

**Name of meeting: Children's Scrutiny Panel**

**Date: 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

**Title of report: Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Transformation Update**

**Purpose of report:**

- 1) In March 2019, a report was presented to Kirklees Council Cabinet following the Children's Scrutiny Panel review into parent / carer perspective and experience of having a child with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Kirklees.
- 2) Since 2019 there has been significant engagement, review and development work in this area and this report will update Children's Scrutiny Panel on the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transformation Plan which is in place . [Kirklees SEND Transformation plan](#)
- 3) Additionally, it is important to note that in February 2022 Kirklees as a Local Area was inspected by OFSTED and CQC in our "Local Area SEND Inspection". This report will give an overview of this process.

<b>Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<b>Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u></b>	<b>Key Decision – No</b> <b>Private Report/Private Appendix – No</b>
<b>The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<b>Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> &amp; name</b>  <b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</b>  <b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?</b>	<b>Jo-Anne Sanders and Tom Brailsford for Mel Meggs</b>  N/A  N/A
<b>Cabinet member <a href="#">portfolio</a></b>	Cllr Carole Pattison - Cabinet lead for Learning, Aspiration and Communities  Cllr Viv Kendrick - Cabinet lead for Children (statutory responsibility for Children)

**Electoral wards affected:** All

**Ward councillors consulted:** N/A

**Public or private:** Public

**Has GDPR been considered?** There are no GDPR implications arising from the report.

# 1. Summary

## Introduction

Our partnership vision in Kirklees is that every child receives the best start in life. Our aspirations for children and young people with SEND are no different to all children and this receives the highest priority from all our partners. We are proud of the partnerships which are at the heart of our services and we acknowledge that our successes are based on **working with families**, building on their strengths. [Kirklees Send strategy](#)

The coronavirus pandemic has clearly brought unprecedented challenges to the way in which we deliver services and the way in which we work, particularly during our response to the initial crisis. As a partnership we are proud of the way we have supported and helped to minimise the impact and disruption that Covid-19 has brought.

We recognise that delivering the best outcomes for all our children with SEND is a significant challenge which many authorities and partners face. Our SEND Transformation Plan outlines how we approach these challenges and the opportunities there are to improve our work. This has a focus on outcomes for people. We will concentrate our energy and resources on the things that make a difference to people's lives.

Since 2019 SEND has been a transformation priority for the council and significant investment has been undertaken in ensuring we get our approach right. We have worked closely with strategic improvement partners – ImPower - to develop our Inclusive Ambitions and SEND Transformation Plan.

In producing change and transformation of outcomes we are seeking to improve the life experiences and chances of a cohort of young people who, on a national basis, consistently benchmark below their peers in relation to educational attainment and employment prospects. Our transformation programme is seeking to deliver culture change in how we do things as much as systemic improvement across the system. This work is a critical strand to our work in addressing inequalities in society.

Our focus is on early intervention and supporting co-production and design, the approach we are developing illustrates our commitment to **working with families**, partners, stakeholders and communities of interests. This is highlighted in the development and agreement of a set of "Shared Inclusive Ambitions" across the Kirklees SEND partnership.

Our "Inclusive Ambitions" are measurable ambitions which we can all work towards together. These ambitions recognise whilst there are different national and local contexts and pressures for partners, we must work as one system unified by inclusive ambitions which all partners, including our Parents and Carers have collectively developed.

The seven summarised ambitions captured below were developed with system wide involvement including health and social care partners in 2020.

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1 Responsive and holistic early intervention

2 Culture of trust with parents and families

3 Inclusive practice in the community and within education settings

4 CYP thriving in education settings and celebrating more holistic outcomes and achievements

5 An integrated system

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**6** Embedding a shared culture of proactivity, holistic skills and knowledge

**7** Supporting children to have clear aspirations with a focus on preparing for adulthood

We are proud of our workforce across the partnership and we have demonstrated in a number of areas both innovation and highest quality provision. We also know however that not all of our provision and outcomes are consistently good and we are aware there is more to be done to achieve our collective aspirations.

