

Health & Wellbeing Board

- SEND Strategy 2017 – 2020
- Gillian Shurrock, Head of SEN

Key recommendations :

- To note the Priorities arising from the SEND Review, and in particular the need to strengthen leadership, reduce dependencies on special school provision and build increased capacity in mainstream schools.
- To note the significant transformation challenges implicit in the action arising from the Review, including to achieve a change of direction for some key performance indicators
- To link other priorities (eg: CWD and SEND integration) into the Strategy.
- To consider the SEND Strategy as the framework for action for the three years 2017-2020, that will secure the cultural and financial changes required.




What are the key issues?

1. **The SEND Review** – focus on the financial implications of the statutory SEND process. Findings lead to **SEND Strategy for 2017-2020**
2. **Ofsted and CQC inspection** – new Inspection regime that will look closely at how agencies plan, commission and work together for SEND, as well as the experiences of parents and carers, children and young people, and the way in which schools, settings, professionals and the administration of the statutory process is person-centred.
3. **Financial challenges** – SEN statutory process is a demand led system where the approach of mainstream schools and early education settings, and parental demand is directly linked to the financial impact on the DSG High Needs Budget. Spend on specialist placement impacts on transport costs.
4. **Transformation capacity** needed to:
 - Drive, lead and take responsibility for transformation programme
 - Develop and embed new skills in mainstream schools
 - Provide inspirational leadership across mainstream schools to SENDCOs
 - Refocus fieldwork services and establish a new coherence in deployment and service priorities
 - Introduce new moderation approaches to support decision making
 - Integrate CWD and SEND work and ensure smooth transition to adulthood
 - Include in Target Operational Model investment



A reminder of key SEND Review Findings

Local Context

- The DSG Schools Block has successively overspent on HN budget
 - SEN specialist fieldwork staff are prevented from working with schools at an early stage because of formal assessment pressures, or conflicting priorities
 - The SEN administration at capacity and at times over capacity
 - Parents and carers are losing confidence in mainstream education and pressing for special school places
 - Exclusions and transfers to special school increasing
 - Higher % of CYP in special schools than nationally
 - Lower % of CYP at SEN support than nationally
 - Higher numbers of EHC Plans
 - Increasing EHC assessments
 - Ongoing and increasing spend – over budget
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Issues that need resolving

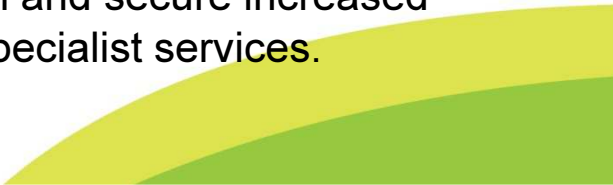
- Threshold Management – assessment, placement and pupil level SEN funding
- Placement trends – increasing dependency on specialist provision, including out-county
- Operational integration of specialist SEND services and teams
- Confidence, competence and capacity within mainstream schools
- Long standing cultures and beliefs in schools and professional staff, and parents & carers




7 Strategic Priorities

Children, young people and families	
Priority 1	Enhance 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 SENCOs 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
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.

Impact of national / local policy?

- National legislative and policy framework was re-launched in Sept 2014 – Children and Families Act – similar approaches to previously – but with new emphasis on high level inter-agency commissioning and joint planning, on person-centred approaches, extending eligibility for education for students with SEND to the age of 25 and with a clear presumption for mainstream education.
 - Buckinghamshire’s 2013-2016 SEND Strategy focused on implementation of new legislative reforms, and the administration of new processes and procedures.
 - The 2017 – 2020 draft Strategy followed a SEND Review whose focus was the interaction of the administration of the SEND statutory process and the financial impact.
 - The SEND Strategy demonstrates extensive dialogue with stakeholders, including school leaders, parents and carers, as well as a formal consultation in October on the next steps following the SEND Review – the priorities to drive the SEND strategy. The content of the draft strategy has been discussed in detail with the Parent Carer Forum lead and with the lead officer from SENDIAS. The Priorities were supported by all respondents, whose main concern was what would this mean in practice.
 - The SEND Strategy overtly aims to reduce reliance on specialist provision, develop capacity and competence in local and mainstream provision and secure increased efficiency and improved impact from resources, including specialist services.
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Any financial implications for BCC?

- In previous years the overspends on the DSG High Needs Block have been made good by the Schools Block. A government consultation in 2015 proposed that the Schools Block would no longer be able to subsidise overspends in the High Needs block. A decision is deferred.
 - The statutory status of provision and placement recorded on EHC Plans and statements means that the Council is responsible for ensuring that the stated provision is delivered. An overspend against the High Needs Block could lead to a position where the Council was required to honour the financial commitments from other budgets.
 - Continuing demand for special school places will further increase the percentage of the pupil population in specialist provision. Special school placements typically cost more than mainstream.
 - As a proportion of the cohort of young people who have completed their education at 19, or at 21 in previous years, continue until they are 25 years old, the demands on the High Needs budget will increase.
 - Recent increases in placements in out-county residential independent special schools, often involving children with social care priority status, lead to increased and unplanned expenditure.
 - Most special school pupils attend a school some distance from their homes. Local special schools may not have places or may have an unsuitable year cohort and so distances can be longer than expected. The Transport budget is inevitably reactive to SEND placement decisions.
 - Increasing capacity for SEND in mainstream will inevitably require capital adaptations.
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Involvement or impact on colleagues and partners?

- The SEND Strategy requires (Priority 4) improvement to the “leadership, co-ordination, deployment and collaborative working of specialist SEND specialist teaching, advisory and educational psychology services.” This includes the specialist teaching and early years SEND staff that are currently employed and deployed through BLT.
- Specified access to speech and language therapy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy is a key feature of EHC assessment requests and plans. An imbalance between CYP with EHC Plans and those at SEN support (as is the situation now) will create unplanned pressure on these services.
- Paediatricians, therapists, social workers and educational psychologists are required by law to provide formal assessment advice within a specified time period if they either know the child or young person or are required to meet them (health and educational psychology). A continuing increase in EHC assessments leads to more time being spent in formal assessment activity at the expense of preventative and early intervention work with schools and settings.
- Transition to adult services must be part of the Preparing for Adulthood pathway as set out in the SEND Code of Practice. This means an integrated approach with children's and adult social care as the requirement for determined 5 day arrangements each week is shared between social care and health (through personal budgets) and education through funded education for guided learning hours (determined by the DFE).



One Council Approach – any implications across the whole organisation?

- That the integration of social care children with disability responsibilities with SEND arrangements, includes the integration of adult social care responsibilities for young adults up to 25 years of age who are the subjects of EHC Plans.
- That's the placement of children in need or looked after by social care in residential schools, is jointly considered by social care and education to consider both legislative and financial frameworks.
- That the identification and provision of the designated medical officer role by the CCG is informed by volumes and demand for EHC assessment
- That the process for diagnosis of autism for children is managed in a manner that includes LA educational specialists and that takes account of the statutory Adult Autism Strategy.
- That the PI framework that underpins the SEND Strategy is used as an integral aspect of joint commissioning of services for children and young people with SEND, whatever the professional discipline.



Next Steps (including timeline)

- SEND Strategy is finalised and published by January 2017
- Stakeholder Board receives termly reports and contributes to governance.
- Programme manager / co-ordinator is recruited for March 2017
- Summary and full version of Strategy are published on Local Offer web-site, with summary versions sent in hard copy to all schools, early education settings and colleges of further education.
- Implementation Plan is prepared by 24 December
- Termly budget and performance reports to Director for Education, Learning and Social care

