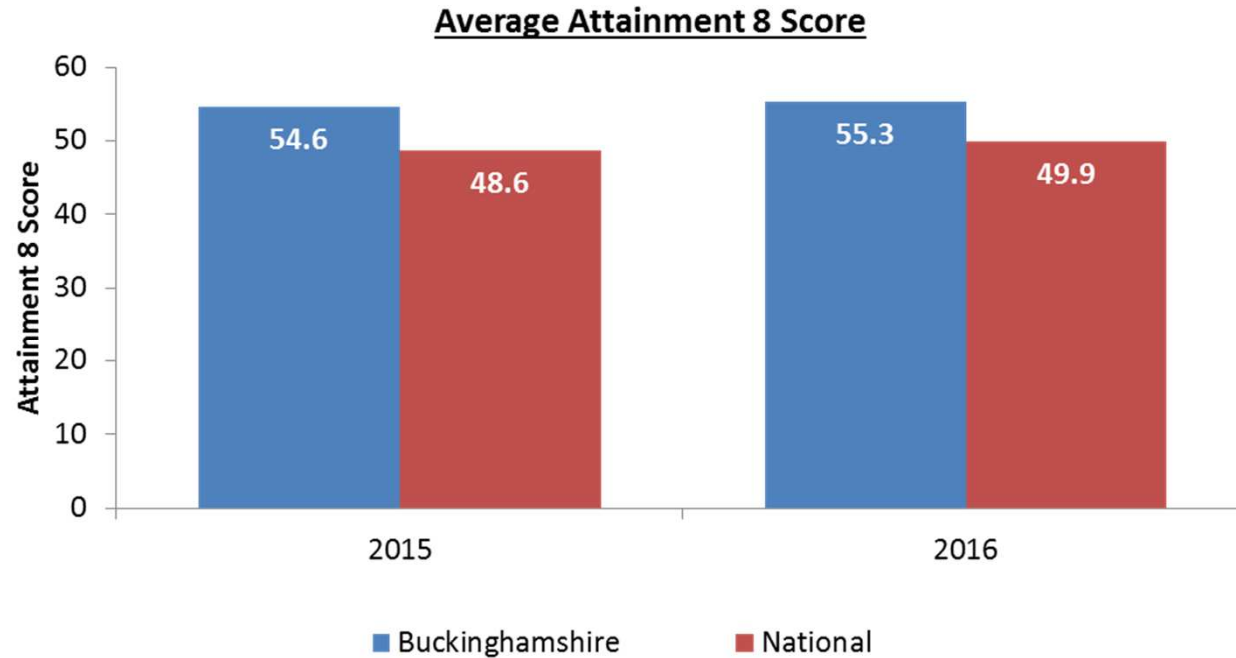
New headline measures in 2016

- A new [secondary school accountability system](#) has been implemented in 2016. 2015 results are available for a limited number of measures to allow comparison over time.



Buckinghamshire County Council

Average Attainment 8 score per pupil, one of the new headline measures, has increased



In Buckinghamshire the average Attainment 8 score was 55.3 in 2016, compared with 54.6 in 2015. Nationally results have also increased, from 48.6 in 2015 (for state-funded schools) to 49.9 in 2016.



Buckinghamshire County Council

Progress 8, the new headline measure of progress, is in line with national averages

Progress 8 is a relative measure, which means that the overall national score remains the same between years. The overall national score is set at 0, and this will remain the same in future years even if standards improve.

In Buckinghamshire the Progress 8 score in 2016 was 0.01, which is not significantly different to the national average. The Progress 8 score for state-funded schools in England was -0.03.



Buckinghamshire County Council

Results for disadvantaged pupils are below those of similar pupils nationally

The DfE now measures LA performance by comparing the results of disadvantaged pupils in the LA to other (non-disadvantaged) pupils nationally. The difference between these 2 groups for 2016 is 13.9.

This means that on average disadvantaged pupils in Buckinghamshire achieve at least 1 grade lower across all 8 subjects included in Attainment 8 than other pupils nationally.



Three ethnic groups perform less well than similar pupils nationally

In most cases Buckinghamshire pupils are outperforming similar pupils nationally, although Mixed White & Black Caribbean pupils, Pakistani pupils and Black Caribbean pupils perform less well than their peers.



Four schools are below the secondary school floor standard

A new floor standard based on the Progress 8 measure has been introduced for 2016. Four Buckinghamshire schools are below the secondary school floor standard. This represents 11.8% of state-funded mainstream schools included in the floor calculations. Nationally there are 282 schools below the secondary school floor standard (9.3%).





Buckinghamshire County Council Select Committee

Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee

Report to the Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Title: | Update on Buckinghamshire Learning Trust – BLT. |
| Committee date: | 21 st March 2017 |
| Author: | Steve Porter – BLT Director and Finance and Corporate Governance. |
| Contact officer: | Nick Wilson – Service Director Education. |
| Cabinet Member sign-off: | Zahir Mohammed |

Purpose of Agenda Item

To provide Members with an update on the work and performance of the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust (BLT).

Background

The Buckinghamshire Learning Trust is a not-for-profit charity, whose sole purpose is to serve and support schools in improving outcomes for children and young people

Summary

The attached report at appendix 1 covers 4 main areas

- Key autumn term achievements
- Key financial challenges
- Buckinghamshire Learning Trust plans
- Holding Buckinghamshire Learning Trust to account





Buckinghamshire
Learning Trust

A brief update

BCC Select Committee
21 March 2017

Key messages

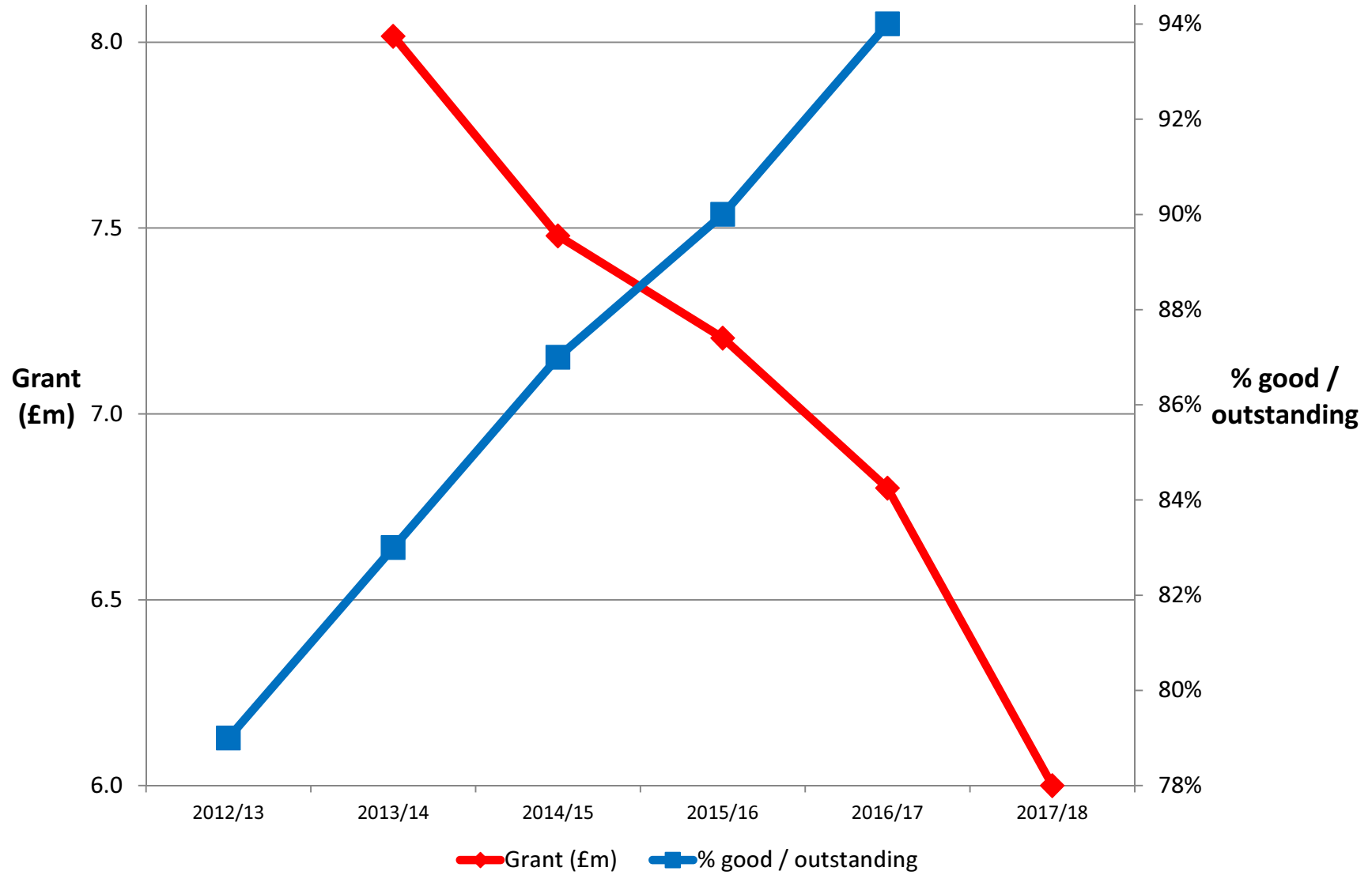
- Buckinghamshire Learning Trust (BLT) is a not-for-profit charity, whose sole purpose is to serve and support schools in improving outcomes for children and young people
- BLT has a strong track record of delivering impact, positive outcomes and value-for-money
- Like the Council and education sector as a whole, BLT is facing big challenges – BLT is proactively and effectively managing these challenges
- BLT is focusing on increasing impact/outcomes, traded income and operational effectiveness
- BLT is supporting Bucks schools to create a new, inclusive, self-sustaining, networked system

