

SEND SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY - JANUARY 2025

Committee name	Children, Families & Education Select Committee
Officer reporting	Abi Preston – Director of Education & SEND Dominika Michalik – Assistant Director of SEND & Inclusion
Papers with report	Appendix 1 - Draft SEND and AP Sufficiency Strategy 2025-2030
Ward	All

HEADLINES

This report presents a draft SEND Sufficiency Strategy for Hillingdon which ‘sets out how the London Borough of Hillingdon and our partners within the SEND Local Area Partnership, intend to ensure that there is sufficient high-quality specialist provision, in both mainstream and special school settings, to meet the future needs of children and young people with SEND in Hillingdon.’

This strategy will complement the Hillingdon Local Area SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy 2023-28 for children and young people with SEND which sets out key priorities for the next 5 years in developing further new, ambitious, and innovative specialist provision that meets the need of Hillingdon children and young people locally.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Children, Families and Education Select Committee:

- 1. Review the draft SEND Sufficiency Strategy;**
- 2. Note the 13 responses from the consultation in response to the proposed strategy; and**
- 3. Provide comments to be included in the Cabinet Member report.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

The draft SEND Sufficiency Strategy sets out very clearly the LA’s vision:

In Hillingdon, we are committed to meeting the needs of our children and young people. We do this by placing them at the centre of all that we do and by ensuring they and their families are part of the decision-making processes. Central to our vision is continuing to strengthen our relationships with children and their families, with a clear focus on co-production.

We want Hillingdon to be a place where children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families lead happy and fulfilled lives from early years through adolescence to adulthood, in communities that accept and understand them.

We are committed to creating an environment where all our children and young people can reach their potential in education and have the support and guidance they need to prepare for adulthood.

The draft SEND Sufficiency Strategy is presented with the following 13 sections:

1. Introduction

2. Our Vision

'All children and young people are entitled to an appropriate education, one that is appropriate to their needs, promotes high standards and the fulfilment of potential. This should enable them to:

- achieve their best potential,
- become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and
- make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training.

The draft SEND Sufficiency Strategy is underpinned by [Hillingdon Local Area SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy 2023-2028](#) with clearly defined ambitions:

- **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

These ambitions highlight the importance of ensuring that we create provision that meets the needs of Hillingdon's children and young people and enables them to receive excellent education in their local community.

3. Strategic context

This section outlines the primary legislation and guidance that define our duties and govern our practice. The Council has a statutory obligation to ensure there are sufficient places for every child or young person residing in Hillingdon.

4. Local context

This section highlights the increasing demand for EHCPs and the ongoing efforts to support pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Hillingdon:

- **EHCPs Maintained by Hillingdon:** As of October 2024, there are 3,452 EHCPs, a 37% increase since January 2020. This number fluctuates due to various factors, including pupils moving in and out of the borough.
- **EHCPs in Hillingdon Schools:** As of October 2024, there are 2,549 pupils with EHCPs attending Hillingdon schools, a 32.1% increase since October 2020. Of these, 44.1% are in special schools, and 19.6% of pupils in Hillingdon special schools are from other local authorities.

- **SEN Support:** As of October 2024, 11.9% of Hillingdon pupils receive SEN support, below the national average of 13.6% (Jan 2024).
- **EHCP Prevalence:** In January 2024, 4.7% of Hillingdon pupils have an EHCP, matching the national average but below the London average of 5.1%.
- **EHCP Growth:** There has been a 40% increase in EHCPs since 2020, with a recent slowdown in year-on-year growth to 4.6% in 2024.
- **Primary Need of Autism:** The number of pupils with autism as their primary need has doubled from 976 in January 2019 to 1,915 in January 2024 and currently remains the highest need in the borough.
- **Special vs. Mainstream Schools:** 34.4% of EHCP pupils attend special schools, higher than the national average of 32.1%. Meanwhile, 56.1% are in mainstream schools, below the national average of 58.4%.

5. Current provision

We have shared the different types of special schools within Hillingdon, and the number of pupils by year group. The seven special schools in the Borough are able to meet a range of needs with a mix of both Community and Academy schools.

