

SEND Update - April 2024

Report To (Meeting):	ONE Stockport Health and Care Board		
Report From (Board Lead)	Chris McLoughlin (OBE) Executive Director People and Integration, Director of Children's Services, Stockport MBC		
Report From (Author):	Geraldine Gerrard, Strategic Lead for SEND, Access and Inclusion, Stockport MBC		
Date:	24 th April 2024	Agenda Item No:	15
Previously Considered by:	Tim Bowman, Director of Education, Work and Skills, Stockport MBC		

Purpose of the report:

This report is an update to the ONE Stockport Health and Care Board on the current position and context of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Stockport.

The report is to provide an overall oversight of the current strategic position and to highlight the current risk issues within the system overall.

The Locality Board are asked to consider the information.

Key points (Executive Summary):

Appendix 1. The SEND Board has drafted a refreshed SEND Strategy for 2024-2027.

Feedback from parent carers, the Investment Position Statement and the SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) have supported the development and focus of the key strategic partnership working groups tasked with delivering improvement on five priorities within the Strategy.

The Strategy identifies four partnership sub-groups reporting directly to the Board. These are Co-Production, Communication and Engagement Quality; Performance and Measuring Impact; Joint Commissioning and Integration; and Workforce Development & Support for Carers.

In addition, there are other Partnerships groups delivering on the children's SEND agenda comprising of School Place Planning Board, and the sub-groups to the One Health and Care Board including All Age Autism Board; CYP Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership; and the Neighbourhood and Prevention Programme. Links are also being made to the Youth Justice Board to ensure Children and Young People with SEND in youth custody receive appropriate education and support.

The five named priorities for the SEND board focus attention on the requirements of our three areas of highest levels of need. These are:

- 1. Social Emotional Mental Health**
- 2. Autism and Neurodiversity**
- 3. Speech Language and Communication Needs**

In addition, there are two cross cutting themes applicable to all education, health and care services for SEND:

- 4. Timelines of Assessment and Diagnosis** and ensure those that are waiting are 'waiting well' which will be underpinned by clear communication
- 5. Developing and promoting our early help ambition of Success at SEN Support and the early years Early Help Assessment** to enable the effective management of need at the earliest point and impact on the **Sustainability of Education, Health and Care Services.**

Appendix 2. We have developed a governance and reporting framework that will support the SEND Board to be appraised on the delivery of the plan. This will involve bi-monthly reporting on performance, delivery of activity and risk assessment.

Appendix 3. The SEND Board Terms of reference have been refreshed to ensure it reflects the refresh of the SEND strategy and expectations of partnership sub-groups not directly managed by the Board.

General update:

The demand for Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans (the statutory multi agency plan for children with additional needs) continues to rise which is also increasing costs. Stockport has historically had a high level of statutory plans in comparison to similar areas and national averages. High levels of referrals for plans and assessments are having a significant impact on performance for the timeliness of issuing a final plan. This is impacting on parents which is leading to increased complaints and dissatisfaction. The annual review of plans is better than the national average.

To improve Stockport's current position on timeliness of issuing EHC plans, we have:

- Increased coordinators, SEND Support Officers and Education Psychology capacity as well as moved staffing capacity within teams
- Applied further rigour to referrals: clear guidance about the information required to make a decision to assess, request to assess panel check and challenge
- Introduced fortnightly timeliness meetings with key leaders and the Director of Education
- Reduce the number of referrals by strengthening inclusion and SEN Support
- Tactical allocation of plans – clear backlog as well as prioritise in time requests
- Reviewed communication linked to:
 - The launch of the Parent Portal to allow parents to access live progress on assessments as well as finalised plans and the plan review cycle

- Launched the Provider Portal to request and receive information digitally through a secure site from education, health and care professionals who are informing the content of the plan.

Current spend on services for SEND is £112M in 2022/23 compared to £86.3M in 2019/20, a 30% increase. While spend has increased, additional investment has not kept pace with significant overspend recorded in Education and Care due to the recognised funding gap nationally resulting in high levels of deficit budget in most local areas.

- In Stockport like in most areas nationally, the High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget is in deficit. This is due to a combination of increased demand, increased external placement costs, delays to opening more local provision i.e., Lisburne and Pear Tree and increased requests from schools for additional high needs funding to support pupils in schools.
- Education SEND Transport budget is forecast to overspend by £1m for 2023/24 financial year. The Council has increased SEN Transport budget to try and address the increased demand and costs of transport. Further budget recovery activity is currently underway.
- Children's Social Care Direct Payments and respite budgets are also overspent.

Stockport's Delivering Better Value initiative (DBV in SEND) aims to support our local system partners to improve the delivery of SEND services for children and young people whilst working towards financial sustainability. We are in the first year of a two year change programme to enhance early help support, reduce the need for lengthy statutory assessments, focus on Mental Health, Autism, neurodiversity and greater financial oversight and governance of decision making. System leaders from education, health and care continue to be key partners in this change programme.

However, low school baseline funding, rise in EHCPs, demand for mainstream additional top up funding, rising parental requests for Specialist and Independent School Places continues to increase the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit. Therefore, additional recovery actions include:

- high-cost placement review (building into rigorous annual plan review). This will include an assessment of whether provision is effective and high quality (well attended and positive parental/student feedback, improved outcomes); appropriate to needs and is clear of the plan for what's next - transitioning into independence, work and skills); geographical distance (travel costs); and ultimately value for money (in line with market costs, financial transparency)
- further work led by the School Place Planning Board to increase the sufficiency of maintained or state funded places. This will include the expansion of small cohort class sizes on site of mainstream schools; expansion of Alternative Provision; full time registered places and part time off-site interventions to stabilise mainstream places; maximising our existing capacity; block purchase lower cost independent special school places; investing in additional secondary Local Authority (LA) special school provision for Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (SEMH).

Recommendation:

The Board are asked to:

- Consider the information presented in the paper.
- Consider what your respective organisations can do as key partners to improve the lived experience of children with SEND and their families.

Decision		Discuss/Direction		Information/Assurance	x
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Aims (please indicate x)

Which integrated care aim(s) is / are supported by this report:	People are happier and healthier and inequalities are reduced	x
	There are safe, high-quality services which make best use of the Stockport pound	x
	Everyone takes responsibility for their health with the right support	x
	We support local social and economic development together	x

Conflicts of Interests

Potential Conflicts of Interest:	None
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Risk and Assurance:

List all strategic and high level risks relevant to this paper	<p>Financial Due to high levels of demand with limited capacity, there overspend in the High Needs Block Allocations as well as revenue budgets support children and young people with SEND.</p> <p>Inspection The new SEND inspection focuses on assessing the impact of local area arrangements for children and young people with SEND. Stockport will be in the inspection window as soon as the Accelerated Progress Plan for Social and Care services has been signed off as an area that no longer requires monitoring. It is anticipated that this is likely to happen after the 2024 local elections. Other areas that have been inspected have had a negative impact on the Ofsted rating where there is evidence of significant wait times for assessment and diagnostics without a robust, effective and monitored recovery plan with evidence of impact. The inspection focuses on the partnership as education, health and care working in partnership to improve the quality and impact of plans at strategic, tactical and individual levels which relies heavily on feedback from service users as well as the workforce making communication a key priority for all services to both the service users and staff.</p>
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Consultation and Engagement:

