

# Special Educational Needs and Disability Sufficiency Strategy 2019 - 2024

## Vision

The special educational needs and disability (SEND) sufficiency strategy contributes to the vision, outcomes and priorities for children and families in Lancashire agreed by the Children and Families Partnership Board by seeking to ensure that:

*Children and young people achieve their full potential in education, learning and future employment*

This will be achieved by:

*Providing children and young people with a good quality education and learning opportunity which matches their talents, ambitions and aims and enables a positive transition to adulthood.*

## Key principles

The SEND reforms in 2014 prioritised inclusive practice and children and young people's right to participate in mainstream education within their local community.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years set out a series of principles designed to support:

- the participation of children, their parents and young people in decision- making
- the early identification of children and young people's needs and early intervention to support them
- greater choice and control for young people and parents over support
- collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support
- high quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN
- a focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning
- successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment

## Key challenges

Between 2014 and 2019 the number of children and young people with education, health and care plans (EHCP) has risen by 47% nationally.

In the same period the number of children and young people educated in special schools and specialist colleges has risen by 29%.

Nationally, the average spend on high needs has increased and high needs block allocations fall short of existing levels of expenditure.

In Lancashire 85% of the high needs block expenditure is on special school places and top-up funding for children and young people with EHCPs. This will vary slightly from local authority to local authority but is not outside the normal range.

Despite increasing budgets this year and a significant transfer from the school block to the high needs block last year the net deficit is still expected to rise both locally and nationally over the next 3-4 years.

Lancashire has undertaken its own preliminary financial forecast. This forecast was based on the trend over time for places, as a result of this it was estimated that there would be a potential shortfall of about £42 million by 2023/24, within a possible range of £30 to £50 million. With the increase in high needs funding in Lancashire for the 2020/21 financial year this estimate is now being re-evaluated downwards.

## Strategic priorities

The priorities for ensuring sufficiency of SEND provision in Lancashire over the next five years are based upon the principles and challenges identified above and build upon the framework agreed by the council's cabinet in August 2019. These are as follows:

1. To improve outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND).
2. To ensure that all children and young people with SEND have access to the right provision at the right time.
3. To ensure that all pupils with EHCPs have access to mainstream education within their local community wherever possible by enhancing this provision.
4. To reduce the amount of travel time for pupils as far as possible.
5. To develop a consistent offer, which provides choice and ensures equity of access.
6. To ensure sufficiency of provision that will accommodate predicted increase in population growth and changing needs.
7. To ensure the efficient use of resources by maximising the capacity of good and outstanding local specialist provision and reviewing underutilised provision to address the unsustainable budget pressures within high needs funding.
8. To working collaboratively with neighbouring councils to seek to maximise efficient use of resources where possible.

*Local authorities are required to keep their educational and training provision under review. This includes the sufficiency of that provision.*

## Local context - numbers

- **3.1%** children and young people in Lancashire have EHCPs, the same percentage as in England.
- **45%** of children and young people with EHCPs in Lancashire have either an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.
- **49%** of children and young people with EHCPs attend a special school or specialist college in Lancashire, this is **9%** higher than nationally and means that **600** more children and young people in Lancashire attend a special school or specialist college.
- **324** fewer children and young people in Lancashire attend SEN units<sup>1</sup> compared with England.
- **642** places are commissioned in addition to those available within state-funded special schools. These include **269** placements in state-funded special schools over their available capacity and **373** within the independent and non-maintained sector.
- **85%** of places commissioned within independent and non-maintained special schools are for children and young people with SEMH needs and those identified as having ASD.
- **£17m** is the cost of independent and non-maintained special school placements for children and young people with SEMH needs and ASD.

## Local context - places

The greatest demand in special school places for children and young people with SEND across the county is in the following areas at both primary and secondary level:

East	North	South
Accrington/Burnley	Fleetwood/Lytham	Ormskirk/Skelmersdale
Colne/Nelson	Lancaster	Preston Leyland
	Morecambe	

### Primary

There is a shortage of primary special school places in the north area and particularly for children with SEMH needs.

A summary of the current number and the additional number of primary special school places for children with SEMH needs is provided in the table below.

Category of SEND need	East		North		South	
	Current places	Additional places	Current places	Additional places	Current places	Additional places
SEMH	64	6	0	46	86	0

<sup>1</sup> SEN unit is a special provision within a mainstream school where the children and young people are taught mainly within separate classes although they can be supported in mainstream for some lessons.

Learning difficulties/ASD	424	0	206		304	18
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## Secondary

There is a forecast shortage of at least 213 secondary special school places across the county over the next five years. The establishment of additional special school places will reduce reliance on independent and non-maintained special school places.

Most of this shortfall will be in the east and south areas for children and young people with learning difficulties and ASD.

Additional places will be needed for children and young people with SEMH needs in all three areas, but particularly in the east and north.

The table below provides a summary of the number of current and additional special school places needed for children and young people with learning difficulties/ASD and SEMH needs.

Category of SEND need	East		North		South	
	Current places	Additional places	Current places	Additional places	Current places	Additional places
SEMH	68	0	120	30	101	14
Learning difficulties/ASD	532	60	373	0	518	88

## Local context - funding

Two sources of additional funding have been made available to ensure sufficiency of SEND provision. This money will be used to create additional special school places across Lancashire. These are:

- Lancashire's allocation of the government's Special Provision Capital Funding of £3.5 million.
- £6.5 million that has been allocated from the basic needs grant in Lancashire.