6. DfE funded capital programmes

This section of the report confirms that there are currently 2 separate government funded capital building projects. The DfE funded and managed Priority School Building Projects (PSBP) aims to rebuild and refurbish school buildings in the most need across the country, and the Free School projects, which will create additional places. In Hillingdon, this relates to 5 special schools and one new autism unit within a mainstream school.

7. Predicted future demand

This summary highlights the importance of ongoing development and monitoring to meet the needs of children and young people with EHCPs in Hillingdon. In the next seven years the projected number of EHCPs is anticipated to increase only by 16% and slowing down. The aim is to strengthen the use of pre-statutory support through a graduated approach and Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP).

8. Our Key Priorities

The three priorities outlined in this section align with the ambitions of the Local Area SEND & AP Strategy for fully inclusive education, addressing the needs of Hillingdon's children and young people in a comprehensive and measurable manner. It also details how stakeholders can achieve each priority and how success will be measured. Additionally, there is related commissioning work regarding Short Breaks and Tuition to ensure we meet the needs of all children and young people, including primary-aged children who have been excluded from school.

9. Specific areas of development

There are 3 specific areas of development that have been identified in this section

- Increasing the number of school age children receiving SEND Support
- Reducing the reliance on independent non-maintained special school (INMSS) provision
- Addressing the demand for EHC plans with a primary need of Autism

10. What we have achieved so far

The following 2 key areas of achievement have been noted in this section:

- Creating new Specialist places in Hillingdon schools. Since September 2023, the following provision has been created in Hillingdon:
 - 24 place primary school Designated Unit
 - 16 place secondary school Designated Unit
 - Two x 16 place primary school ASD Specialist Resource Provisions ○ 16 place (32 part time) Specialist Assessment Base for Early Years
- Strengthening Early identification and access to SEND support
 - Conducting SEND Reviews as an evidence-based tool to self-evaluation and comprehensive assessment of whole school practices.
 - Early Support Funding has been reviewed to offer short term funding for children who have additional needs beyond those that might be expected to be funded from the SEND notional budget.
 - Hillingdon Ordinarily Available Provision was reviewed and collaboratively developed to serve as a tool for enhancing support and promoting consistent practices across educational settings.
 - Training offer for parents and educational settings has been reviewed to ensure it effectively supports the enhancement of SEND provision.

11. Sufficiency delivery plan

This section highlights the Hillingdon SEND School Places Expansion and Development Plans through the development of SRPs and DUs which provide additional specialist facilities in mainstream schools.

12. Funding arrangements

This section shares how a framework has been developed to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of high needs block spending.

13. Governance and review arrangements for this strategy

This section summarises the decision-making process for the SEND Education Sufficiency Strategy

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The consultation for the draft SEND Sufficiency Strategy was shared by Officers with Headteachers and SENCOs of every school in Hillingdon on 4th November 2024. The consultation period started on the 4th November 2024 and ended on 4th December 2024.

Consultation Responses

13 responses were received in total during the consultation period. The responses are summarised below.

Online Questionnaire responses are summarised below:

1. 11 respondents agreed with the shared principles in the strategy.
 - Yes - 11
 - No - 0
 - Maybe – 2
2. Of the 2 respondents that answered 'Maybe', comments have been summarised below in the paper

3. **12** respondents liked the layout and overall content of the strategy
 - Yes - 12
 - No - 0
 - Maybe - 1
4. Of the **1** respondent that answered 'Maybe', comments have been summarised below in the paper
5. **12** respondents agreed with the 3 priorities and how we aim to achieve them
 - Yes - 12
 - No - 0
 - Maybe – 1
6. Of the **1** respondent that answered 'Maybe', comments have been summarised below in the paper
7. 9 respondents provided further comments which have been summarised below in the paper.

Themes raised in the Consultation Responses

1. General Agreement with the Strategy

- **Majority Agreement:** Most respondents agreed with the shared principles, layout, content, and priorities of the strategy.
- **Positive Feedback:** Many respondents expressed overall support and appreciation for the strategy.