Local People / Patient Engagement:	Stockport maintains a strong relationship with Parents and Carers Stockport (PACTS) as well as other parent carer groups across the Borough. There are regular meetings between senior leaders and parent/carers groups. The refreshed SEND Strategy has been developed through listening clearly to feedback from
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	Stockport residents who have supported in identifying the themes and priorities.
Workforce Engagement:	Stockport engages the education, health and care workforce through sub-groups, newsletters, briefing and regular all staff focus on SEND through 'Practice Week'

Potential Implications:			
Financial Impact: Please note - All reports with a financial implication require detail of the level of funding, funding stream and comments from Finance.	Non-Recurrent Expenditure	£	
	Recurrent Expenditure (please state annual cost)	£ 112M in 2022/23 (As per Investment Position Statement 2022/23)	
	Funding stream	Yes	No
	Included in the s75 Pooled Budget		x
	GM ICB (Stockport) delegated budget	x	
	Other, please specify: Council's revenue and Dedicated Schools Budgets.		
Finance Comments:			
Performance Impact:	<p>SEND Board has a SEND Scorecard that identifies performance by proxy-indicator against our seven outcomes statements.</p> <p>The Scorecard is being reviewed to ensure it aligns with the refreshed SEND Strategy and highlights progress on the five priority areas.</p>		
Workforce Impact:	<p>Current feedback from Service leads is that continued high levels of demand that are outstripping resources is having a detrimental impact on the workforce.</p> <p>The recent staff survey undertaken by the council and completed by 56% of the children's workforce reflected that 79% are satisfied with their experience of working with the council however, 36% of staff feel that they cannot complete their job without working excessive hours.</p>		
Quality and Safety Impact:	<p>Quality is currently being assessment by the Performance and Quality Sub-group to the SEND Board. Moderation, audit and self-assessment activity will support greater understating of the quality of plans and support for children and young people with SEND and their families.</p>		
Compliance and/or Legal Impact:	<p>The SEND Board works to the SEND Code of Practice which refers to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations. The SEND Code of Practice provides guidance on the special educational needs and disability (SEND) system for children and young people aged 0 to 25 in England. It explains the legal requirements and statutory guidance that schools, colleges, local authorities, health and social services must follow to support children and young people with SEND.</p>		

	The SEND Code of Practice was last updated in 2015 and is currently under review by the government.					
Equality and Diversity: Has an equality impact assessment been completed?	General Statement:					
	If Not Applicable please explain why	Yes		No	x	N/A
Environmental Impact: Has an environmental impact assessment been completed?	General Statement:					
	If Not Applicable please explain why	Yes		No	x	N/A

Stockport SEND Strategy 2024-2027

1. Foreword

Cllr Wendy Meikle Cabinet Member for Children Families and Education

The strategy is fully in line with the joint aspirations and approach to the delivery of the One Stockport Borough Plan. At its core is the spirit of collaboration, inclusion, equality and community. We know that we will have the biggest impact on improving lives when we work together across public services, businesses and communities.

Chris McLoughlin OBE, Executive Director People and Integration and Director of Children's Services, Philippa Johnson NHS GM Deputy Place Based Lead (Co-chairs of the SEND Board)

We are delighted to present the Stockport SEND Strategy which outlines our approach to support children and young people with SEND to achieve and their families to thrive over the next 3 years. As leaders in the field of education, health and care, we recognise the importance of collaborative efforts to create an inclusive and supportive environment for all children and young people.

We understand that every child is unique. Our commitment is to provide flexible services that respect individual wishes and meet individual needs. By tailoring our approach, we aim to empower families and enhance outcomes. We recognise that our combined workforce plays a pivotal role. We are dedicated to developing a skilled workforce that strives for excellence through continuous learning, professional development, and a passion for making a difference.

We are committed to offering sufficient and appropriate provision within the community. Whether it is educational support, health services, or emotional well-being, we want to ensure that families can access what they need close to home through neighbourhood and prevention. We actively collaborate as a system of early years providers, schools, colleges, health, education and care professionals to support every child and young person with SEND to achieve success in all areas of life. We work with parents and carers, listening to lived experience to shape our evolving services and will continue to learn from what they tell us and ensure their voices influence our work and developments going forwards.

Sherran Hillman MBE, Chair of Parents and Carers Together Stockport (PACTS)

Parents and carers are the unsung heroes of our children's lives. They hold a wealth of knowledge about their child's unique needs, aspirations, and challenges. Their insights are invaluable, and working together with universal, targeted and specialist services we know will lead to more effective and inclusive practices. PACTS welcomes the clear integrated and collaborative approach to delivering improved outcomes for our children, young people and families. We commit to continue listening to the voice of parents and carers in Stockport and working with the local area to reshape services and support, so they reflect families' views even more fully.

2. Introduction

This document sets out the strategic priorities for children and young with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their families in Stockport for the period 2024 until 2027.

The strategy is based on the voice of all stakeholders within Stockport. Ongoing dialogue with parent/carers groups, which includes, but is not limited to, our nominated parent/carer forum have helped shape our priorities. We have also heard from young people through our SEND specific young person's groups SAYS and through focussed work carried out by partners AUTISK and PIE.

Our aim is to build on the work undertaken as part of the previous 2020-2023 SEND strategy and the significant improvements made since our initial SEND Inspection in 2018.

Since 2018 we have come a long way as a local area and have embedded "SEND as everyone's business" with a focussed transformation plan in place throughout the last 5 years. In the OFSTED re-visit in 2022 it was noted that:

Leaders' mantra that 'SEND is everyone's business' is now embedded in the culture of the local area. Leaders ensure that children's services and health teams are held to account for the education and health outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

However, as a local area we recognise that there is still much to do to improve the lives of our children and young people with SEND in Stockport.

3. Our Vision

Our vision in Stockport for SEND is:

"Our vision is for all children and young people with SEND to have the best start in life. We want all children and young people to be happy, prepared for adulthood and able to achieve their goals. We want families to feel supported, confident, resilient and connected to their community"

To support this vision, we have co-designed seven I Statements with parents, carers and young people in collaboration with the Council for Disabled Children. These Statements underpin work across all areas so we can ensure the best possible outcomes for children and young people. The seven outcomes for children and young people are:

- I am confident and able to achieve my goals
- My voice is heard and acted upon
- I enjoy good health and wellbeing
- I feel safe
- I feel part of my local community
- I am happy and have people I can trust
- The people who love me and care for me are enabled to do this