Our improvement work has driven progress in meeting the needs of children and young people with additional needs, but we recognise that we need to go even further as a whole system to meet the high aspirations we have locally for our children and families. It is our assessment that in Kirklees there is much good practice and improvement since 2014. There are areas, however, where there is more to be done and therefore there will be some inconsistency in children's and families' experiences of SEND related services.

### **The Kirklees SEND context**

- We have just over 104,000 Children and Young People in Kirklees, of which 69,638 are school aged.
- Kirklees currently has 11,968 children and young people aged 0-25 with SEND – this is 11.5% of our population. 8097 of these (68%) are at “SEND Support” and 3871 (32%) with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- There has been just over a 100% rise in the number of CYP in Kirklees with an EHCP since 2015 when 1907 children and young people had a plan.
- The % of pupils with a statement or EHCP has increased since 2015 broadly in line with the national average since 2015
- The % of children and young people at “SEND support” has increased above the national average
- We have 6 special schools in Kirklees, all of which are judged as Good or Outstanding.
- We have 9 “Specialist Provisions” in Kirklees which are attached to mainstream schools
- We have an inclusive mainstream system across Kirklees, with the vast majority of our children and young people with SEND being educated in their local mainstream school

### **Our Challenges**

Whilst facing demand pressures, we also recognise that more could be done in the local SEND system to improve outcomes and results. As a partnership we have already undertaken extensive work to address these challenges and have achieved significant successes over the past two years. We recognise, however, that there are opportunities to go further. Some of these challenges are as follows:

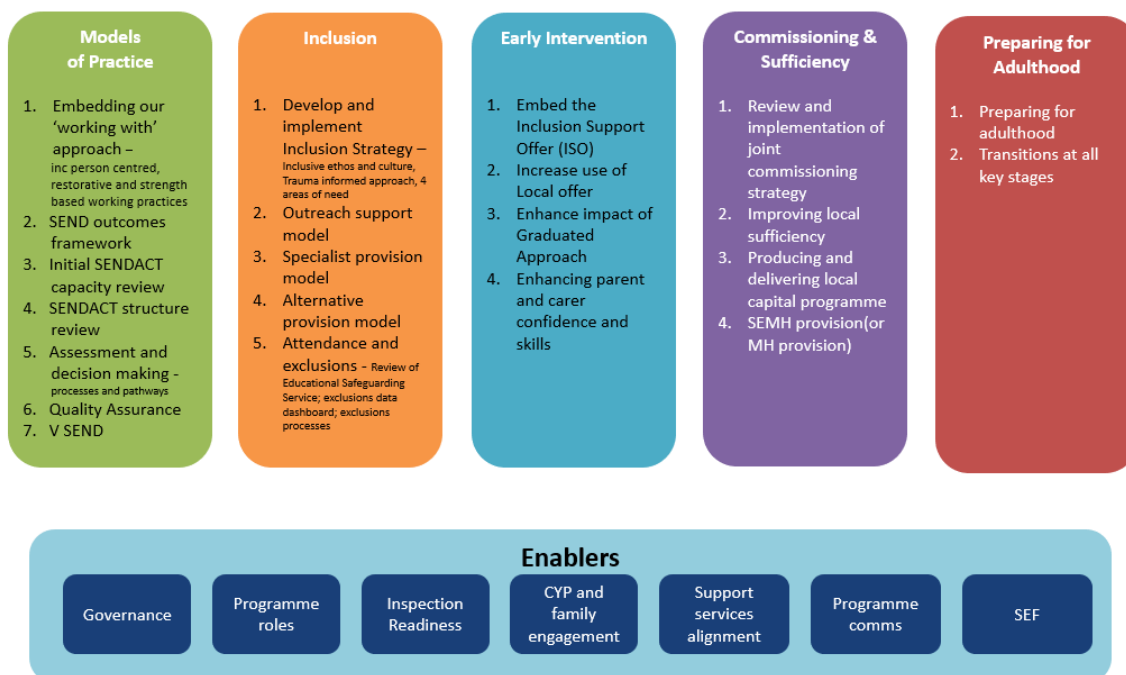
- Consistency and quality across services.
- Model of Practice - Our research has shown us that there are opportunities to enable support much earlier stage – we need to refocus our investment to support systems to enable that
- Sufficiency – we need to grow capacity in all settings and placements across our SEND system to match the needs of our population.