2. Concerns and Suggestions

- **Ambiguity in Principles:** Some respondents found the principles unclear or confused them with ambitions.
- **Implementation Delays:** Concerns were raised about delays in panel decisions, funding, and school placements, which affect timely support for children.
- **Funding Issues:** Multiple comments highlighted the need for increased funding to effectively implement the strategy.

3. Specific Recommendations

- **Borough Supply Pool:** A suggestion to create a borough supply pool of SEN staff to provide immediate support, similar to a past initiative in Tower Hamlets.
- **Agile Response Framework:** Proposals for an agile response framework to scale resources based on real-time data trends, especially for autism support.
- **Hybrid Interface:** Recommendations for a hybrid interface to present the strategy, combining context, vision, and specific actions.

4. Communication and Transparency

- **Clear Communication:** Emphasis on the need for clear, concise communication to avoid information overload and ensure all stakeholders are well-informed.
- **Transparency:** Calls for complete transparency with schools and parents to build mutual understanding and reduce frustrations.

5. Parental and School Involvement

- **Parental Views:** Importance of considering parental views in decision-making processes.
- **School Involvement:** Encouragement for more schools to participate in working groups to foster understanding and empathy.

6. Specific Needs and Challenges

- **Specialist Placements:** Issues with the lack of specialist placements affecting pupil progress and draining school resources.
- **Curriculum Support:** Desire for support in delivering an appropriate curriculum, ensuring it aligns with the strategy's priorities. A specific suggestion was made to create a borough supply pool of SEN staff would be a good solution and provide short time immediate help.

Conclusion

We acknowledge the comment regarding funding arrangements, which is being addressed through the Hillingdon Banded Model review. This new banding framework will ensure there is a fair and transparent approach to funding EHCPs across the borough.

Additionally, Ambition Group 1 is working to ensure all partners understand what "right support at the right time" means and when mainstream versus specialist provision is appropriate, as there are varying interpretations that do not always align with needs.

The SEND Sufficiency Strategy is supported by the Hillingdon Local Area SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy 2023-2028 and its ambitions. These ambitions emphasise the importance of creating provision that meet the needs of Hillingdon's children and young people, enabling them to receive excellent education within their local community.

The implementation of the SEND Sufficiency Strategy is overseen by Ambition Group 3, which focuses on ensuring provisions meet the needs of Hillingdon's children and young people, and by Ambition Group 5, which ensures a flexible offer and range of interventions for children to access alternative provision.

These groups have detailed action plans that are monitored bi-monthly by the SEND Operational Group and the SEND Executive Partnership Board to ensure timely progress on all priorities from the SEND Sufficiency Strategy.

In the comments, there was a suggestion to regularly review the demand for specialist provision, including Specialist Resource Provision (SRP) and Designated Units (DU), to ensure capacity aligns with needs and that there is a continuum of support within the system. We conduct regular reviews of our demand, and our data indicates a need for more secondary SRP provision, so we are collaborating with schools to address this.

To ensure that the needs of every student with an EHCP are appropriately met with the right resources and provision, including adequate placement, the Local Area Partnership is working together to strengthen the quality of Annual Reviews and EHCPs.

There was also a suggestion to support schools in delivering an appropriate curriculum. This is being addressed through new approaches and support provided by the SEND Advisory Service and the Educational Psychology Service. These efforts are informed by feedback from school visits, SENCO Forums, and training offer surveys.

Next Steps

Comments from the Children, Families & Education Select Committee will be included in the recommendations that will go to the relevant Cabinet Member for formal approval.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications from this strategy report, the financial implications will be included in later reports that identify the specific actions arising from the strategy.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Hillingdon SEND and AP Strategy 2023-28](#)

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Draft SEND and AP Sufficiency Strategy 2025-2030



Hillingdon **SEND**
and **AP** Partnership



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision Sufficiency Strategy 2025-2030