4. Co-production of Our Priorities

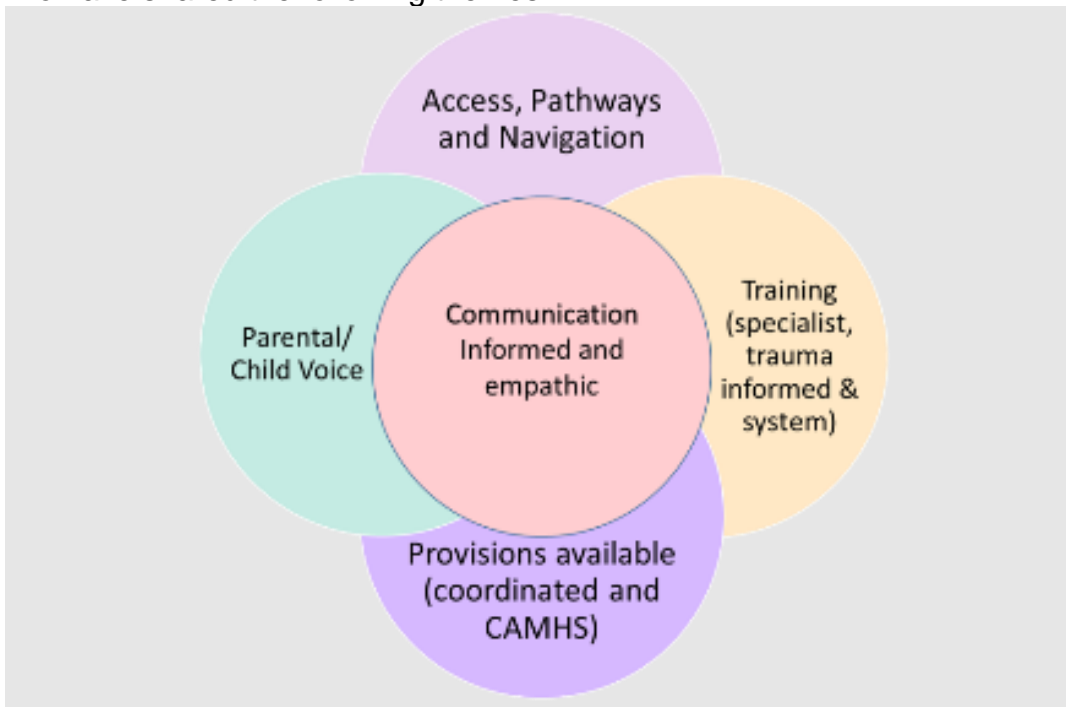
This strategy has been written in line with the commitment made in our Stockport Local-Area Co-production Charter (insert). We have worked together at Board, sub-group and task and finish group levels to achieve improvements as well as prioritise our collective time and resources. We have been active in ensuring coproduction is embedded in the way we work.

Co-production happens when all voices are actively listened to from the start of the planning process. This involves a mutual respect for each other's views, with an open and honest relationship that is transparent and continually evolving to achieve meaningful and positive outcomes.

The Charter states that, together we will create a culture where we will:

- Be open and honest
- Actively listen
- Value the lived experience
- Do what matters
- Work together
- Be respectful

In making decisions on our priority setting for this strategy we have included feedback from partners and listened clearly to feedback from Stockport residents who have shared the following themes:



The details of the parent/carer feedback can be accessed here:



The SEND Strategy has also been informed by the recent SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (insert) and will inform our Joint Commissioning Strategy.

The SEND strategy also aligns with the Stockport Borough Plan and following priorities:

One Heart: Because at the heart of Stockport are its people and the communities in which they live.

One Home: Because we believe that Stockport is a great place to live, where no one should be left behind.

One Future: Because we can grow, create and deliver a thriving future for Stockport

5. SEND population in Stockport

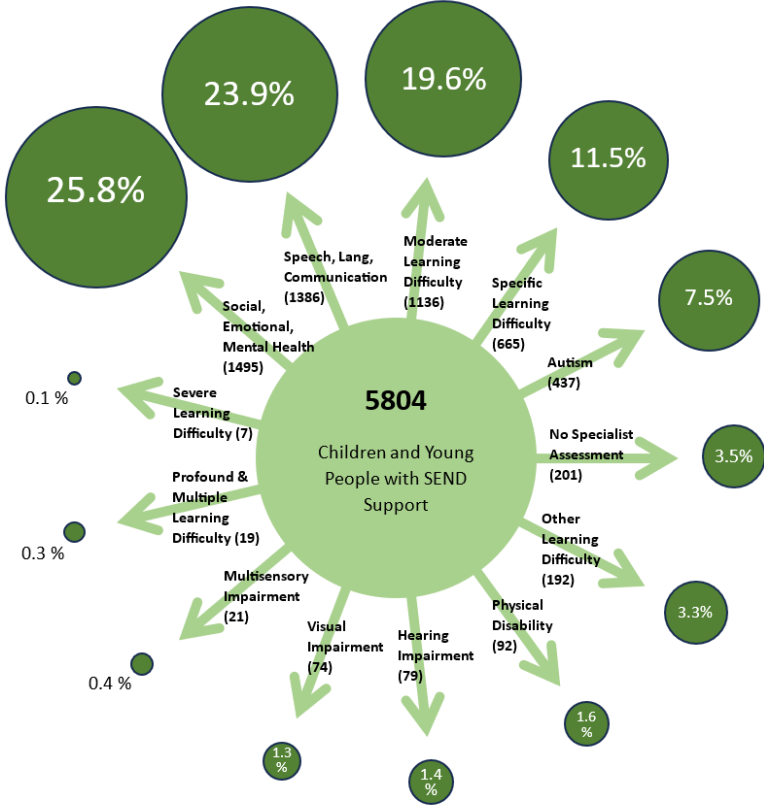
The current population Stockport

- There are currently 81,003 children and young people aged 0 to 25 years living in Stockport. In Stockport 8,993 children and young people (0 to 25 year olds) have Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability (SEND).
- Of those with SEND, 67.3% have their needs met through lower-level SEN Support and 32.7% have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This means approximately 10.7% of the total population of 0 to 25 year olds in Stockport have an identified SEND need. This is higher than the national average (8.5%).
- The number of EHC plans in Stockport has increased from 2,195 in 2019 to 2,827 at the end of 2023 an overall increase of over 28%. Since the 2023 SEND JSNA, this has risen to 3,164 in mid-February 2024 with an additional 590 in progress (where there is a plan being drafted but not finalised)

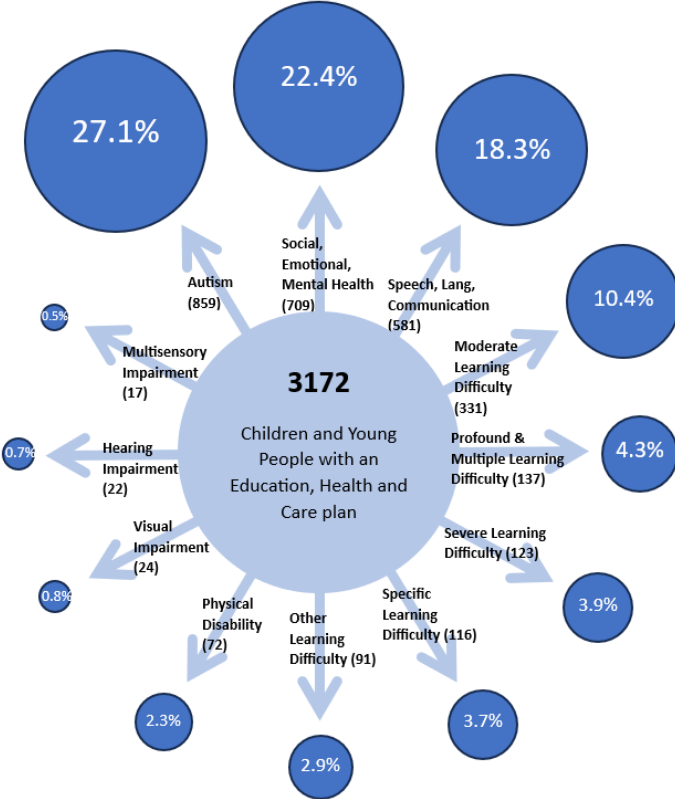
Where SEND children and young people live

- EHC Plan rates are 6.0% in the most deprived areas compared to 2.1% in the least deprived areas. For those who receive SEN support the rates are 9.4% in the most deprived areas compared to 4.2% in the least deprived areas.
- Combined SEN Support and EHC Plans are highest in our deprived areas of Adswold, Brinnington, Offerton and Lancashire Hill. More than 20% of those aged 0-25 years in these areas have a SEND need. The area with the lowest proportion part is in Romiley with a rate of 3.5%.