## Short-term action

1. Establish 14 additional special school places in two secondary special schools in the south for young people with SEMH needs.
2. Review the decision making processes and systems in relation to the placement of children and young people with special educational needs.
3. Embed the SEND Review approach to support peer led improvement in inclusive practice in partnership with schools.
4. Develop flexible approaches which support integrated pathways across mainstream, alternative and specialist provision, to improve transition between placements and into adult services for children and young people with SEND.

## Medium term action

1. Continue the programme of workforce development in partnership with schools, to build on the self-evaluation tool and SEND Toolkit developed as part of the SEND improvement work.
2. Undertake more preventative and early intervention work through the proposed schools' locality networks, bringing education and children's services teams together to support inclusion of children and young people within local mainstream schools.
3. Establish 144 places in 12 SEN units attached to mainstream primary schools to support earlier intervention and enable children to attend their local school. These will be located in: Accrington/Burnley; Colne/Nelson, Fleetwood; Lancaster; Morecambe; Preston/Leyland and Ormskirk/Skelmersdale.
4. Establish 12 SEN units attached to mainstream secondary schools. This will provide 288 additional places across primary and secondary schools at an average cost of £180,000; a total estimated cost of £4.32 million.
5. Establish an additional 16 places in Lancaster by adding a modular building to the Stepping Stones Short Stay School site. A total estimated cost of this provision is £400,000.
6. Establish an additional 30 primary special school places for pupils with SEMH needs in the Thornton-Cleveleys area using empty classrooms in the unoccupied Haven School site. The total cost of refurbishment is estimated as £200,000.
7. Establish an additional 30 secondary places on the Haven School site creating a split site cross phase provision for children and young people with SEMH needs.

## Long term action

1. Establish an additional 88 special school places for children and young people with learning difficulties and ASD at Sir Tom Finney Community High School. The estimated cost is £1.45 million.
2. Re-locate Broadfield Specialist College to the Hameldon School site, to establish an additional 60 secondary special school places. The estimated cost is £3million.

## Funding and Governance

### Schools' Forum

A framework for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of high needs block spending in Lancashire has been developed. This sets out a range of measures to ensure the high needs funding received by the local authority is used to increase inclusion and support improved outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The future priorities for action to improve inclusion along with improving effectiveness and efficiency of resources will assist in addressing the forecast overspends over the coming years. School Forum will assist in monitoring progress and outcomes of these priorities alongside the SEND operational Group.

The Head of Inclusion will work with the HNB sub-group of School forum to agree and implement actions. The SEND operational group will make recommendations to the Schools Forum and Education

Board. The SEND operational group will be chaired by the Director of Education. All decisions will be presented as recommendations to the Schools Forum in line with the constitution where schools are identified as "consultees" for the HNB.

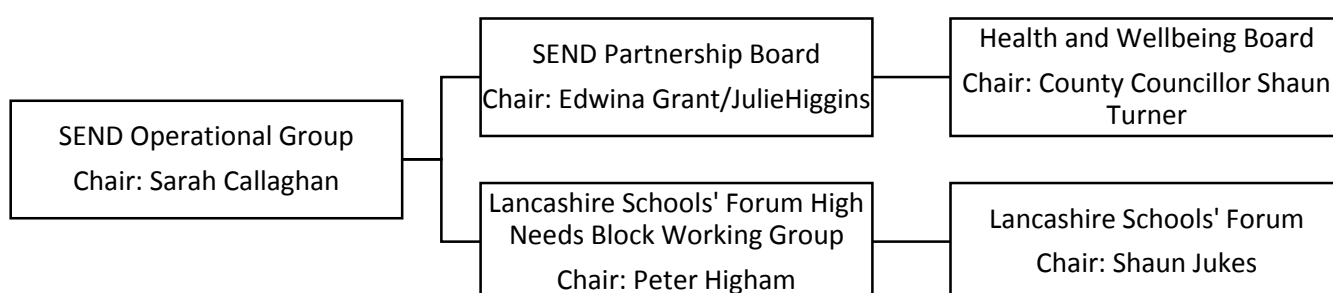
## SEND Partnership

### Arrangements for Governance

Decisions relating to the SEND Sufficiency Strategy are agreed at the SEND Operational Group, progress will be reported to the SEND Partnership Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The SEND Operational Group will also make recommendations to the Lancashire Schools' Forum High Needs Working Group and Lancashire Schools' Forum.

The active engagement of schools will be supported through the SEND Partnership Board and Lancashire Schools' Forum.



### Strategic coherence and a consistent approach

To ensure our strategic approach is coherent and the arrangements for children, young people and families are consistent it is essential that the actions arising from in a number of strategies and action plans are well-coordinated. In particular the:

#### Early Help Strategy

The strategy sets out the aim to target support early, as a coordinated, multi-agency response to prevent a statutory social care intervention. This will include children and young people with SEND and behaviour difficulties.

#### SEND Strategy

This strategy sets out four partnership priorities: planning for and meeting need; developing as equal partners; delivering services that are accessible and responsive; ensuring children and young people achieve their potential.

#### Family Safeguarding

The concept of family safeguarding is to get those working with the same family to work as a multi-agency team sharing the concerns and risks. The aim is to support families to address the difficulties they experience, using a motivational approach to achieve long term change driven by parents.

#### Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Transformation Plan

The plan aims to improve the resilience, emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people across Lancashire and South Cumbria.