

SEND STRATEGY

Committee name	Children, Families and Education Select Committee
Officer reporting	Abi Preston – Children’s Services Directorate
Papers with report	Hillingdon Draft SEND & AP Strategy 2023-2028 Appendix 1 – SEPB feedback & LA services feedback Appendix 2 - School feedback to the SEND and AP Strategy Appendix 3 – Young People’s views of the Strategy Appendix 4 - Summary of consultation survey responses from initial version in 2022
Ward	All

HEADLINES

- The purpose of the report is to provide the Committee with an update on the new version of the draft Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Strategy 2023-2028.
- The strategy outlines how Hillingdon Council plan to further develop the SEND and AP offer in Hillingdon over the next five years. The aim of the strategy is to improve outcomes and help raise the educational, achievements and health and care of Hillingdon’s children and young people with SEND and those who attend AP in order that they can fulfil their potential.
- A formal public consultation on the first draft version (SEND only) of strategy took place from July to August 2022 and was launched on the Council and Local Offer website, with Easy Read versions made available.
- Using this feedback, along with feedback from professionals, the draft strategy was updated further to sharpen the focus of the key priorities in light of this feedback and following further analysis of our data. There are now 5 ambitions, linked closely to the new national SEND and AP improvement plan.
- Hillingdon’s shared vision is for children, young people and young adults with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and those who access Alternative Provision (AP) in Hillingdon is that they lead happy and fulfilled lives in a society that accepts and understands them.
- The ambitions set out in the strategy are:
 - **Ambition 1: The right support, at the right time, in the right place**
 - **Ambition 2: Fully inclusive education for all**
 - **Ambition 3: Provision meets the needs of Hillingdon’s children and young people**
 - **Ambition 4: Children and young people live happy and fulfilled lives where they are included in the community**
 - **Ambition 5: There is a flexible offer and range of interventions available for children to access Alternative Provision**
- Feedback of the new updated version was sought from members of the SEND Executive Partnership board (includes health, social care, education, Parent Carer

forum, education setting representatives and voluntary sector representatives). The new strategy was also shared with all schools and governors, all staff in the Education and SEND services and senior leadership across education and social care.

- Consultation also took place with young people to hear their views on the proposed ambitions, who supported the ambitions and felt they were the right ones. They wanted their voice to be heard more by schools to ensure they get the right support at the right time.
- Members of SEPB, Education and social care teams confirmed the vision and priorities as a positive framework for improving SEND provision and outcomes for children and young people.
- Feedback from schools and governors was more mixed. 76% agreed with the principles in the strategy, 16% stated other, 12% did not agree, and 51% agreed with the ambitions, with 24% stating they didn't know and 24% not agreeing. The main concerns related to the national policy in the strategy such as an increased focus on children with EHCPs attending mainstream settings where possible which schools are not supportive of in some cases and concerns around funding changes.
- The strategy supports the direction of travel from the DfE on the new SEND and AP improvement plan.
- An easy read version will be published once the strategy is agreed.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee notes the contents of the draft Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2023-2028 which outlines the strategic vision and priorities for the delivery of SEND Services across the borough.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. The strategy is for Hillingdon children and young people aged 0-25 years who have Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) and children who access Alternative Provision (AP), their families and the professionals who work together with them.
2. The initial draft strategy was co-produced by the SEND Strategic Executive Board (formerly the SEND Strategic Partnership Board), with representatives from Hillingdon Council (education and social care), NHS NW London Integrated Care Board, education settings and Hillingdon Parent Carers Forums. Further development work was undertaken with health, social care and education partners to sharpen the focus on the key areas of priority.
3. The strategy is set within the national context and our statutory requirement to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND under the requirements of the Children and Families Act 2014. The strategic priorities have also been aligned to the recently consulted on Department of Education (DfE), SEND Review: Right Support, Right Place, Right Time (Green Paper) and the new Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Local Area SEND Inspection Framework as well as the new SEND & AP Improvement plan.
4. There are five established priority group workstream supporting the priorities outlined in the strategy. The SEND Operational Group monitors the work of the priority groups which are Early Intervention and Inclusion; Co-production; Health and Social Care Engagement; Transition Planning and SEND Sufficiency and Placements. Once the strategy is agreed, the groups will be realigned to the new ambitions to ensure that they each have action plans to drive forward progress which will be regularly monitored and reported on to the Hillingdon SEND Executive Partnership Board.