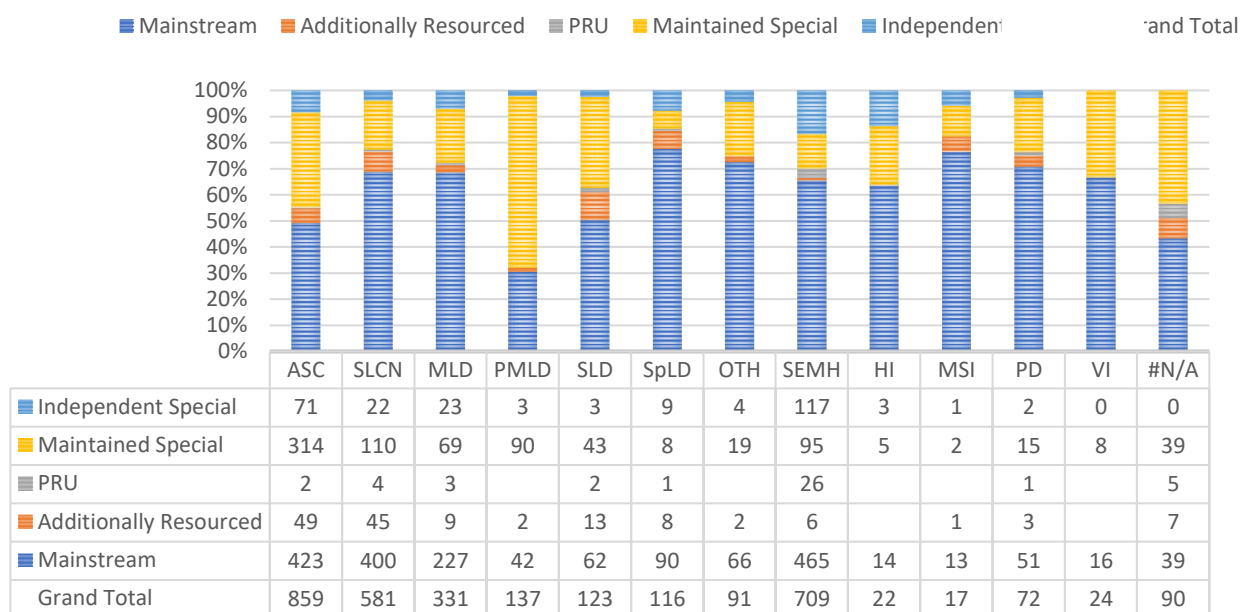
Needs of our children and young people SEN Support (January 2024 Census)



EHCP (Liquid Logic February 2024)



Type of School for each primary need



- The SEND JSNA outlines that in 2023, the most common primary need for those with an EHC Plan were Autism, followed by Social, Emotional and Mental Health, Speech, Language and Communications, and Moderate Learning Difficulty – together these four needs are the primary need for over three quarters of children and young people with an EHC Plan. These areas will be an underlying area to target and focus resource for all sub-groups.
 - There has been a cumulative increase in total numbers of EHC Plans since 2019. The figures have risen from 2195 to 3127 (977 or 44%). The primary need of autism is the greatest increase in numbers rising by 425 (97%). This is followed by the increases in those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health with 162 more cases (30% increase). A significant increase has been seen in Profound and Multiple Learning Disability with 105 more pupils.

6. Stockport Priorities 2024-27

There are four strategic partnerships which are sub-groups to the board. In addition, there are other partnerships delivering on the children’s SEND agenda. We are focusing attention on the requirements of our 3 highest levels of need. These are:

- 1. Social Emotional Mental Health**
- 2. Autism and Neurodiversity**
- 3. Speech Language and Communication Needs**

As well as 2 cross cutting themes applicable to all education, health and care services for SEND:

- 4. Timelines of Assessment and Diagnosis** and ensure those that are waiting are ‘waiting well’ which will be underpinned by clear communication
- 5. Developing and promoting our early help ambition of Success at SEN Support** and the early years **Early Help Assessment** to enable the effective management of need at the earliest point and impact on the **Sustainability of Education, Health and Care Services.**

The SEND Board agreed in workshops and meetings the following four partnerships would provide cross-cutting areas of focus to deliver on our 5 priorities:

Co-production, Communication and Engagement

We will work in partnership with people with lived experience, carers, and service providers to develop clear and timely communication from strength based services which support children, young people and families achieve to achieve positive outcomes.

What we have heard:

- Communication with some families is not always clear enough or planned into the assessment and interventions with individual services/workers.
- Families are not always kept informed of specific delays and feel they must chase information.
- Partners across the area feel they could be better informed of developments.
- Families still often tell their story more than once and professionals do not always communicate and share.
- Young people do not feel they have their voice heard in individual planning.
- We don't have the evidence to demonstrate coproduction.

What we will focus on:

1. A participation strategy and a communication plan for the local area considering digital platforms and how people want to receive information.
2. Being clear on when communication will be received and holding to providing this information at those points in the timeline.
3. Workforce development planning to include communication as a top priority.
4. Co-produce communication standards and information across the partnership
5. Further developing "tell it once" and a person-centered planning approach.
6. Further focus on engagement with young people to support individual planning and service design.

Outcomes to be achieved:

- Timely and agreed milestone communication is a focus for those waiting for assessment, therapies and diagnosis making families and frontline workforce feel heard and understood.
- The SEND community and workforce influence priorities, and are kept informed about improvement plans and progress on delivery. This will require regular scheduled communication, engagement and coproduction activity.

- Partners continue to recognise that SEND is everyone's business, and are regularly briefed on SEND duties and what good looks linked to SEND inspection.
- Services and individual plans are child, young people and family-focused by continued work with parents, carers, young people and other partners to improve individual and service planning, design, delivery, measuring impact and review evidenced by 'You said – We did'.

Key Performance Indicators

To be agreed at the next sub-group meeting

Strategies, Plans and Tools developed and delivered by this Sub-group

- Participation and Engagement Strategy
- Communications Strategy
- Co-Production Charter
- Local Offer

Quality, Performance and Measuring Impact

We will assess, measure, and evaluate the quality of services to achieve positive outcomes and continuous improvement, ensuring education, health and care services remain sustainable.

What we have heard:

- We are significantly overspending on SEND budgets
- We are not performing well enough in some areas
- Timeliness for EHCP assessment needs to improve
- Waiting times for assessment and diagnosis are too long
- We need to ensure further work on quality brings consistency in both SEN Support and EHC Plan writing and delivery.