| Four key areas: | | Page |
|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| 1 | Key Autumn-term achievements | 4-11 |
| 2 | Key financial challenges | 12-18 |
| 3 | BLT plans | 19-24 |
| 4 | Holding BLT to account | 25 |

Key Autumn-term achievements

| Key objectives | | Status |
|----------------|---|--------|
| 1 | Drive-up educational outcomes for schools/CYP | Green |
| 2 | School improvement – deliver more for less (VfM) | Green |
| 3 | Manage escalating Specialist Teaching Service (STS) volumes | Yellow |
| 4 | Deliver further Early Years improvements | Green |
| 5 | Deliver further savings/grant reductions | Green |
| 6 | Increase commercial/traded focus | Yellow |
| 7 | Enhance Bucks reputation | Green |

More impact for less grant

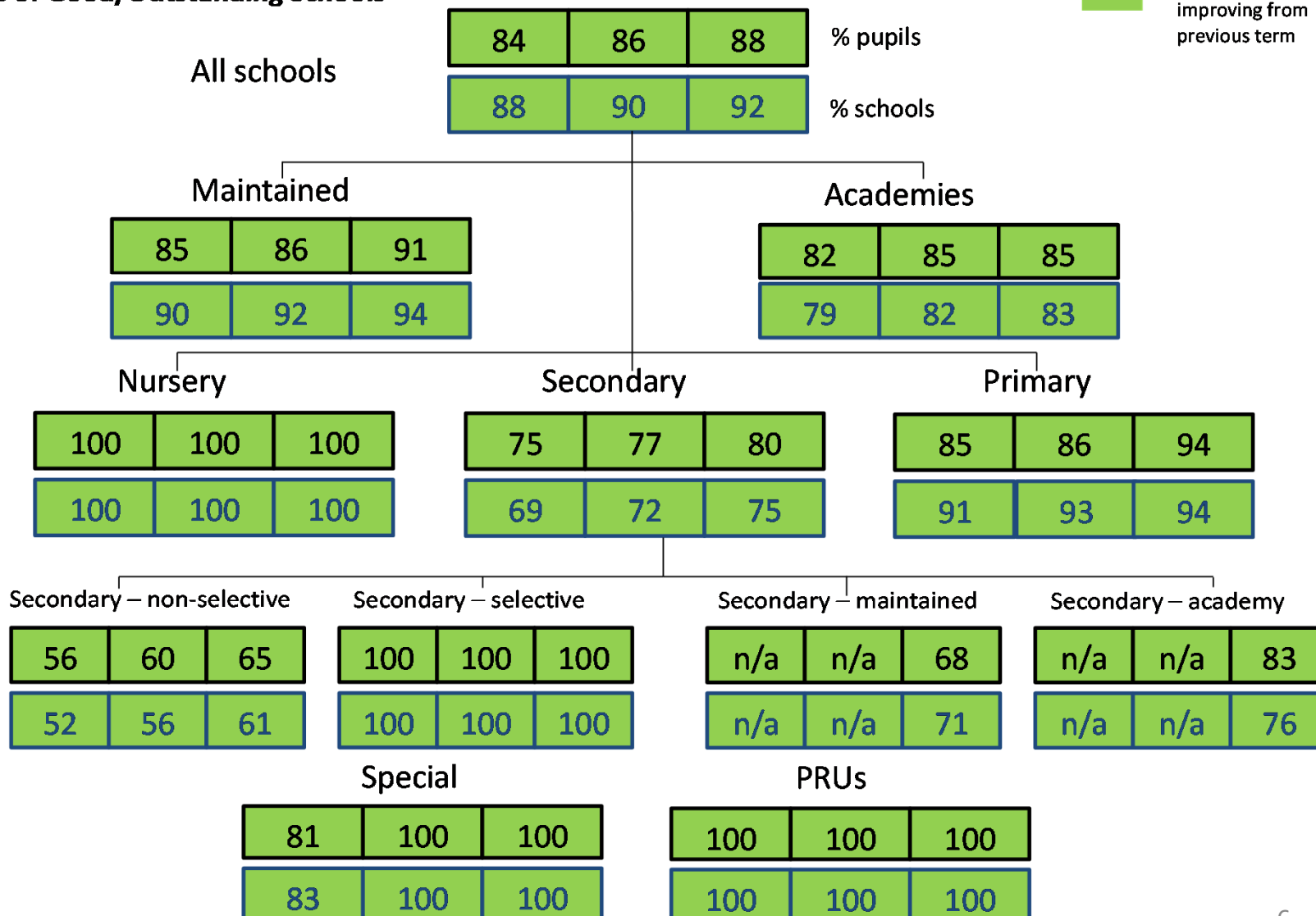


Continued School Improvement progress

1.2 % of Good/Outstanding Schools

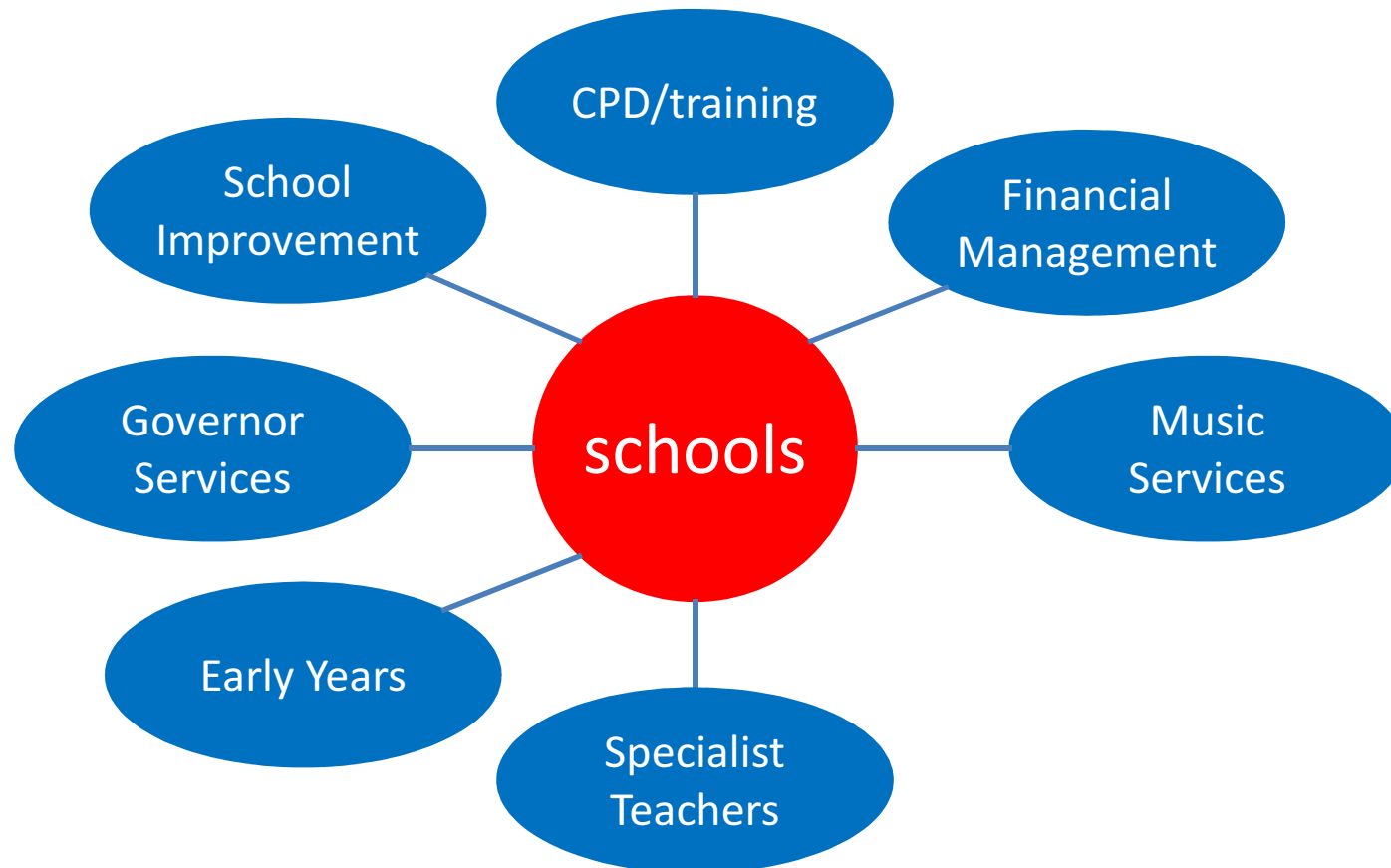
Spring 2016 Sum 2016 Aut 2016

= Maintaining or improving from previous term



120

What BLT does



Autumn-term achievements (1)

School Improvement

- % of maintained schools good/outstanding increased from 92% to 94%
- % of non-selective secondary schools good/outstanding increased from 56% to 61%
- School business meetings refocused to add more value

Specialist Teaching Service

- Further 10%+ increase in number of CYP supported
- 94% of schools rate service as good or better
- New reporting system introduced – better data capture

Early Years

- All RI and new inspections good or outstanding
- 98% EEF settings now good/outstanding
- Proactive advice provided to settings on effective use of Pupil Premium

Autumn-term achievements (2)

Governor Services

- 94% of primary schools rate service as good or better
- Launch of new ILM-recognised governor-development programme
- Redesign and refresh of Governor Zone online information portal

Financial Management

- Engagement with all 11 schools returning a deficit plan
- 8 (of 11) schools have cleared or reduced deficits
- Intensive support provided to 'Academy order' school
- Enhanced training provided, including Academy governors

NQT

- 418 NQTs registered for induction service
- Teacher Recruitment Service showcased at 12 teaching fairs at universities

Autumn-term achievements (3)

Traded

- Recruited strong, new Head of Business Development
- Completed preparations for launch of Learning Campus
- Held inaugural conference for headteachers of British Schools Overseas (BSO)
- Commenced first BSO school-improvement package in Hong Kong

Music Service

- Held Musicate conference with positive feedback from 70+ delegates
- Echoes music competition launched

Autumn-term achievements (4)

HR

- new 'goal-focused' Performance Management system introduced
- significant progress on building/strengthening the HR 'infrastructure' (systems, policies, controls, etc)

Finance

Improved financial management through:

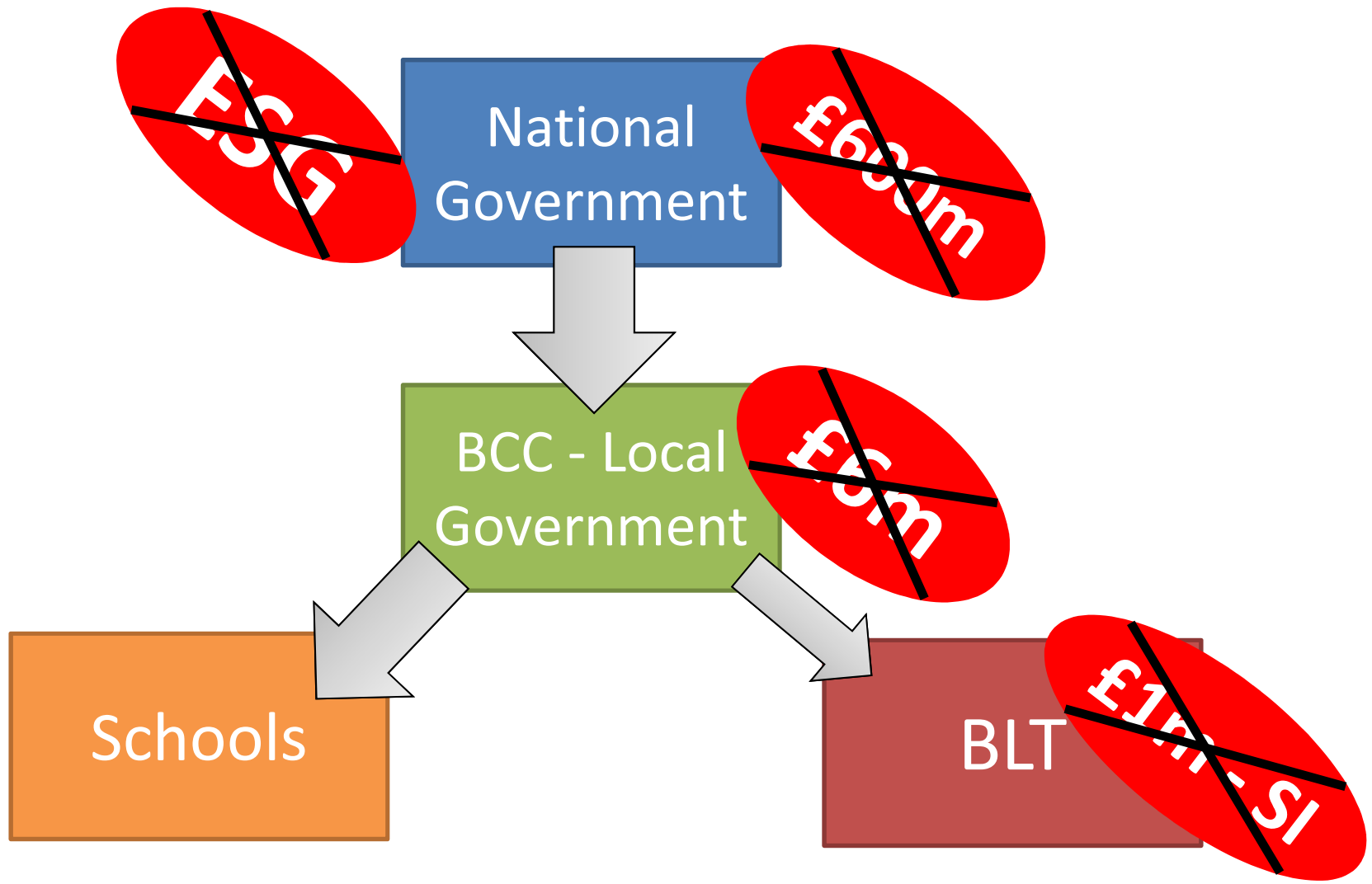
- enhanced management accounts reporting
- business partnering for ET/SLT
- quarterly financial reforecasting

Business Support

- Enhanced sales reporting to support increased Business Development focus/activity
- New STS reporting tool developed/embedded
- Effective management of Learning Campus project