PERFORMANCE DATA

None at this stage.

RESIDENT BENEFIT

Through the initial consultation process in 2022, Hillingdon residents and particularly those with children and young people with SEND were given the opportunity to review current service provision and how this could be improved. We listened to residents and the Parent Carer Forums and shaped the SEND Strategy in the light of their comments and views. The strategy outlines the local areas commitment to improving the outcomes for children and young people with SEND and those who access AP and will encourage active engagement and participation from parents, carers, and young people in strategic developments.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Hillingdon has secured a DSG Safety Valve Agreement with the DfE, and actions outlined in the deficit recovery plan are helping to manage down the DSG overspend over the course of the next five years. Additional capital funding has also been secured towards school expansion works and this along with Hillingdon's capital funding will be used to develop additional school places in borough as part of the strategic objectives. The key priorities outlined in the strategy are also aligned to the DSG safety valve plan and areas of work contributing to the deficit recovery plan.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None at this stage.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Draft SEND & AP Strategy 2023-2028

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – SEPB feedback & LA services feedback

Appendix 2 – Schools' feedback to the SEND and AP Strategy

Appendix 3 – Young People's views of the Strategy

Appendix 4 – Summary of consultation survey responses from initial version in 2022

APPENDIX 1 - SEPB FEEDBACK & LA SERVICES FEEDBACK

Parent Carer Forum: *'We agreed that the details in the 4 ambitions sound like great stuff, it's exactly what we want our local authority to be thinking and saying.'*

Our hope is that the implementation and monitoring of all these ambitions are given as much attention, because ambitions are nothing if they are not acted on.

We also wonder what all this would look like in practise. We would like the next stage to be that someone oversees an implementation stage for these ambitions.'

SENDIASS – *'I do like this document, there are lots of great ideas and it feels like discussions that have taken place are taking shape in practice.'*

Other professionals:

The strategy is very clear on our 4 ambitions and how it aligns with other plans across services within Hillingdon working collaboratively with our stakeholders. The format of the document also allows for an easy read.

All four ambitions are positives steps for our children with SEND.

Good to see ambition 3 - assessment provision for children who clearly have a long term need but no special schools available - look forward to seeing this.

The overall document is very informative and clear about areas of development and how this will be achieved.

Really like the mention of community acceptance of SEND especially as the borough is so diverse.

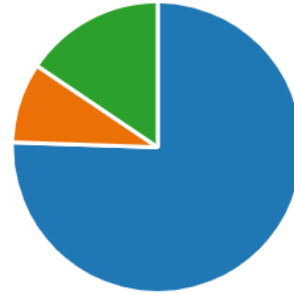
APPENDIX 2 - SCHOOLS' FEEDBACK FROM 2023 VERSION OF SEND & AP STRATEGY 2023

(Please note, the AP ambition was not included in the consultation version)

SEND Strategy

Do you agree with the shared principles in the strategy?

● Yes	34
● No	4
● Other	7



Do you like the layout and overall content of the strategy? (N.B. it will be professionally designed in due course)

● Yes	26
● No	7
● I dont know	12



Do you agree with the overall ambitions and how we aim to achieve them?

● Yes	23
● No	11
● I dont know	11



Ambition 1:

...

27 respondents (64%) answered **needed** for this question.



Ambition 2:

...

17 respondents (40%) answered **children with SEND** for this question.



Ambition 3:

...

20 respondents (48%) answered **funding** for this question.



Ambition 4:

17 respondents (53%) answered LA for this question.