DRAFT December 2024

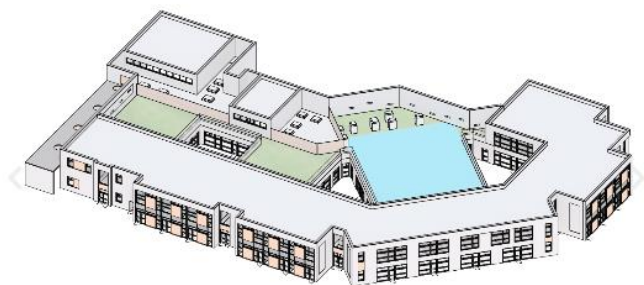


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1. Introduction

The SEND Sufficiency Strategy sets out how the London Borough of Hillingdon and our partners across the SEND Local Area Partnership, intend to ensure that there is sufficient high-quality specialist provision, in both mainstream and special school settings, to meet the future needs of children and young people with SEND in Hillingdon.

The SEND population has grown significantly since the 2014 SEND reforms with the greatest growth taking place in the statutory EHCP category. Historically, the number of children and young people requiring specialist provision has exceeded the capacity of the provision in Hillingdon, however,

there have been a number of developments to address this including a successful bid for an all through special free school. Our ambitious SEND capital programme developments enabled the area to meet the needs of most of the cohort in recent years and work is still ongoing to further develop our specialist provision. There are plans to expand the special schools offer, develop more Specialist Resources Provisions (SRPs), Designated Units (DU) and potentially further Assessment Centres for nursery age children with complex needs.

The London Borough of Hillingdon is the second largest of London's 32 boroughs. There are over 7,700 children and young people aged 0-25 years with SEND in Hillingdon which constitutes approx. 11.9% of our children.

During 2023-24 Hillingdon identified 16.6% of students who have either an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) or are receiving SEN Support. This compares to an average of 17.4% in London and 18.1% nationally (census data).

Hillingdon historically had higher levels of pupils with EHCPs on the school census than the national and London averages, but the gap has closed in recent years with Hillingdon matching the London average of 4.3% in 2021-22, and in 2023-24 Hillingdon's level of 4.7% fell below London's 5.1% and matched national 4.7%.

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) have recently undertaken a joint inspection of Hillingdon's Local Area SEND Partnership and identified areas for improvement related to SEND sufficiency. One of them was to ensure that inclusion in mainstream schools improves across the borough by supporting children and young people (CYP) to sustain their education in mainstream school and prevent suspensions and exclusions. Our aspiration outlined in the SEND and AP Strategy 2023-2028 is that all children in Hillingdon feel included, understood and welcomed regardless of their needs. We understand that the barriers felt by children and young people with SEND are a result of the way society is organised, rather than something intrinsic to the child. It is our role to remove the barriers children face to enable them feel part of their community and ensure inclusion is at the heart of all we do.

Please note that this document is based on long term planning forecasting. Data will be reviewed annually, and this plan will undergo minor updates, however, the body of the document will remain the same for the lifespan.

2. Our vision

In Hillingdon, we are committed to meeting the needs of our children and young people. We do this by placing them at the centre of all that we do and by ensuring they and their families are part of all decision-making processes. Central to our vision is continuing to strengthen our relationships with children and their families, with a clear focus on co-production.

We want Hillingdon to be a place where children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families lead happy and fulfilled lives from early years through adolescence to adulthood, in communities that accept and understand them.

We are committed to creating an environment where all our children and young people can reach their potential in education and have the support and guidance they need to prepare for adulthood.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice, 0-25 years (January 2015) is clear that:

'All children and young people are entitled to an appropriate education, one that is appropriate to their needs, promotes high standards and the fulfilment of potential. This should enable them to:

- achieve their best,
- become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and
- make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training.

As such, ensuring our children receive the education and support based on their needs is central to our strategies.