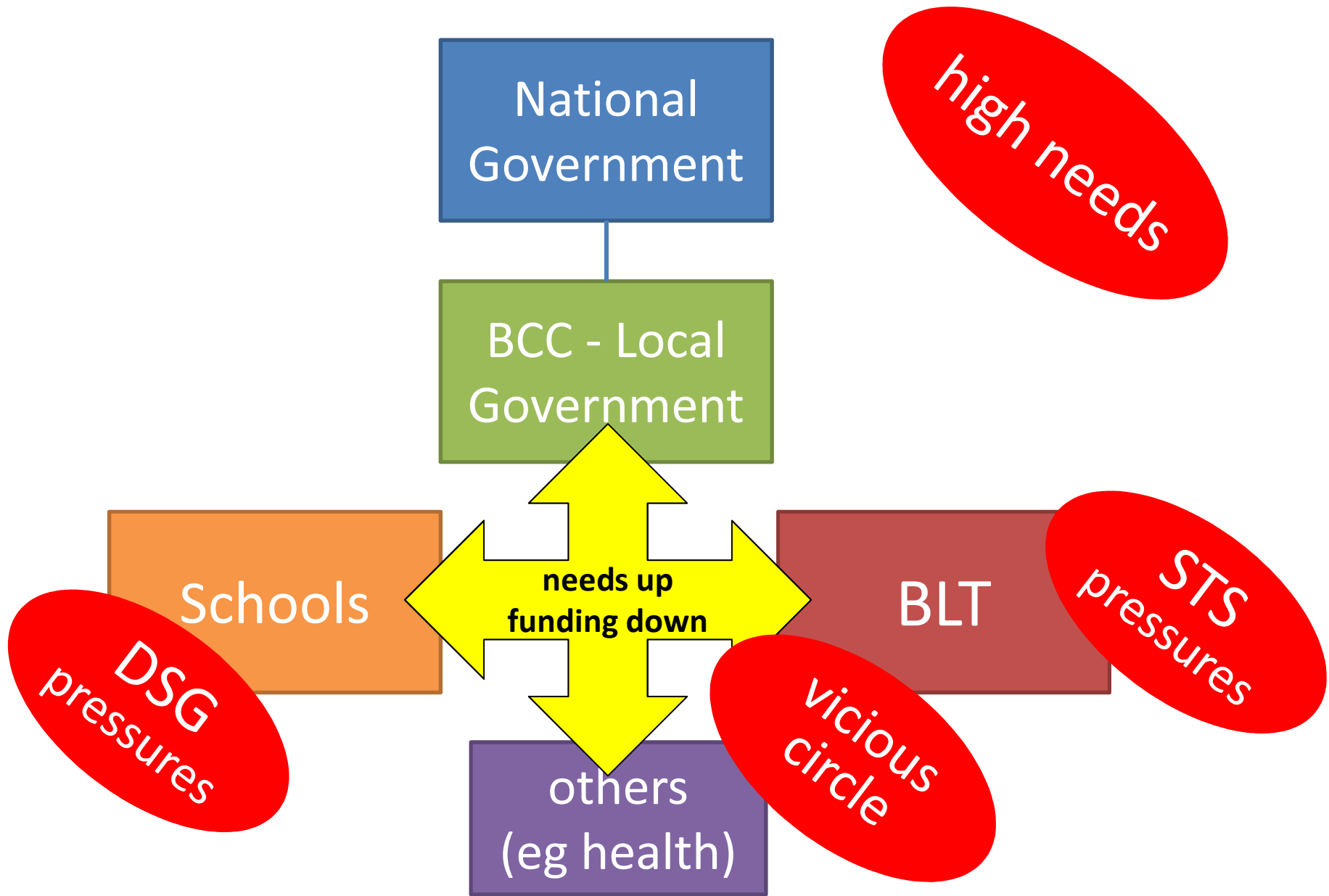
Key financial challenges

- 1) Education Support Grant (ESG)
/School Improvement (SI)
- 2) Specialist Teaching Service (STS)
- 3) Traded income

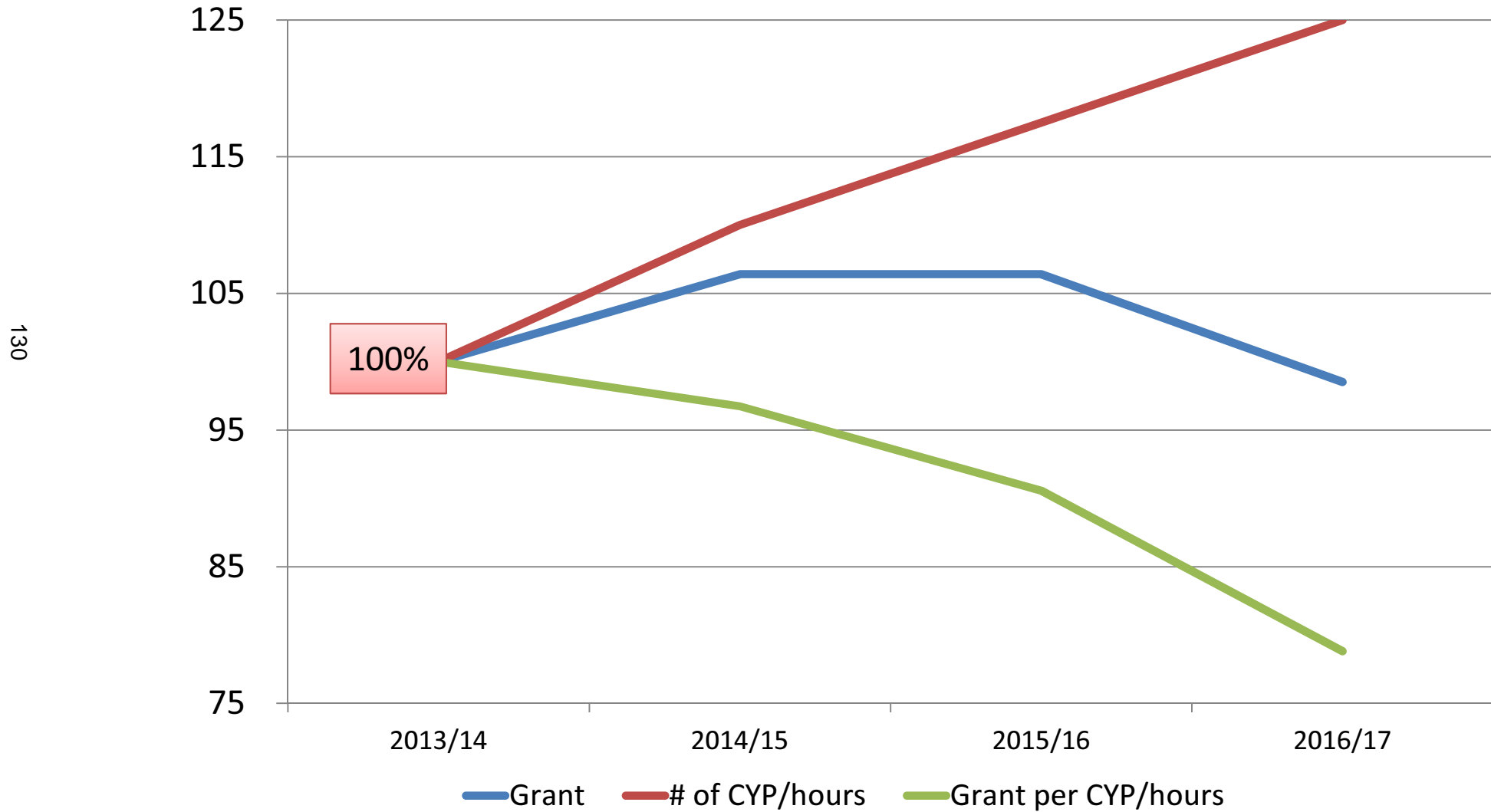


BLT SI response

- Grant halved (still uncertain)
- New 'leaner' operating model developed
- New structure/roles (staff consultation in progress)
- Focus on schools in category and closing the gap
- Supporting BCC fulfilment of statutory duties
- Increase in traded activity
- Communications with schools