What we will focus on:

1. A financial recovery plan which includes the DfE and CIPFA initiative in Stockport 'Delivering Better Value.'
2. A significant improvement for EHCP timeliness including focus on the receipt of good quality data to make an assessment, digital improvements, and earlier involvement of specialist support and ensure clear and measurable outcomes are agreed with families in the EHCP.
3. Further developing quality assurance processes for the services we provide and commission to include input from parent/carers and young people.
4. Monitoring service impact so that short and longer term outcomes for children and young people with SEND are improved, and there is evidence of their

achievements and progress across all areas, including social, emotional, educational, health and independence.

5. Measuring the right performance data to identify whether the system is making improvements against our 7 outcomes. Performance is owned and monitored across the SEND System.
6. Knowing what good looks like and benchmarking ourselves against it which will support inspection readiness, peer challenge and Ofsted self-assessment.

Outcomes to be achieved:

- The SEND system working across education, health and care are achieving sustainability by working towards recovery of the financial overspend.
- There is an improvement in service delivery, lived experience, quality and outcomes which is evident through active quality assurance activity and the SEND dashboard indicators.
- Children, young people and families wait well and experience improved timeliness for assessments, therapies and diagnosis.

Key Performance Indicators

To be agreed at the next sub-group meeting

Strategies, Plans and Tools developed and delivered by this Sub-group

- SEND Data Dashboard and Outcomes Framework
- Bi-Monthly SEND Board Report
- SEND Self-assessment
- EHCP Quality Assurance Framework and Report

Joint Commissioning and Integrated Working

We will ensure that health, education and care working effectively together and with children, young people and their families, agree on shared commissioning priorities and use joint resources to measurably improve outcomes

What we have heard:

- Parent/carers feel it is hard to understand what is available to support them at the earliest opportunity.
- There is still too much bureaucracy involved in gaining support and this takes too long causing frustration for families.
- Schools would like to be able to access more resources at SEN Support level to allocate more assistance to their pupils sooner.
- We have higher than average numbers of children with EHCP which could have been avoided if we intervened effectively earlier.

- Some of our support services are post diagnostic which cuts off support to those without a formal diagnosis, for example autism.
- Short breaks are helping families, but sometimes they are difficult to source and more needs to be done to make ordinary community groups more accessible.
- We require robust process for preparation to adulthood which includes joint planning between children's and adult services.

We will focus on:

1. Building further our digital local offer, linked with wider work on community resources and family hubs to ensure we have a robust overview and publicise access to the early help offer.
2. Oversight of the development of neurodiversity pathways including pre and post diagnosis and the hub model; providing additional support to ensure families are waiting well.
3. SEN Support pathfinder to co-produce a new way of working with schools to provide support at the earliest point with additional early help funding for schools.
4. Further integration of workforce with a much clearer understanding of services and how we work together from services managers through to frontline staff members with clear roles, responsibilities, and links for working together.

[Linked to the Workforce Development sub-group]

5. Implement recommendations from reviews of therapy services (Speech and Language, Occupational Health, and Physiotherapy) to ensure the right people are getting the right support at the right time.
6. Ensuring joint decision making across education, health, and care leads to improved outcomes for children and young people.
7. Have oversight of the development of robust sufficiency strategies to ensure local levels of provision are sufficient to meet need. For school places, this includes the reduction of private and independent provision being commissioned only in exceptional circumstances.

[Linked to the Place Planning Board]

8. Ensure clear and robust pathways for young people preparing for adulthood ensuring links into the economic plan and work and skills agenda.

Outcomes to be achieved:

- Children and young people's needs are identified early to avoid an increase in need by strengthened SEN support offer leading to reduced lengthy statutory assessments. This will require alignment of financial resources to support early help.
- Children, young people, and families feel understood and supported and don't feel the need to request statutory assessments or get a diagnosis before effective support is put in place.

- Multi-disciplinary teams know each other, work effectively together, share plans, and integrate to provide a seamless offer to families.
- Families and professionals are more knowledgeable about local provision and support by being able to access information, advice, and guidance. This will require information on support options being clearer and easier to access for all.
- Young people are successful in achieving independence through good work and skills opportunities, good health, independence and feeling included through being part of the community and accessing leisure locally. This will require clear pathways into adulthood and independence.

Key Performance Indicators

To be agreed at the next sub-group meeting

Strategies, Plans and Tools developed and delivered by this Sub-group

- Joint Commissioning Plan
- Speech, Language and Communication Review and Delivery Plan
- Occupation Health and Physiotherapy Review
- Social Emotional and Mental Health Review and Delivery Plan
- Neurodiversity, pre and post diagnosis review and pathway plans
[Oversight only – Delivery Plans belong to One Health and Care Board Mental Health, Learning Disability and Autism Delivery Programme]
- Preparing for Adulthood Strategy
[linked to the Economic Plan and Work and Skills Plan]

Workforce Development and Support for Carers

We will work together to develop a skilled and adaptable workforce, by enhancing the skills, knowledge, and capabilities of workers through training, education, reflective supervision, career advancement, and continuous learning. We will ensure strategies, practices and knowledge is shared with families for both information and adoption at home.

What we have heard:

- There is a need to focus further on whole area workforce development post pandemic this includes understanding of high staff turnover.
- There needs to be a community of best practice approach.
- It feels like there are a lot of separate services. A one workforce offer across the system is needed.
- Parents and carers lack the tools and techniques to be able to support their children at home.

What we will focus on:

1. Revised area workforce development plan based on lived experience to be co-produced.
2. Ensuring communication and person-centered approaches are a key theme where families only tell their story once. [linked to the Workforce Development sub-group].
3. Myth busting for SEND to ensure appropriate advice is given by the workforce.
4. Strengthening the support for carers so that they are able to support initiatives introduced at school or health services while in the home environment.
5. Ensure the workforce is focused on “tell it once”, supporting sharing and coordination across services and systems.

Outcomes to be achieved:

- Workforce feel well informed and confident about their roles as well as teams they work with. This will require appropriate training, information, advice and guidance with clear oversight of quality and application from their manager.
- Workforce are informed and knowledgeable about SEND processes and know how they and other teams work collectively while retaining their own duties to support children, young people and families. This will require prevention, identification, early help support as well as pathways to specialist interventions to be widely understood.
- Families reflect that regardless of who they approach, they are given similar information, advice and signposting.
- Carers are confident about what support is being undertaken in school or health environments and are able to apply similar strategies at home.

Key Performance Indicators

To be agreed at the next sub-group meeting

Strategies, Plans and Tools developed and delivered by this Sub-group

- SEND workforce development plan
- SEND workforce training matrix
- Strength Based Assessments and Outcome Focused Plans

Priorities Delivered by other Stockport Partnerships

The SEND Board also relies on the delivery of its priorities through linked Stockport Partnership Boards who manage, oversee and implement focused work to improve SEND outcomes. These include:

The School Place Planning Board delivering the SEND school place sufficiency plan.

The Mental Health, Learning Disability and Autism Programme Delivery Group delivering the 0-25 offer for mental health and neurodiversity.