This SEND Sufficiency Strategy is underpinned by Hillingdon Local Area SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy 2023-2028 with clearly defined ambitions:

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

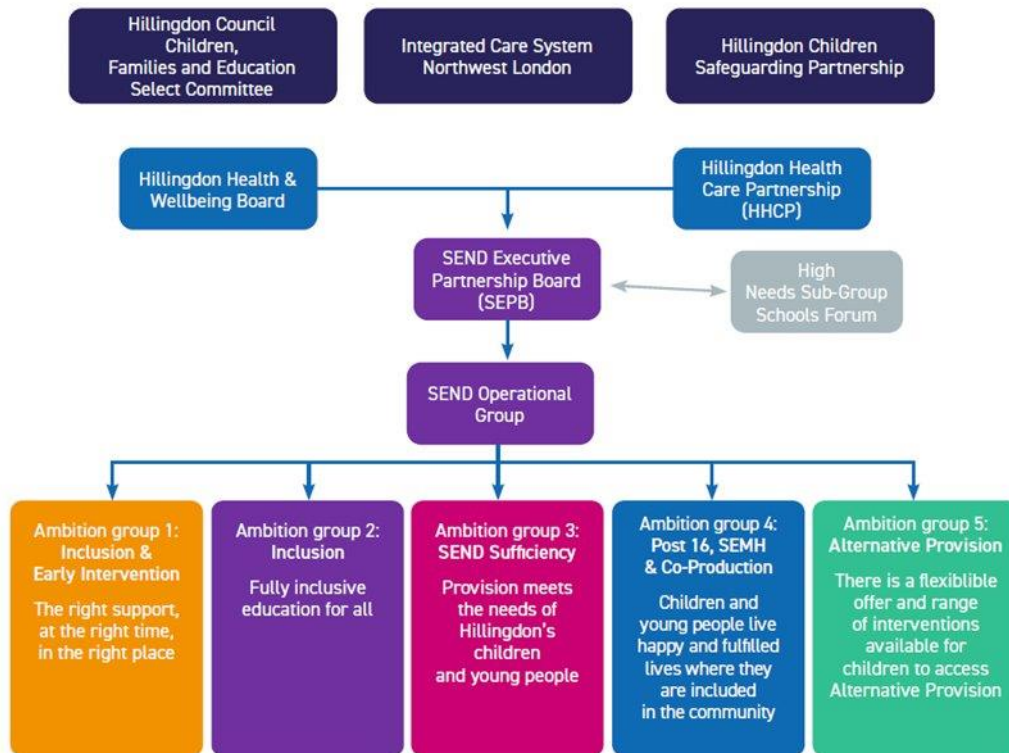
Ambition 5: There is a flexible offer and range of interventions available for children to access Alternative Provision



These ambitions highlight the importance of ensuring that we create provision that meets the needs of Hillingdon's children and young people and enables them to receive excellent education in their local community.

Governance

Each ambition is led by an ambition group with representatives from education, health and social care as well as schools' community. Clear action plans have been developed to ensure that the objectives related to the sufficiency, special schools' placements and mainstream inclusion are achieved.



The Ambition Groups 2 and 3 have a specific focus on strengthening inclusion and overseeing specialist provision.

The Ambition Group 2 specifically focuses on promoting Hillingdon's approach to inclusion by supporting and empowering settings to play their part in fully inclusive system where CYP can access mainstream local provisions, as much as possible.

This is achieved by:

- Creating a workforce training plan across the local area to share expertise, improve consistency and to ensure all partners work together to improve outcomes for SEND
- Working collaboratively with schools, to develop strategies to reduce the numbers of children who are excluded from education
- Establishing frameworks to support settings with the identification of SEND and how to best put support in place through Ordinarily Available Provision
- Providing all schools with a contextualised overview of inclusion data in mainstream schools to help identify areas for development and measure impact.

The Ambition Group 3 focuses on provision and monitors the progress of all new developments and manages any changes required in existing specialist provision to make it sustainable and meet the current and future demand.

This is achieved by:

- Reviewing current SEND school provision and ensure it meets the current needs of children
- Improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND
- Reviewed all independent and non-maintained schools to optimise the use of mainstream settings
- Reviewing Hillingdon’s banded funding model and create a new banding matrix to better support needs and the provision required to achieve this
- Quality assuring existing provision to create a consistent approach to supporting children with SEND
- Developing more provision to meet the range of needs locally in the Borough, including additional SRP places and Designated Units
- Further developing more SEND school places as required to meet the current and future demand

Our SEND Sufficiency Strategy aims to support these objectives by setting up a framework which allows us to provide educational settings in Hillingdon where children and young people’s learning and development is promoted in line with their individual needs and abilities.