The STS Challenge



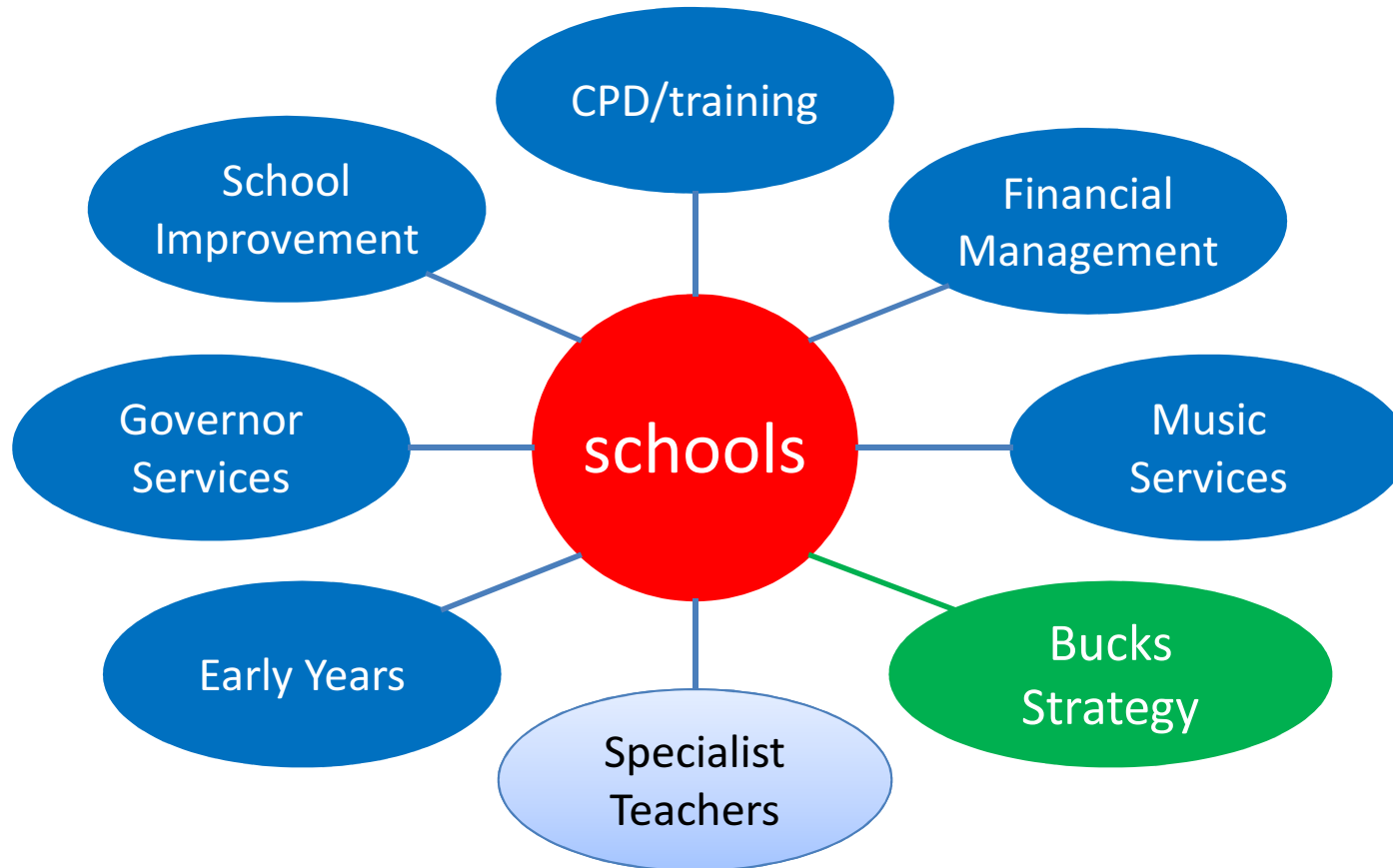
Response to Specialist Teaching Service challenge

- Increased assessments/referrals
- Operational challenges/strains
- New BCC SEND strategy approved
- Focus on improved outcomes for CYP and improved business effectiveness
- Single integrated operation

Increased commercial focus

- Appointed new Head of Business Development in January 2017
- Developing a BD plan
- Reviewing related skill requirements (sales, marketing, digital, PD, KAM)
- Focus on counties bordering Bucks
- Cross-organisational business improvement reviews commenced