The Neighbourhood and Prevention Board delivering place based integrated working with a focus on prevention, early help and effective joint practice delivered through Family Hubs, team around the school and GP Practices.

The Youth Justice Partnership Board collaborating to identify and address the special educational needs and disabilities of young offenders. In recognition of high levels of practice in supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities, the board strives to achieve the Youth Justice SEND Quality Mark.

The Economic Alliance plays a crucial role in shaping Stockport's economic landscape and ensuring a prosperous future for the community. The work and skills agenda for young people with SEND is a key area of focus for the Preparing for Adulthood Group.

Sub-Groups to the Stockport Family Partnership are key areas of integrated working for Children's Services involving Early Help, Start Well and Family Hubs. These sub-groups champion the offer to SEND children whilst considering wider population needs to reduce inequalities and improve outcomes.

7. Governance of the Strategy

This strategy is overseen by the One Health and Care Board and Stockport Family Partnership Board; the responsibility for delivery has been delegated to the SEND Board.

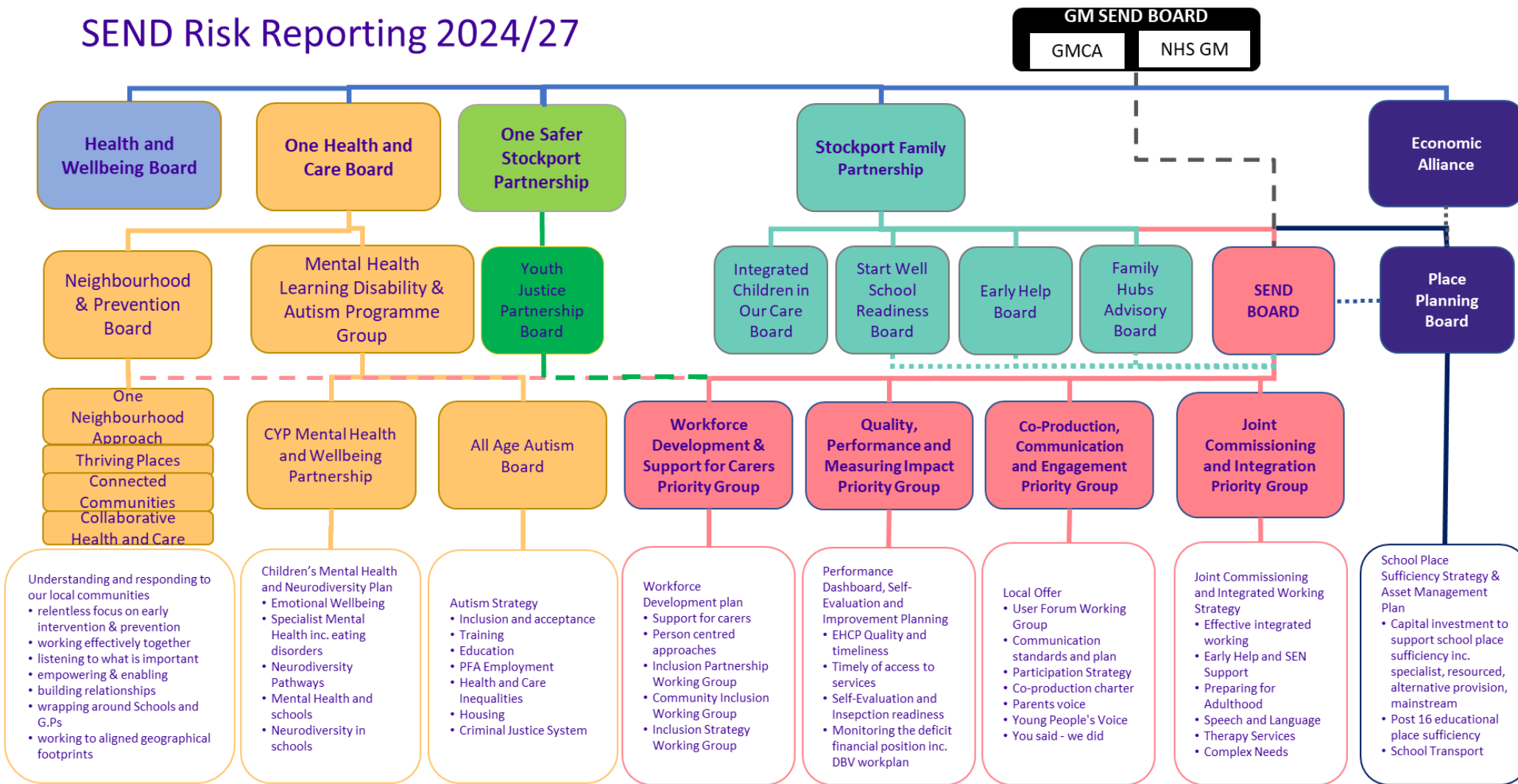
The SEND Board will report progress annually to the Health and Wellbeing Board using our self-evaluation processes.

The Stockport SEND Board priorities and actions will be represented at the GMCA SEND Board as well as NHS GM SEND Board.

The SEND Board is chaired by Chris McLoughlin OBE, Executive Director People and Integration and holds the statutory role of Director of Children's Services and co-chaired by Philippa Johnson NHS GM Deputy Place Based lead. Terms of Reference can be found in Appendix Three.

The shared priorities will be operationally delivered in partnership with our stakeholder by a number of workstreams reporting to the SEND Board. Please see the governance diagram below.

SEND Risk Reporting 2024/27





Appendix One Overview of SEND Strategy 2020-2024

Reflections on previous SEND Strategy

The previous SEND strategy was launched in 2020. Since that time there has been a significant period of disruption due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Although the local area has focussed on and remained committed to all priorities within the strategy, we also worked quickly to adapt the support during this period.

A summary of the progress against the 2020 SEND strategy priorities is set out below.

The SEND Strategy 2020-2023 had the following priorities:

- 1. Co-production - That all work proactively and co-productively with parents, carers, young people and other partners to improve service planning, design, delivery and review and to ensure that services are child, young people and family-focused. Our work will be guided by the [Stockport Co-Production Charter](#).**

In this time, we have:

- Further publicised the co-production charter
- Launched co-production E-learning across the area
- Developed a co-production community of practice which is attended by partners from across Stockport to share and learn from co-production best practice.
- Carried out focussed work on youth voice through partners.
- Built up open and honest relationships and lines of communication with parent/carer groups.

We still need to:

- Further enhance opportunity for young people to have their voice heard in their individual planning
- Further collate the impact of co-production in a more robust way.

- 2. [Joint Commissioning](#) – We will ensure that health, education and social care work with children, young people and their families to agree on shared priorities and direct resources to where they measurably improve outcomes.**

In this time, we have:

- Continued a joint commissioning, planning and delivery group which meets monthly and oversees all activity
- Across all agencies and partners jointly reviewed speech, language and communication offer for Stockport children
- Jointly commissioned a review of occupational therapy and physio services
- Co-produced and launched an integrated personal budget offer
- Co-produced and launched Family hubs to strength family help offers.
- Reviewed and co-produced a new local offer
- Strengthened working arrangements and planning between children and adult services.
- Ensure a performance focus with a specific performance group chaired by Director of Education.