3. Strategic context

The following primary legislation and guidance specifies our duties and governs our practice:

- Education Act 1996, Section 14
- Children’s Family Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice (0-25 years) 2015
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan 2023

The SEND and AP Sufficiency Strategy supports [Hillingdon Council’s Strategy 2022-2026](#) in meeting our 5 commitments to residents:

1. **Safe and strong communities**

Hillingdon is a safe place with resilient, strong communities with access to good quality, affordable housing.

2. **Thriving, healthy households**

Children, young people, their families and vulnerable adults and older people live healthy, active and independent lives.

3. **A green and sustainable borough**

Hillingdon will be a sustainable, carbon-neutral borough, protecting Hillingdon's heritage,

built environment and valued green spaces. Residents will live in pleasant neighbourhoods with access to sustainable waste management and transport.

4. **A thriving economy**

We are actively working with local businesses and partners to create a borough where businesses grow within a strong economy and local people can improve their skills and enjoy good quality jobs.

5. **A digital-enabled, modern, well-run council**

We are a well-run, sustainable council with sound financial management, achieving positive outcomes for residents.

This SEND and AP Sufficiency Strategy is aligned with various strategies/plans across the local area including the:

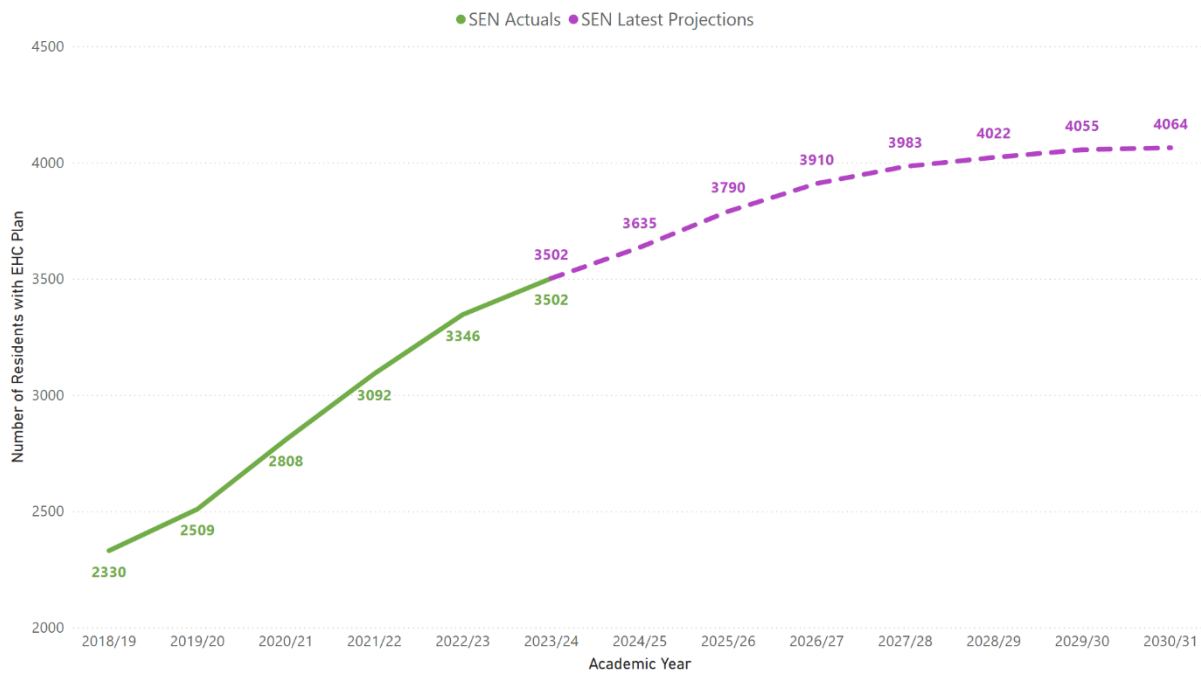
- [Hillingdon Local Area SEND & AP Strategy 2023-2028](#)
- [CNWL Strategy for 2022-2025](#)
- Hillingdon Education Strategy (draft)
- [Hillingdon Council Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2025](#)
- •Hillingdon Joint Autism Needs Assessment 2022
- •Hillingdon Autism Strategy 2023
- [Hillingdon Family Hub Strategy Hillingdon Early Help Strategy 2021-2025](#)
- [Hillingdon Safeguarding Children Education Inclusion Toolkit](#)
- [Hillingdon Safeguarding children and young people with complex needs and disabilities](#)