- Exclusions – too many of our young people with SEND needs are excluded from their settings
- Moving towards adulthood requires a more holistic approach from a younger age and more consistent co-production
- Some of our systems and services are under pressure. If a child or young person has an identified Special Educational Need or Disability they will initially receive support from their school or setting and any additional services under a category of “SEND Support”. Many of our children and young people make good progress at SEND support, but for some, families choose to request a statutory assessment for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and as outlined, there has been a 100% increase in the number of children and young people in Kirklees with an EHCP since 2015. The significant increase in requests for Education, Health and Care needs assessments (EHCNAs) has impacted upon capacity of key services such as Educational Psychology and SENDACT. Our compliance rate in ensuring new EHCNAs are completed within 20 weeks was 40.5% in 2021, declining between July and December, however is now increasing again. Where families have needed to wait for longer than they should for an assessment to be completed we have ensured ongoing communication and support is in place. It is also important to note that despite the challenges around new assessments for EHCPs, we have seen some significant service improvement including:
  - ✓ The quality of new ECHPs have improved and this has been validated at the recent Peer Review with another Local Authority
  - ✓ There are improved Quality Assurance processes in place, carried out across Education, Health and Care
  - ✓ We have improved our management of Annual Reviews
  - ✓ We have worked with colleagues across Health and Social care to improve the quality of advices received
  - ✓ We have put in additional leadership capacity to support the changes identified in the services

The level of opportunity, coupled with the extent of work already underway, has highlighted the need for a shared programme to deliver the Inclusive Ambitions for our children, young people and families with additional needs and a single programme plan which pulls together all SEND change activity

This transformation programme was developed, with the key steps set out below. The programme has been shaped concurrently with ongoing day to day activity, enabling the programme approach and targeted interventions to deliver impact as we develop the direction. There are many opportunities across our local system to fulfil our aspirations and the SEND Transformation Plan sets out our ambitions, how we will build on our foundations and how we will improve. Our plan is ambitious and is being delivered with pace, whilst importantly ensuring that our work is sequenced so interdependences between programmes are accounted for.

# Programme Structure



## Recent activity

In order to achieve our ambitious outcomes for our Children and Young People we identified a need to build upon and expand our best practice and provision within Kirklees, as well as increasing strategic leadership capacity. We acknowledged that, if we truly want to enable our Children and Young People to achieve highly, within a first class education system which enables every learner to achieve to their full potential, then we need to be bold, be innovative and invest heavily in change.

We acknowledge that if we want to create substantive change we need to consider the whole “SEND System” holistically – we cannot just focus on improving one area. We are committed to working across partners in Education, Health and Care to ensure services and provision are accessible to children, young people and their families when they need them.

We know we need to work across the system with a “Graduated Approach” – ensuring that we develop expertise, capacity and sufficiency of specialist placements for children and young people with SEND across our whole system.

We are proud to have strong relationships with PCAN (Parents of Children with Additional Needs), our Parent / Carer forum in Kirklees. PCAN work closely with us to ensure co-production of key strategies, documents and resources for children and young people with SEND and their families. PCAN meet with strategic leaders on a monthly basis, and teams across our service attend events and coffee mornings hosted by PCAN to ensure we are consistently hearing and understanding parent / carer voice.