...
Lots of references positive about their experiences school surveys
relation to Q4 EHCP plans professionally designed
voice and perspective layout LA annual reviews children and families
parent or professional success criteria statutory timelines content of the strategy
references to children impact on the pupils document have any impact
positive about the support priority for any stakeholder

Feedback from schools (direct comments):

- Yes serious attempts should be made to achieve this. Totally agree but how will you ensure that the right support is available at the right time?
- Yes - The most significant of this is make more support and resources available without the need for a diagnosis and without needing and EHCP.
- This is a useful ambition, but parents do not feel this is applicable.
- I agree with your statement that 'Not all schools in Hillingdon welcome children with SEND as much as others, whilst some schools are very inclusive.' I have seen this for myself first hand. What is the LA authority going to do about these schools?
- I agree with the aim. However, there is a significant gap in SEMH support for mainstream settings.
- Projections don't seem to reflect that we are a "port authority" and have historically picked up a large number of movers in, particularly asylum seekers.
- There needs to be a clearer approach that is easily accessible for outreach work that will make a difference.
- I agree with the aim and feel it would be helpful to develop a SEMH pupil and family support approach/services offered, which can then be shared with schools via a centralised website.

Areas of concern:

- Funding – schools want to see more funding for SEND.
- Criteria for reducing EHCPs is a concern.
- With accountability creating very high stakes for HTs, what 'protection' could be put in place regarding results for schools who are inclusive? It almost feels as if you are penalised for inclusivity.
- A sense that LBH is a port authority and therefore schools feel we shouldn't compare ourselves to national data.
- Schools wanted to see reference to LA compliance as actions – this was in the strategy but the wording was altered to further clarify this for schools.

APPENDIX 3 - YOUNG PEOPLE'S VIEWS OF THE STRATEGY

Children shared some ideas for what helped them in school:

- Exams in a different room to others
- Need extra support
- Offer different ways of communication
- Mental health should be considered
- Schools need to offer more support outside of EHCP, support is only given when you have one and not everyone has one

'Children with behavioural needs feel they aren't wanted in schools. They are the problem. Support isn't shaped enough around what children need and how they learn.' One young person felt that learning by reading didn't work for them. They needed to be taught more thoroughly.

Dyslexia can be hard – they need coloured overlays and different ways of teaching.

Young people did not feel they are heard in schools.

In reference to *'Provision meets the needs of Hillingdon's young people'* - children need the right staff, training, spaces etc.

In reference to setting up SRPs – one young person felt this worked well for her and other children.

Schools need to adapt their settings to meet everyone's needs and stop seeing the child as the problem.

Schools should have more options, learning is very important, every needs to do it, so the option should be available and resources for this should be provided.

One young person felt they didn't want an adult supporting them as others noticed and it didn't help them. They got their teaching assistant to do all of their work so they didn't have to bother but it didn't help them to learn:

It shouldn't be 'one approach for everyone' because I hated having an additional teacher in the classroom but I know others like it, so it should be individual to the need of the child.'

Careers advice needs to improve – they felt their careers advice only helped them think of where to go next not the long term options. Apprenticeships did not get promoted enough for the young people to understand their options fully.

'I wasn't taught practical skills at school (except cooking) so I was unprepared for the real world. I didn't know how to pay rent or manage my money. PSHE was not taught regularly.'

'You shouldn't have to have an EHCP for additional help.'

APPENDIX 4 - SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION SURVEY RESPONSES FROM INITIAL VERSION IN 2022

Who were the respondents?

There were 38 responses to the consultation survey, of which 74% were parent/carer respondents; 5% were Headteachers; 5% were other educational professionals; 3% were Health professionals and 3% were voluntary sector representatives. There was a lower response rate than was expected and this may have been due to the timing of the launch of the consultation, with it being so close to the end of term. We also would have wanted to engage with more young people as respondents, however we now have a plan in place of how we can better engage young people in strategic development work.

The consultation survey asked respondents if they agreed with the shared vision and three key priorities outlined in the strategy. Asked if they agreed with the vision, 87% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the vision.