4. Local context

As of October 2024, there are 2,549 pupils with EHCPs, in Hillingdon schools (October 2024 school census). This number has risen by 32.1% since October 2020. Of these, 44.1% are in special schools, and 19.6% of pupils in Hillingdon special schools are from other local authorities.

The number of students with an EHCP maintained by Hillingdon is 3,452 as of October 2024, which is a 37% increase since January 2020. This number fluctuates as pupils move in and out of the Borough, pupils gain an EHCP, or others have their EHCP ceased when all of their outcomes have been met, or they become age 25.

Graph 1. Hillingdon Residents with EHCPs – Actuals and 23/24-based Projections



- 11.9% of Hillingdon pupils are registered to receive SEN support (Jan 2024 school census), which is below with the national average of 13.4% (Jan 2024 school census). Progress has been made over the last year, but there is still more to do to identify and support children and young people with SEND in mainstream settings.
- 4.7% of Hillingdon pupils have an EHCP (Jan 2024 school census) which is on par with the national average of 4.7% and below the London average of 5.1% (Jan 2024 school census). All percentages have increased each year since 2016.
- There were 3502 EHC plans maintained by Hillingdon as of January 2024. Whilst this indicates a net increase of plans since January 2022 (3092 EHCPs). There has been a 40% increase in the number of EHCPs since 2020, compared to 48% nationally. The year-on-year EHCP net growth has decreased from the previous trend of 7% per year to 4.6% this year, which reflects continued work on ceasing plans where appropriate. Since 2020, there has been a consistent level of movers in each year at 3% of the cohort and cessation in the same period has also been fairly consistent with an average of 9% during the 2023 calendar year compared to a national average of 8%.
- The number of Hillingdon pupils with EHC plans classified as having a primary need of autism has doubled in the last 5 years from 976 in Jan 2019 to 1915 in Jan 2024.
- 34.4% of the children and young people with an EHCP issued by Hillingdon attend special schools (including specialist post 16), which is higher than 32.1% nationally. This has however, decreased by 3.8% from the previous year, compared to a 1.1% decrease nationally, despite growth in number of EHC plans.
- 56.1% of Hillingdon children and young people with EHC plans are supported in a mainstream school (including early years and further education) which is below 58.4% nationally. There has been a 1% increase in Hillingdon compared to a 1.7% increase nationally when compared to the previous year.

Graph 2: breakdown of the EHCP cohort as of SEN2 2024 by type of setting age range (0-25)

Type of educational setting	Early Years	%	Yr 0 (reception) & above	%
Mainstream	10	0.3%	1828	52%
Maintained Special	5	0.1%	947	27%
Independent Special (INMSS)	0	0.0%	354	10%
Other (includes EOTAS, EHE, NEET, tuition, PVI etc.)	18	0.5%	338	10%
Alternative Provision	0	0.0%	2	0%
	33	0.9%	3469	99%
Total				3502

5. Current Provision

Below are several tables to explain the type of special schools within Hillingdon, and the number of pupils by year group. We are able to meet a range of needs across the schools, and there is a mix of Community and Academy schools. There is only 1 special school that can accommodate primary and secondary pupils, -the other 6 schools have fixed age ranges.