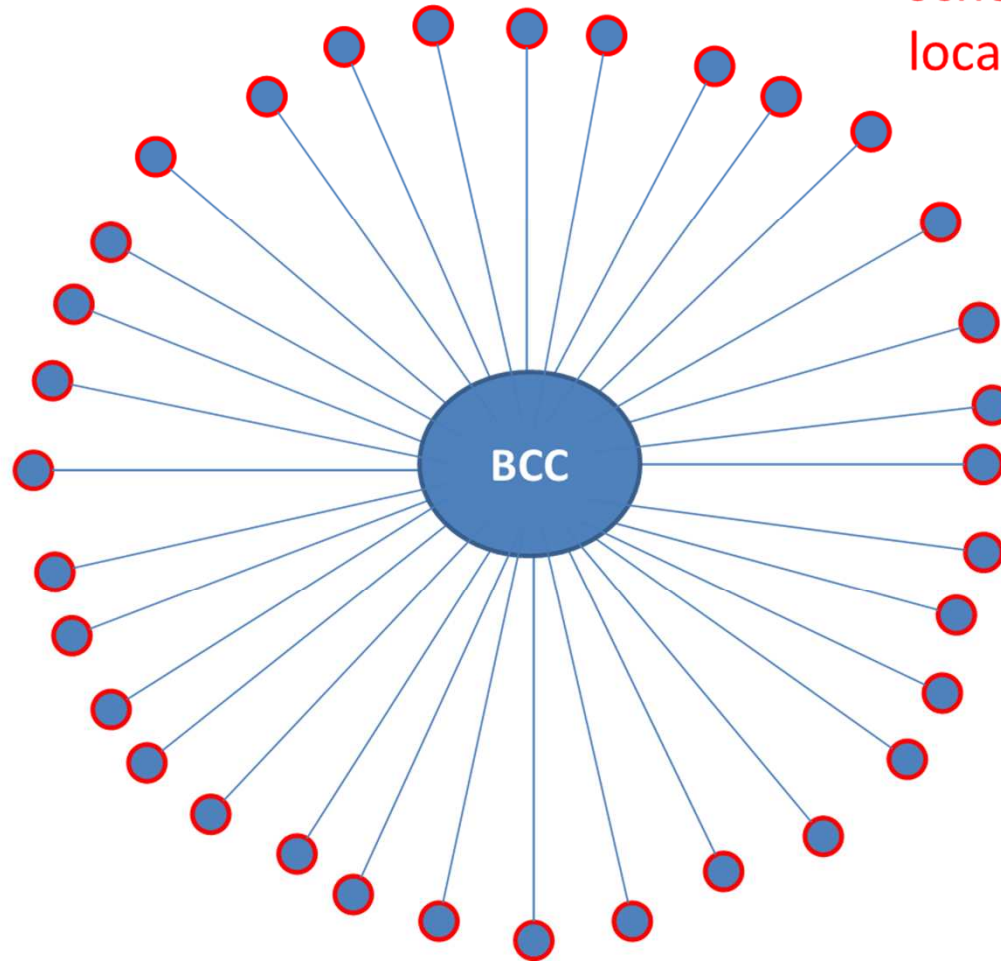
What BLT will do



The Evolving Landscape

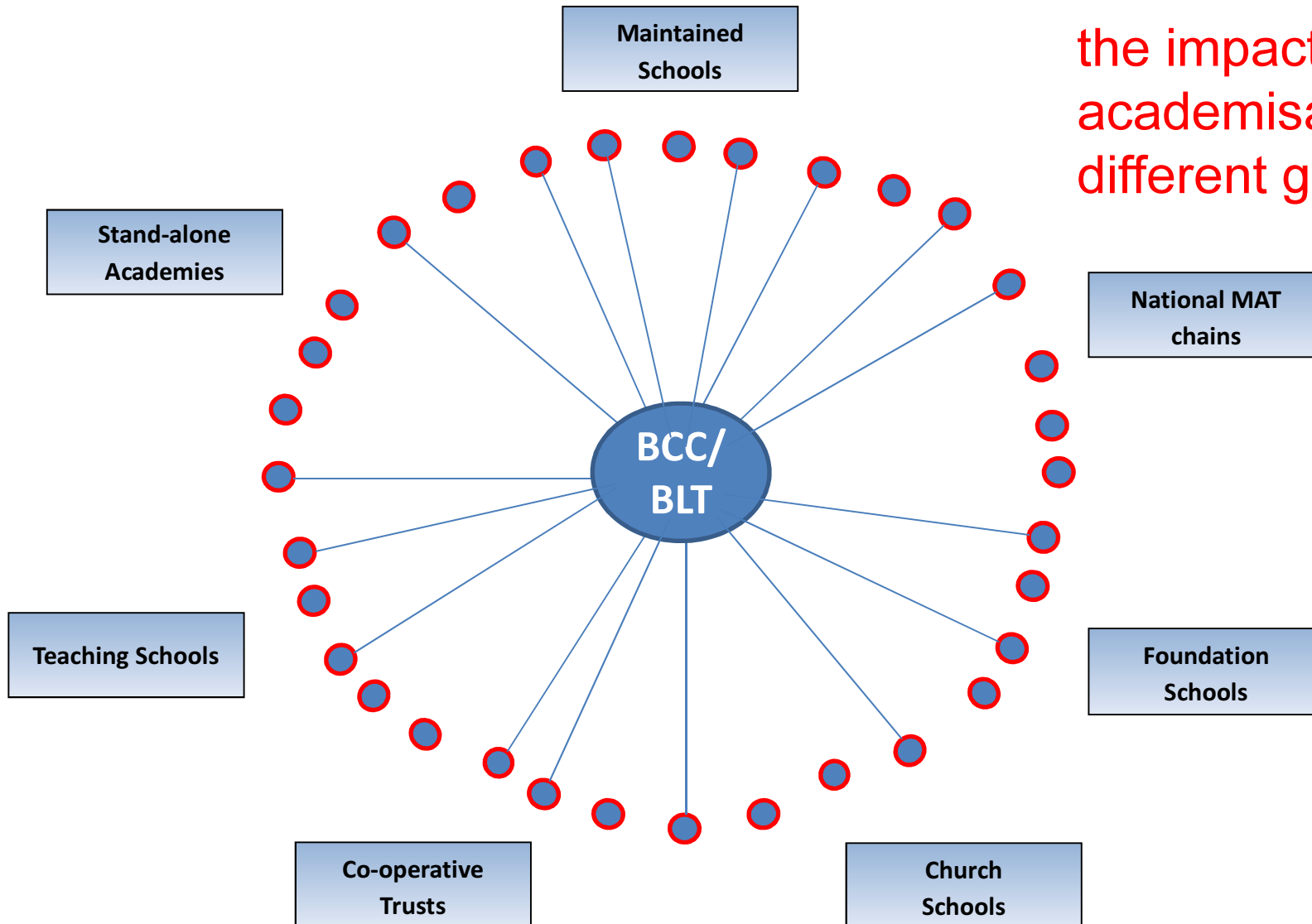
Ten years ago

300 maintained schools around a local authority hub

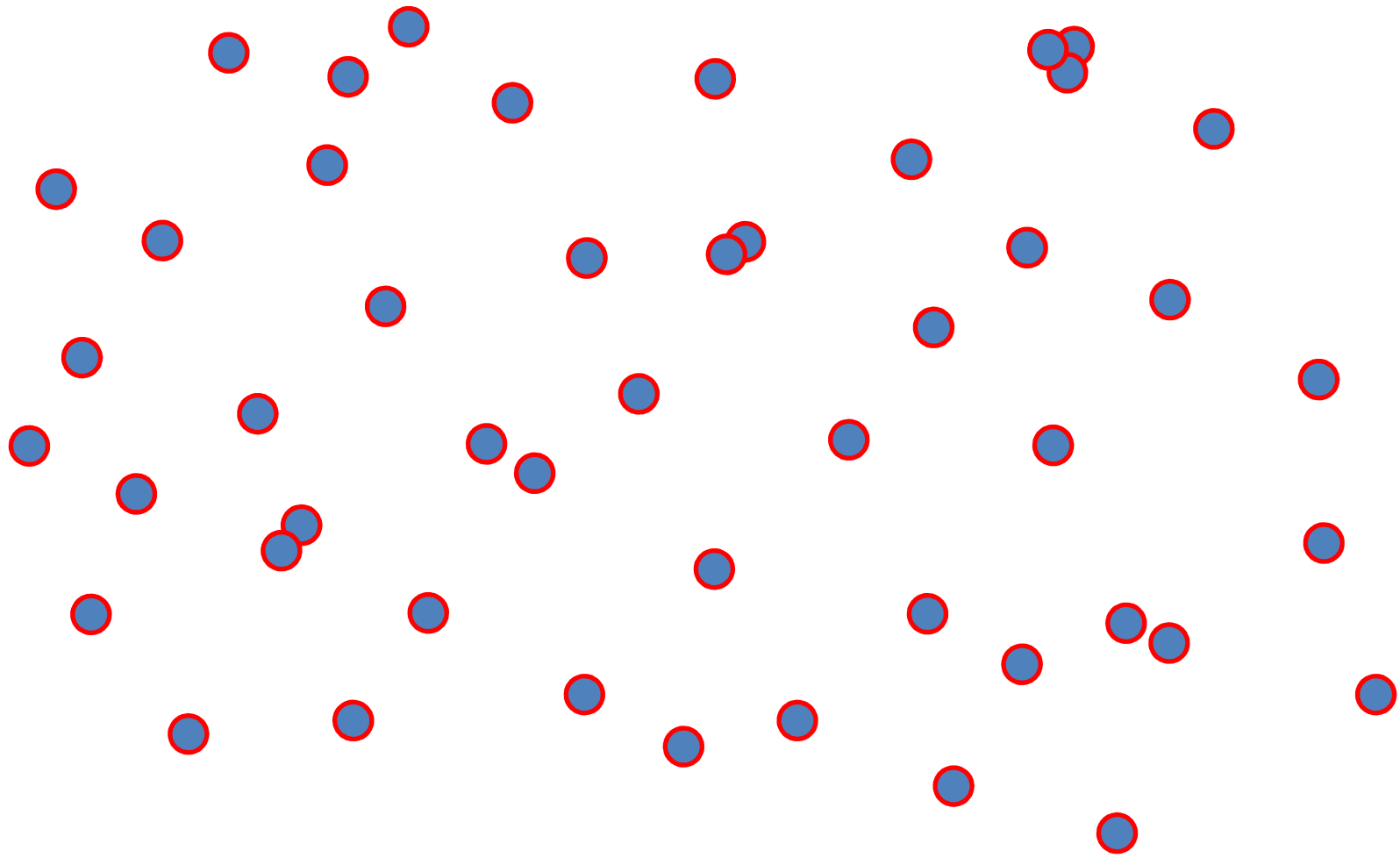


Today – current landscape

the impact of
academisation and
different groupings



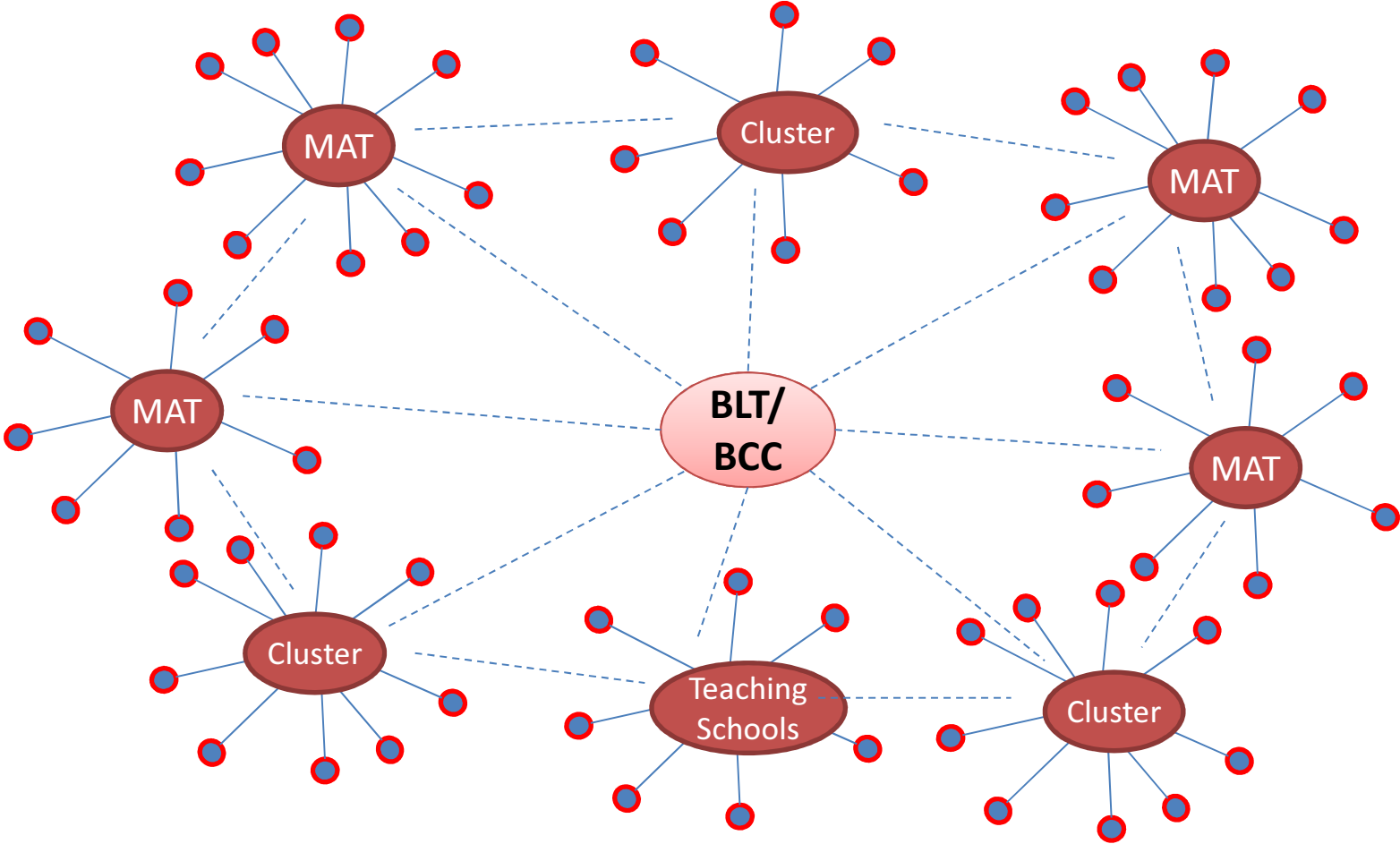
Possible future landscape



136

Preferred future landscape

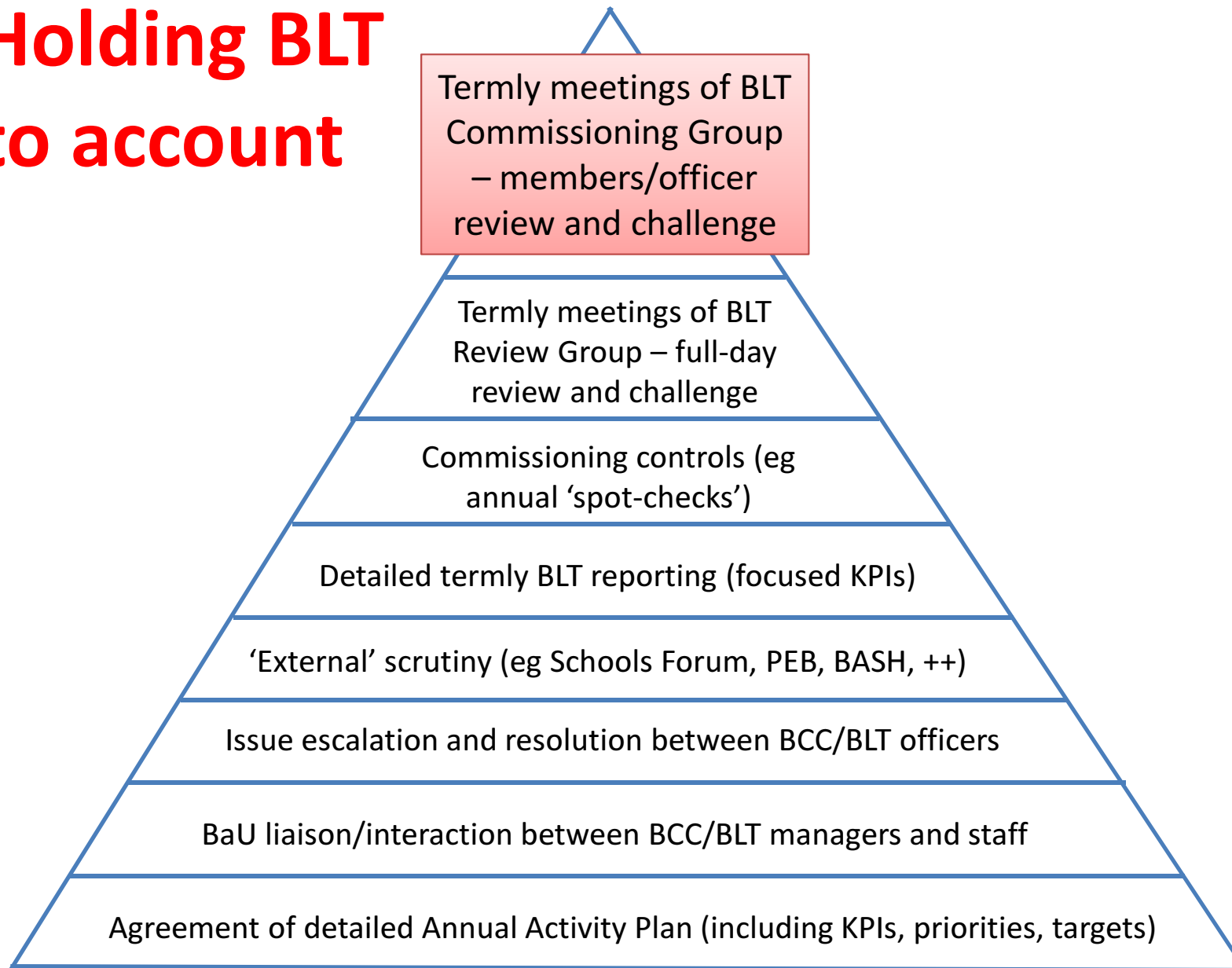
Self-sustaining networked system



Bucks Strategy

- New self-sustaining system/network for Bucks schools
- Embraces new educational landscape
- A local solution – a partnership that will operate at three levels of entry (discoverer, explorer, advocate)
- Academies/clusters/teaching schools/MATs/school to school support
- A platform for best practice to be shared
- Steering groups of Heads and Governors formed
- Briefing for leaders – information sent to all schools
- NCS/RSC buy-in (National and Regional School Commissioner)

Holding BLT to account



Summary

- Not-for-profit charity
- Sole purpose – to serve/support schools (increasing outcomes for CYP)
- Strong track record - impact, positive outcomes and VfM
- Proactive management of challenges
- Helping to create a new, inclusive, self-sustaining, network solution for Bucks



Buckinghamshire County Council Select Committee

Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee

Report to the Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Title: | Change For Children Programme |
| Committee date: | 21 st March 2017 |
| Author: | David Johnston |
| Contact officer: | Philip Dart 01296 382398 pdart@buckscc.gov.uk |
| Cabinet Member sign-off: | Lin Hazell, Cabinet Member for Children's Services Zahir Mohammed, Cabinet Member for Education & Skills |

Purpose of Agenda Item

This report is for information and was requested by the Select Committee, in order to update the committee on the Change For Children Programme and its objectives.