We still need to:

- Deliver on the current work on a new pre-diagnostic offer for neurodiversity linked to emotional wellbeing.
- Strengthen focus across the system on preparation for adulthood.
- Launch in Sept 2024 a new speech, language and communication offer which is outcome focussed and community based.
- Implement changes and recommendations outlined in the occupational therapy and physio service review

3. Inclusion – We want to ensure that all early year’s settings, schools, colleges and services provide high quality inclusive provision that meets the needs of children and young people with SEND locally. We want to ensure that settings are appropriately supported to be enabled to do this both with resource and support.

In this time, we have:

- Restructured and launched our council education support services into a new inclusion service with a new defined inclusion focus.
- Strengthened the role of school improvement within SEND.
- Developed a school’s strategy
- Commissioned further resource provisions within mainstream school settings.

We still need to:

- Develop as planned inclusion partnerships within each locality.
- Roll out findings from the current work on SEN support in the pathfinder across the borough

4. Outcomes – That there is a shared drive to provide services that have the most significant impact so that short and longer-term outcomes for children and young people with SEND are improved, and there is evidence of their achievements and progress across all areas, including social, emotional, educational and independence. Making sure it is outcomes based and focused on evaluating by outcomes and not actions.

In this time, we have:

- Ensured we have a performance focus on outcomes with a distinct discussion monthly based on multi-agency outcomes dashboard based on our outcome’s framework.
- Improved positively DFE measured specific education outcome measures in both the early years and school ages for our SEND children.
- Ensured the SEND outcomes framework has been adopted across children’s services and is in Council plan and is central to strategic thinking.
- Ensured it is a focus of workforce development programmes.

We still need to:

- Further strengthen operational practice in relation to SMART outcome measures within SEN Support and EHCP planning

5. Workforce – That we have a skilled, trained and confident workforce supported by brave and bold leaders to deliver these priorities.

In this time, we have:

- Ensured SEND E-learning is mandatory for all Council workers and available to anyone in Stockport.
- Launched new mandatory training for all social workers on SEND and their role.
- Launched a training through school improvement/ inclusion on adaptive teaching.
- Rolled out Autism in schools training to all schools which is being built upon in 2024
- Rolled out ELSA training for all schools- MARTIN- needs wording.
- Ensured workforce development for family hubs includes SEND as a golden thread.

We still need to:

- Refresh the current workforce plan

SEND Board Performance, Improvement and Assurance Framework

Performance, Improvement and Assurance is a description of our core performance reporting processes.

This one-page guide describes a framework of bi-monthly reporting from SEND sub-groups to the SEND Board and bi-monthly review and development of the self-assessment to support inspection readiness, peer review, the Ofsted annual conversation and continual improvement. This involves reporting progress on delivery, impact monitoring through performance measures and risk assessment and escalation where necessary.

The framework essentially consists of:

- Sub-group delivery
- SEND Board oversight and decisions
- PIA Report (bi-monthly)
- Self-assessment (bi-annually)
- Board Risk Register
- SEND Dashboard



Sub-groups

The SEND Sub-groups will monitor and oversee Stockport's performance, programme delivery, impact of anticipated changes and risks.

Each sub-group meets at least bi-monthly and agrees the high level progress to be reported to SEND Board

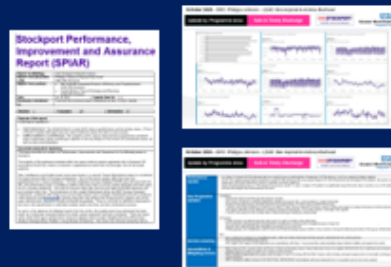
Sub-groups will contribute to the SEND self-assessment and inspection preparedness



SEND Board Report

The Performance, Improvement and Assurance Report is generated by Programme Managers and consists of the measures contained within the SEND dashboards, updates on the delivery of the SEND Strategy and escalation or notification of risks.

The SEND self-assessment will be shared with the Board for comment and direction



Risk Register

Sub-groups have a responsibility to identify risk; measure and assess risk level; mitigate risk; govern risk monitor and report risk when:

- It is a new risk, that if unmanaged, would threaten the delivery of the Stockport SEND objectives.
- It is an existing risk that is increasing in its risk rating - mitigations are not working or significant gaps in control.
- The risk affects multiple partners or delivery areas.

SEND Board escalate high impact risks that require Stockport Family or One Health and Care Board consideration and action.

Category	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Governance	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Delivery	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Assurance	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Improvement	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Partnership	1	2	3	4	5	6

SEND Dashboard

The SEND Dashboard works towards ensuring that SEND Partners together or independently deliver against the priorities and outcomes in the SEND Strategy. The Key Performance Indicators span a number of national and local performance and outcome frameworks.

The SEND Board Report draws upon these indicators as well as locality priority measures and monitoring of wider system measures to identify areas of growing concern.



Terms of Reference – Stockport SEND Board (Local Area Partnership for Education, Health and Care)

1. Vision

“Our vision is for all children and young people with SEND to have the best start in life. We want all children and young people to be happy, prepared for adulthood and able to achieve their goals. We want families to feel supported, confident, resilient and connected to their community”

This vision was established in our previous SEND strategy, has been reviewed and continues to be our vision for all our children.

2. Background

There has been a SEND Board within Stockport since September 2018. Initially, the purpose of the board was to oversee the Written Statement of Action in relation to the SEND Local Area Inspection. Since the revisit in 2022, the Board has continued with its purpose as a local area partnership which oversees how Stockport’s organisational partners, parents, carers and children and young people work together to improve the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.

3. Purpose of Board

The Board’s purpose is to strategically lead the SEND agenda within Stockport. The Board will have a joint decision making and monitoring function with partners. Board members will be responsible for bringing their organisation’s workforce, capacity and financial resources to align so that the Board can jointly plan and make decisions with the knowledge of the totality of resources at locality level. Members are responsible for ratified decisions through their own organisational governance arrangements.

The Board will have:

- Responsibility for ensuring Stockport is compliant with the SEND Code of Practice.
- Responsibility to ensure the lived experience of families, children and young people is central to all strategic decisions
- Responsibility to ensure outcomes for children and young people with SEN and their families improve within Stockport
- Responsibility for the SEND JSNA, SEND Strategy and Joint Commissioning strategy and all associated strategies and plans created to deliver Stockport’s priorities.
- Responsibility for the monitoring of the progress of both strategies and associated work streams through a Performance, Improvement and Assurance framework.
- Responsibility to inform the allocation of resources to support the delivery of system-wide financial sustainability and efficiencies.
- Responsibility of holding the SEND Board risk register and ensuring effective management of risk.

The Board will oversee sub-groups and programmes of delivery to achieve our joint priorities:

There are four partnership sub-groups reporting directly to the Board. These are Co-Production, Communication and Engagement Quality; Performance and Measuring Impact; Joint Commissioning and Integration; and Workforce Development & Support for Carers

In addition, there are other Partnerships groups delivering on the children's SEND agenda comprising of School Place Planning Board, and the sub-groups to the One Health and Care Board including All Age Autism Board; CYP Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership; and the Neighbourhood and Prevention Programme. Links are also being made to the Youth Justice Board to ensure Children and young people with SEND in youth custody receive appropriate education and support.