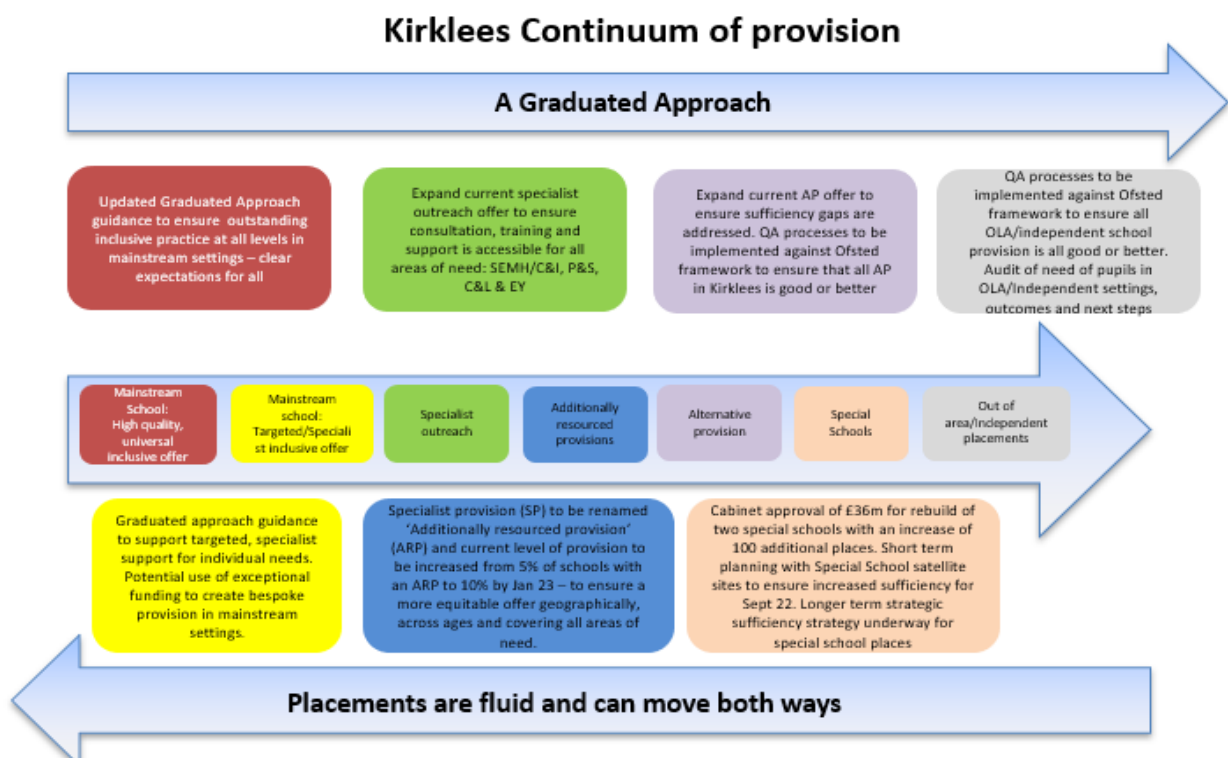
We have also engaged with a number of children and young people to ensure their voices are heard through our Childrens’ Participation Team and Local Offer service. Pupil and family voice significantly influence our strategies and actions.

Recent key activity around SEND has included:

- A co-produced and refreshed Local Offer service [Home | Kirklees SEND Local Offer \(kirkleeslocaloffer.org.uk\)](http://Home | Kirklees SEND Local Offer (kirkleeslocaloffer.org.uk)) which offers clear signposting and advice around SEND in Kirklees for children, young people, families and professionals (launched Jan 21)

- The introduction of our “Inclusion Support Offer” (ISO) helpline for professionals around SEND (launched Mar 21)
- Developing revised guidance for schools and settings on ensuring an outstanding inclusive offer within a “Graduated Approach” (to be launched Apr 22)
- Trialling of a new tool called “Valuing SEND” which supports in understanding Children and Young People’s needs and what support settings and parents / carers may need to be able to meet these - wider rollout planned
- External reviews of Specialist Provision and Alternative Provision – these were completed in 2021 and recommendations are now being implemented – these include plans, subject to statutory processes, to significantly expand our “Specialist Provision” (to be renamed “Additionally Resourced Provision”) and “Alternative Provision” offers to create more places across the whole of the Local Authority to support children and young people across all four areas of Special Educational Need; 1) Communication & Interaction 2) Physical & Sensory 3) Cognition & Learning 4) Social Emotional & Mental Health
- In Oct 2021 cabinet approved investment of £36 million to replace and rebuild two of our existing Special Schools; Joseph Norton Academy and Woodley School & College. This will create brand new, state of the art special schools in Kirklees, offering around 120 additional places for children and young people with complex Communication & Interaction needs and Autism and Social, Emotional & Mental Health needs.
- Revised Kirklees Joint Strategic Assessment. Our new KJSA provides a picture of the health and wellbeing of Kirklees people and is used to inform the commissioning strategies and plans of Kirklees CCG, council and the local voluntary and community sector. It includes information about health needs and assets.
- Robust sufficiency strategy to underpin ‘commissioning’ of additional capacity.