Background

The Change For Children Programme is designed to ensure Children's Social Care and Learning is financially stable and future proofed whilst continuing to support the most vulnerable children throughout Buckinghamshire

Key issues

The Select Committee will be updated on the four work-streams of the Programme, as outlined in Appendix 1:

- Early Help Services for Children and Families
- Services for Looked After Children and After-Care.
- Educating Our Children
- Services for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Resource implications

The financial costs and benefits of the Programme are already included in the Medium Term Plan as agreed by Full Council on 16th February 2017

Next steps

The Programme is governed by a Programme Board that will continue to meet monthly in order to ensure delivery of the benefits. Progress is also reported to the cabinet members for Education and Skills and for Children's Services, as part of the normal management arrangements of the Children's Social Care and Learning Business Unit. Where necessary, key decisions will be taken by the relevant cabinet members.



Change For Children Transformation Programme

Children's Social Care And Learning
Briefing For Select Committee
21st March 2017

Buckinghamshire County Council Strategic Plan 2015-17



Safeguarding
Our Vulnerable



Creating Opportunities
& Building Self Reliance



Keeping Buckinghamshire
Thriving and Attractive

Safeguarding our vulnerable

- Vulnerable children are safe and protected from harm
- Vulnerable children are supported to fulfill their potential
- Vulnerable Adults are safe and protected from harm
- Vulnerable Adults are supported to lead independent lives

Creating Opportunities & Building Self-Reliance

- Buckinghamshire young people achieve excellent results throughout their education