The named priorities for the SEND board focuses attention on the requirements of our 3 areas of highest levels of need. These are:

- 1. Social Emotional Mental Health**
- 2. Autism and Neurodiversity**
- 3. Speech Language and Communication Needs**

In addition, there are 2 cross cutting themes applicable to all education, health and care services for SEND:

- 4. Timelines of Assessment and Diagnosis** and ensure those that are waiting are 'waiting well' which will be underpinned by clear communication
- 5. Developing and promoting our early help ambition of Success at SEN Support** and the early years **Early Help Assessment** to enable the effective management of need at the earliest point and impact on the **Sustainability of Education, Health and Care Services.**

4. Principles

The board will operate within the following principles:

- **Lived experience is seen as central to all actions** - The board will be cognisant of the lived experience of young people and families when making decisions.
- **Co-production** – The board will Champion co-production and inclusiveness and ensure all strategic decisions are informed by co-production and is embedded within work streams.
- **Respect** - all members will act in a respectful manner, acknowledging and valuing others professional expertise.
- **Leading change** – members will be willing and able to lead change. This will include giving clear direction, engendering trust, engaging stakeholders, solving problems and creating innovative solutions to meeting need within Stockport.
- **Leading by example** - Board members will be 'Champions' for the SEND agenda within both their respective fields and within Stockport as a whole.
- **Communication**- Board members will ensure that there is open and effective communication with the wider community on priorities and strategic objectives
- **Adding value** – the work of the board will add value to the sum of the constituent projects and will be aligned to individual corporate priorities.

- **Learning from experience** – a reflective stance will be taken by all members of the board.
- **Remaining aligned with partners’ corporate strategies** – external influences on the programme will be identified, projects will be carefully monitored and the priorities will be regularly reviewed.
- **Reviewing membership** – to ensure all agencies are represented appropriately. They will also abide by the following values co-produce with parents and carers:
 - Child/ family-centred
 - Trustworthiness
 - Treat all partners as equal
 - Honesty
 - Mutual respect
 - Compassion and empathy for the ‘lived experience’
 - Development of mutual understanding
 - Actively listen
 - Open communication
 - Involve
 - Solution-focused
 - Working together/ teamwork
 - Personalise
 - Non-judgemental

5. Membership

Role

Director of Childrens Services (Chair)
 Deputy Place Based Lead (Joint Chair)
 Director of Adult Services
 Director of Education
 Director of Public Health
 Head of SEND and Inclusion
 Service Director Children’s Social Care
 Service Director Family Help and Integration
 Parent/Carer Representative
 School’s Consortium representative

Principal Education Psychology
 Senior Commissioner Children’s & Maternity
 CAMHS representative
 Children’s Services
 Sector 3

Organisation

Stockport MBC
 NHS GM Stockport
 Stockport MBC (Adult Social Care)
 Stockport MBC (Education)
 Stockport MBC (Public Health)
 Stockport MBC (Education)
 Stockport MBC (Children’s Social Care)
 Stockport MBC (Early Help)
 PACTS
 Primary School
 Secondary School
 Special School
 Stockport MBC (Education)
 NHS GM Stockport (Children’s Health)
 Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust
 Stockport NHS Foundation Trust
 VCFSE Representative

Should a member not be able to attend a meeting, apologies in advance must be provided to the Chair. Deputies can attend on behalf of members and will count towards the quorum.

Also in Attendance:

Lead for Programme Management Stockport MBC (Education)
 Board Administrator Stockport MBC (Education)
 Other attendees by invitations to support the agenda.

6. Member roles and responsibilities

The Board will have collective accountability between partner organisations for system delivery and performance, underpinned by the statutory and contractual accountabilities of individual organisations.

- Be willing to lead strategic change across the SEND agenda.
- Be open to change, be innovative and outcomes focussed.
- Be able to hold others to account for the SEND agenda within Stockport.
- Hold lead roles and responsibilities for their organisation and service area in respect of SEND.
- Represent their organisation/service area activity in respect of the SEND and be a 'champion' within Stockport.
- Report to their own organisation/service area on SEND board activity and to gain ratification of board proposals.
- Be accountable to the wider board for implementing decisions in their own work areas.
- Recognise and acknowledge the inter-dependencies of the SEND agenda and promote the primacy of integrated working to achieve change.
- Demonstrate a commitment to regular attendance at and active participation in board meetings.
- Adhere to board principles.
- Ensure confidentiality is respected.

7. Meetings

Meetings of the SEND Improvement Board will be held bi-monthly. Additional meetings can be arranged with the Chairs agreement.

and the Chair is responsible for ensuring that agenda and papers are distributed to members 3 working days in advance of meetings.

Meetings will last 2 hours and in order to achieve optimum effectiveness and in support of collaborative working, all meetings will start on time with a requirement for all members to be present at the scheduled start time.

Action notes from meetings will provide a summary record of agenda items discussion and actions arising from this and will be published on the SEND Local Offer Responsibility for this support will be shared between the office of the Director of Children's Services SMBC and the NHS GM Stockport.

The Chair of Board may call ad-hoc briefings/meetings to deal with critical issues arising between regular Board meetings as necessary. Progress reporting to the public will be via the local offer and other regular designated contacts.

8. Attendance / Quoracy

Core members of the SEND Board should be present at all meetings. In exceptional circumstances where members cannot attend, apologies should be proffered with suitable and relevant substitute arrangements made by prior agreement with the Chair or her Deputy.

In the unlikely circumstances that a representative from each core member agency (Education, Health, and Care) is not represented at a meeting, the effectiveness of the meeting and its rescheduling should be considered by the Chair.

Meetings should be judged ineffective and non-viable in the absence of parent/carer representation or unless agreed alternative arrangements are made with parent/carers.

9. Governance and Reporting

The SEND Board will report to the One Health and Care Board quarterly or more frequently if requested.

Reports may also be requested by the Health and Wellbeing Board under their statutory role in driving, agreeing and implementing mechanisms for joint working across health and care organisations and setting strategic direction to improve the health and wellbeing of people locally.

The Board will devolve operational decision making powers to individual work streams. The Board will require bi-monthly updates from the work streams and groups on decisions, impacts and outcomes. Leads will ensure that no decision is made that is not in line with the SEND agenda or individual agency responsibility. The work stream leads will also ensure that individual agency financial procedures are followed in relation to permissions and governance.

10. Review of the terms of reference

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the Board at least annually or sooner if required.
Last Review Date: February 2023

Date Terms of Reference agreed: March 2024

Review date: March 2025

11. Definitions

SEND child or young person

A child or young person has Special Educational Needs (SEN) if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person up to the age of 25 has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

A child under compulsory school age has SEN if he or she is likely to fall within the definition above when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if SEN provision was not made for them.

Geographical coverage

Stockport is defined as the borough of Stockport within its defined boundaries.

SEND Types and Categories of Needs

Communication and interaction

Children and young people with **Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)** have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives.

Children and young people with **Autism**, are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Cognition and learning

Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including **Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)**, **Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)**, where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to **Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)**, where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.

Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

Social, emotional and mental health difficulties

Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

Sensory and/or physical needs

Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with **Vision Impairment (VI)**, **Hearing Impairment (HI)** or a **Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI)** will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning, or habilitation support. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties.

Some children and young people with a **Physical Disability (PD)** require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.