The diagram below helps to outline some of the provision accessible for children, young people and their families across the learning system, using a graduated approach.



In November 2021, through our Schools Forum all schools in Kirklees agreed to transfer 0.5% of the Schools Block to support investment in the High Needs system. This equates to £1.6 million which will support some of the expansion plans we have in place, for example within our specialist outreach teams and across our specialist provision.

## **Local Area SEND Inspection**

In February 2022 Kirklees was inspected over 5 days by OFSTED and CQC in our Local Area SEND Inspection. This process involved submission of substantial documentation the week prior to inspection including:

- Our Self Evaluation Framework (SEF) which outlined our assessment of strengths and areas for development, with identified plans and next steps
- 30 Education, Health & Care Plans, for children and young people across a broad range of needs and contexts
- Key strategy and policy documents relating to SEND

A team of 3 inspectors, plus additional inspectors who quality assured the process, then visited Kirklees from 7<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> February 2022. They undertook a broad range of meetings and focus groups with stakeholders from across the area, including Parents and Carers, Children and Young People, Elected Members, Council Officers, Health Professionals and School, College and PVI setting staff. The inspection team also visited a number of schools and colleges, including primary, secondary, Resourced Provision, Alternative Provision and Special Schools.

The outcome of the inspection has not yet been shared as we are awaiting our joint inspection outcome letter which will explain the main findings and identified areas for improvement.

## **2. Information required to take a decision**

No decision required.

## **3. Implications for the Council**

### **3.1 Working with People**

Our children and families are at the heart of all work undertaken across our Inclusion and SEND teams. We are constantly striving to further develop our person centred approach to ensure a consistent positive experience for children, young people and their families across Kirklees.

### **3.2 Working with Partners**

We absolutely accept and acknowledge that in meeting the additional needs of many of our children and young people requires a holistic, multi-agency approach and we are wholly committed to working alongside partners from across the Education, Health and Care sectors.

### **3.3 Place Based Working**

We are committed to further developing services and provision across Kirklees to meet the needs of children, young people and their families in their local community. This report will demonstrate how we are moving towards an offer of more place based working.



### **3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality**

By further developing our provision for children and young people with SEND in Kirklees this will reduce the need for travel to schools and settings outside of the Local Authority, and consequently reducing the impact upon carbon emissions and climate change.

### **3.5 Improving outcomes for children**

Everything we do within our teams is with a focus on improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND. Significant scrutiny on outcomes was undertaken during the recent Local Area SEND Inspection.

### **3.6 Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources) Consultees and their opinions**

Not applicable

## **4. Next steps and timelines**

Our ambitious SEND Transformation Plan clearly outlines next steps and timelines. Actions within the transformation plan include recommendations previously made by scrutiny panel.

## **5. Officer recommendations and reasons**

To continue to progress and implement the SEND Transformation Plan.

To ensure children and young person and parent / carer voice is regularly sought to feed into all work undertaken.

## **6. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations**

Councillor Kendrick and Councillor Pattison have had sight of this report and are in full support of the identified strategy.

## **7. Contact officer**

Kelsey Clark-Davies, Head of Education Safeguarding & Inclusion  
[kelsey.clark-davies@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:kelsey.clark-davies@kirklees.gov.uk)

## **8. Background Papers and History of Decisions**

[Item 15 2019-03-19 Cabinet report SENDACT FULL VERSION.pdf](#)

## **9. Service Director responsible**

Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director - Learning and Early Support