- Improved health and wellbeing for all of our residents
- Buckinghamshire residents are skilled and ready for employment
- Buckinghamshire communities are safe places to live
- Buckinghamshire communities are supported to help themselves

Keeping Buckinghamshire Thriving & Attractive

- Improved condition of roads and footpaths
- Improved road and rail connectivity
- Improved access to high speed broadband
- Sufficient school places for Buckinghamshire pupils
- Protecting our high quality natural environment
- The creation of more jobs for local people

Committed to
achieving the best
possible value for
money

Buckinghamshire Children's Strategy 2016



- 1 Children are at the heart of Buckinghamshire County Council's strategic priorities.
- 2 Planning for the future, what the data tells us about our children
- 3 Together keeping our children safe
- 4 Enabling all our children to learn and develop skills for life
- 5 Improving our children's health and well being
- 6 How are we going to do it: the 5 year plan

Buckinghamshire Children’s Strategy 2016

| Together keeping our children safe | Enabling all our children to learn and develop skills for life | Improving our children’s health and well being |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Right service, right time, right place ➤ Child centred ➤ Keeping children with their families | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Best start in life ➤ Narrowing the gap in learning ➤ Improving outcomes for those with SEN or disability ➤ School Improvement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure every child has the best start in life ➤ Enjoy healthy lifestyles ➤ Promote good mental wellbeing and emotional resilience ➤ Community Life |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Supporting our workforce ➤ Being innovative and digital | | |

146

Strategy = the “what” for CSC&L
Change For Children = the “how”