For Priority One, **making sure that children and young people with SEND have access to services early on in their life or when additional needs are emerging**, 82% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the priority one. When asked if respondents agreed with the actions identified to achieve delivery of priority one, 90% of respondents either strongly agree or agreed with the actions identified to deliver priority one.

Overarching themes from the comments provided for Priority One included:

- The work of the SEND Service is driven by budgets and not needs of children and young people with SEND.
- The quality of EHCP's needs to be improved and professionals need to work together more.
- Some professionals lack the right SEND knowledge.
- National and London figures show that Hillingdon is not identifying SEN need early enough.
- More understanding is needed on how these priorities will be delivered

For Priority Two, **ensuring that wherever possible we will have enough school places in Hillingdon for children and young people with SEND**, 90% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the priority two. When asked if respondents agreed with the actions identified to achieve delivery of priority two, 89% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the priority two and its aims.

Overarching themes from the comments provided for Priority Two included:

- Mainstream schools are not currently able to meet the needs outlined in some EHCP's. It was the view that specialist staff should be deployed in mainstream schools.

For Priority Three, **supporting children and young people's transitions and preparing them for their adult lives**, 92% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the priority three. When asked if respondents agreed with the actions identified to achieve delivery of priority three, 92% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the priority three and its aims.

Overarching themes from the comments provided for priority three included;

- The strategy needs to include the support offer for Adults with Complex Needs.

Overall themes from additional consultation and engagement events

What our families are telling us?

Through the consultation survey, additional consultation and engagement events and regular dialogue with our Hillingdon Parent Carer Forums and SENDIASS some of the key issues identified by parents include:

- Lack of understanding by some SENCO's, of children and young people with SEND. Parents feel that this impacts on their child getting the right type of support within school. They feel that more training and upskilling of SENCO's is needed, so they really understand the needs of children and young people with SEND.
- Lack of understanding in mainstream settings of children and young people with unmet autism or Social Emotional and Mental Health needs which are displayed through behaviour.
- Lack of capacity in special schools delaying moves that increase anxiety and non-attendance impacting outcomes.
- There is increased pressure on mainstream schools to support children and young people who would otherwise be in specialist provision, due to a lack of capacity in borough.
- A lack of places in Hillingdon to provide for those young people with autism or SEMH.
- Parents feel there needs to be a more integrated approach, with professionals working together, in order that they do not have to tell their story again and again.
- More early intervention support is needed for children and young people transitioning and moving into the borough. Parents find it difficult to navigate the systems and once they arrive in borough.
- Sometimes parents experience difficulties in contacting their SEN Officers and being kept update with the Education Health Care (EHC) process.
- The Children's Integrated Therapy Service is not meeting the needs of some children and young people with speech and language or occupational therapy needs, particularly for young people placed out of borough, or those out of education.

What professionals are telling us?

- Mainstream Headteachers and SENCO's, are concerned that they are being asked to continue with provision for children and young people with SEND when specialist provision has been identified and are unable to meet need in borough.
- More skilled and trained staff are needed to meet the needs of children and young people with SEMH needs.
- The SEND Service does not identify some types of need as early or as well as other areas.
- The Children's Integrated Therapy Service is not able to offer early intervention and non-statutory support for children and young people with emerging therapy needs.
- Headteachers and SENCO's have told us there needs to be improved communication with the SEND Service and SEN Officers about EHCP processes.
- There is a need to ensure that Preparing for Adulthood outcomes are being outlined in the EHCP from at least Y9 – including health/social care ones, which will help to identify earlier where there is demand and gaps in future provision. This will also enable better planning when learners move from health and social care into adults at 18.
- There needs to be earlier identification of high cost/complex learners at phase transfer stage so that suitable provision can be identified.

- There was a view that there needs to be a move from a 1:1 to group support model for Alternative Provision to support integration into mainstream placements. Improved monitoring around this will ensure that young people with SEND are progressed to future settings more quickly.