Change For Children Programme

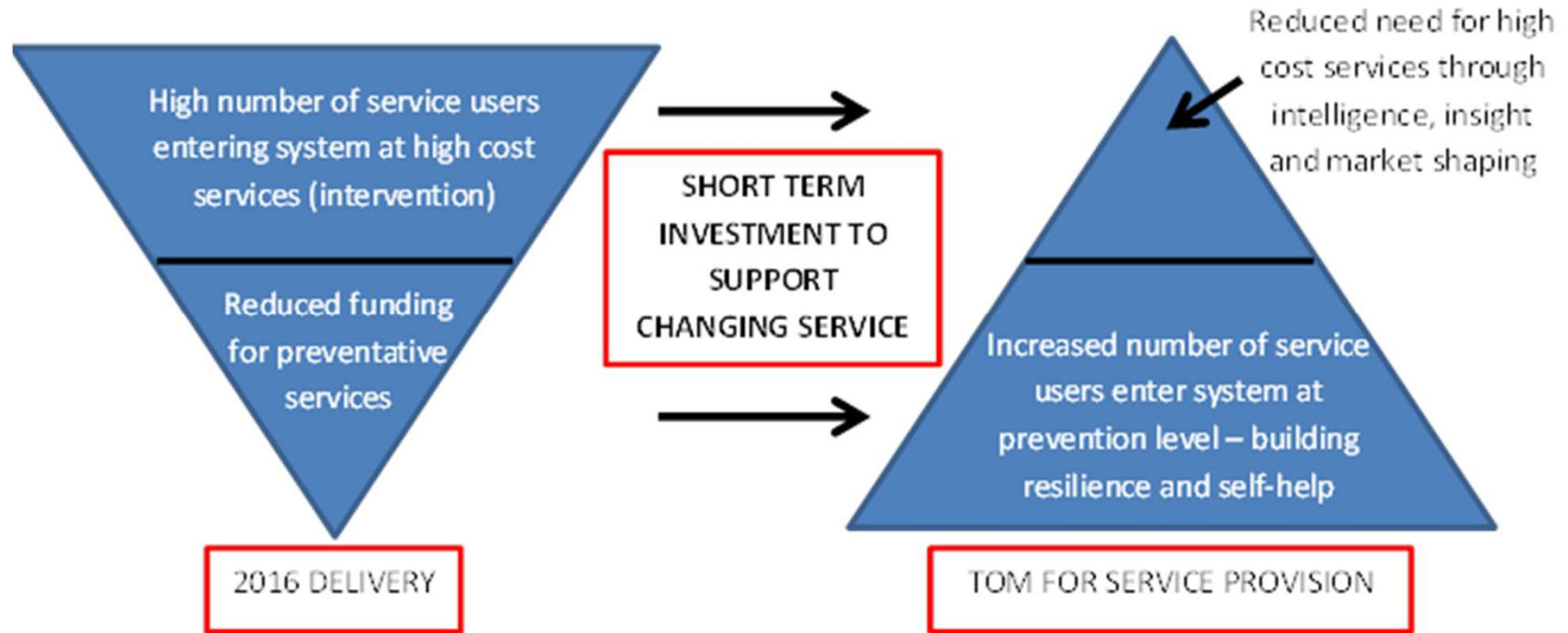
Mission:

Ensure Children's Social Care and Learning is financially stable and future proofed whilst continuing to support the most vulnerable children throughout Buckinghamshire

Operating Principles:

- Ensure we have the **capacity to intervene where children are not safe**
- Ensure that **there is a market** to meet the needs of children and young people – but **not necessarily to deliver everything ourselves**
- Build on parents and families strengths and **help communities to be resilient**
- **Actively manage the co-ordination of services** and deploy them in an effective way
- **Manage demand** to reduce the needs on high cost intervention

Buckinghamshire County Council



Workstreams

Support Services
for Our Children
and Families

Services for Our
Looked After
Children

Educating Our
Children in Bucks

Services for Our
Children with
SEN/CWD

Enablers

Intelligence & Insight

Commissioning

Workforce

Service Sustainability

Early Help Services for Children & Families

What problems are we trying to solve?

- Services are not sufficiently targeted
- Early Help is still not sufficiently co-ordinated
- Current services delivered in house and commissioned externally are financially unsustainable
- Planned MTFP savings are leading to piecemeal reduction in services
- Contacts, repeat contacts and referrals to social care are too high
- It is very difficult to track outcomes across all Early Help services

Where do we need to get to?

- A new Early Help integrated model based
- Financially sustainable services
- Reduction in demand on social care services
- Improved outcomes for a children and families

Services for Looked After Children & Aftercare

What problems are we trying to solve?

- Too many children placed out of County
- Insufficient foster carers
- There is no residential strategy - too many children are living in residential care
- Overall spend on Children's Social Care is high
- Lack of certainty that we're paying the right price
- Changes in the demographic profile of the County
- Adoption timescales

Where do we need to get to?

- More children placed within 20 miles of home
- More LAC placed within a family setting
- Clear residential strategy
- Spend in line with SNs
- Services that are able to meet children's needs, in the right place, at the right time for the right cost
- Suite of effective, evidence based interventions
- Reduced Adoption timescales

Educating Our Children

What problems are we trying to solve?

- Lack of coherent and coordinated education strategy
- Progress for many children in Bucks is poor.
- Bucks has a large number of small primary phase schools
- Central government funding reductions to the Education Services Grant (ESG) – for BCC a reduction from approximately £6m to £1.2m
- The current commissioned and direct delivery model is financially unsustainable
- The funding for the number of school places required is in excess of the current capital budget
- Government policy envisages the removal of statutory duties from local government

Where do we need to get to?

- A new 0-25 education and skills strategy for Buckinghamshire
- A new operating model based on the team around the school methodology
- Finalise the procurement options for the delivery of school improvement/ support services
- Spend to be in line with the retained duties grant
- Income from services to schools optimised
- Establish a new multi-agency education board to support the project

Services for Children with SEN &/or Disability

What problems are we trying to solve?

- Requirement to meet new duties for local areas
- Rising Buckinghamshire population and disproportionately large High Needs Block spend
- Increasing complexity of children's needs
- Significant rise in requests for EHC Plans
- Integrated assessment, commissioning and service delivery is underdeveloped
- Lack of transparency around eligibility for transport provision
- Culture that engenders dependency
- Current position of not knowing what support we provide or the amount we spend at child level unsustainable

Where do we need to get to?

- Deliver the SEND reforms
- spend per pupil in line with SNs
- Develop a clear view of the future needs and demand of special educational needs and/or disabilities
- Comprehensive (joint agency) SEND strategy
- Capital investment strategy to be produced
- Develop greater confidence, competence and skills in mainstream settings
- A needs led, focussed service, that supports families to care for their children
- Increase the use of direct payments / personalisation

Questions?

| Children's Social Care & Learning Select Committee | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| 21 Mar 2017 | Buckinghamshire Learning Trust (BLT) | For Members to look at the performance of the BLT | Steve Porter, Director of Finance and Corporate Governance | |
| 21 Mar 2017 | Change for Children (C4C) - 5 Year Plan | To give Members the opportunity to discuss the 5 year programme of re-configuration projects across the Children's Social Care and Learning Business Unit. | Phil Dart, Service Director (Communities) | |
| 21 Mar 2017 | Education Standards Summary Report 2016 | For the Committee to consider a summary report of pupil's educational attainment across the County for 2016. | Atifa Sayani, Education Champion, Nicholas Wilson, Service Director Education | |
| 21 Mar 2017 | NHS England Sustainability and Transformation Plan | Understanding the impacts of integrating Health and Social Care on Children's Services including the NHS England Sustainability and Transformation Plan | David Johnston, Strategic Director (Children and Young People) | |
| 21 Mar 2017 | The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2016 | For Members to examine the new Special Educational Needs and Disability Strategy. | Gillian Shurrock, Head of SEN | |
| 5 Sep 2017 | Independent Reviewing Officer Service | For Members to look at the performance of the IRO service and current resourcing. | Sharon Graham, Interim IRO manager | |

| Date | Topic | Description and purpose | Lead Service Officer | Attendees |
|-------------|--|--|---|------------------|
| 5 Sep 2017 | National Funding Forumula for Schools | For Members to consider changes to the National Funding Formula and the impact on Buckinghamshire schools. | Nicholas Wilson, Service Director Education | |
| 5 Sep 2017 | National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) | For Members to look at the performance of NYAS following recent management changes in Buckinghamshire. | Simon Brown, Operations Manager (Commissioning) | |
| 5 Sep 2017 | The Educational Psychology Service Action Plan | To update Members on progress with implementing the Educational Psychology Service Action Plan | Craig Tribe | |