Table 1 - October 2023 – Special School Roll

School	School Type	Designated Need
Grangewood School	Academy	SLD/PMLD/MSI
Hedgewood School	Community	MLD (Complex)/ASD
Meadow High School	Community	MLD (Complex)
Moorcroft School	Academy	SLD/PMLD/MSI
Pentland Field School	Academy	MLD/ASD
Willows School Academy Trust	Academy	SEMH/MLD/ASD
The PRIDE Academy	Academy	SEMH

Current total special school rolls are set out in the table below. The total roll is now 1,053, a rise of 7.3% on last year (981 in January 2023), and an overall rise of 25.6% in the past 5 years (838 in January 2019). The majority of the pupils are Hillingdon residents although some schools near borough borders take higher levels of out of borough pupils.

Table 2. January 2024 – Primary Special School Roll

School Name	Nursery	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Grangewood	2	12	17	27	24	20	17	19	138
Hedgewood	-	5	21	30	28	38	36	30	188
Pentland Field	-	3	12	4	10	6	10	11	56
The Willows	-	-	-	9	13	12	19	19	72
Primary Total	2	20	50	70	75	76	82	79	454

Table 3. January 2024 – Secondary Special School Roll

School Name	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Total
Meadow	44	38	35	35	18	37	29	26	262
Moorcroft	16	21	16	17	22	16	14	11	133

Pentland Field	12	14	21	14	13	14	10	14	112
The PRIDE Academy	20	14	17	20	19	2	-	-	92
Secondary Total	92	87	89	86	72	69	53	51	599

6. Capital programmes

DfE Led Projects

There are currently 2 separate government funded capital building projects. The DfE funded and managed Priority School Building Programme 2 (PSBP2) aims to rebuild and refurbish school buildings in the most need across the country, and the Free School projects, which will create additional places. In Hillingdon, this relates to 5 special schools and one new autism unit within a mainstream school. All these places will be commissioned for Hillingdon residents and will reduce out of Borough provision and costs, though some cross-borough movement and use of specialist provision will always be needed.

Priority School Building Programme 2:



- **Meadow High School** is a complex MLD setting for secondary aged pupils. It was largely rebuilt by DfE Priority Schools Building Programme, with a larger hall and other improved facilities but no extra places, which officially opened in September 2022.



- **Harlington Secondary School** PSBP expansion that included a new Designated Unit for 16 pupils with autism opened in the Autumn Term 2023.

Free School Projects

One new Free School has opened already, with the construction of two new Free Schools underway and approval for another Special Free School:

- **The PRIDE Academy** opened in January 2023 as a Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) specialist setting for secondary age pupils. The school expanded its previous provision by 45 places, including Key Stage 3 and 4 and post-16 places and has now broadened their designation to also include complex autism with SEMH in order to meet local needs.



- **Grand Union Village** is a new primary Severe Learning Difficulties /Profound Multiple Learning difficulties (SLD/PMLD) school with 80 new places. The build was completed in the Autumn Term 2023 but is being used to decant pupils from Grangewood to allow for the building of the new Pinn River school.



- **New Pinn River Free School** with 80 additional places that include expanded SLD/ PMLD/ Multi-Sensory Impairment MSI provision which is due to open in 2026. This all through school will provide places for pupils currently in satellite provisions at Pinkwell Primary School and RNIB Sunshine House within the Eden Trust.



- **New Special Free School** – to create 180 place all through school for pupils with autism and complex needs. Eden Trust was successful in its application for the free school.

Local Authority Led Projects

The following table details the LA led projects that have been completed in the last academic year:

Table 4. Completed LA led projects

Provider	Project type - expansion, suitability, accessibility	Provider Type	Phase	Type of SEND need	Number of additional places to be created
Charville Primary Academy	SRP for pupils with autism	Academy Primary	Primary	Autism	16
Ruislip Gardens Primary School	Specialist Assessment Base	Community Primary School	Primary	All	16
Ruislip Gardens Primary School	SRP for pupils with autism	Community Primary School	Primary	Autism	16
Wood End Park Primary Academy (south)	Designated Unit	Academy Primary	Primary	Autism with Complex Needs	24

The following table provides details of current LA led projects to provide additional SEND places:

Table 5. Current LA led projects

Provider	Project type Expansion, suitability, accessibility	Provider Type	Phase	Type of SEND need	Number of additional places to be created
Meadow High School	Expansion by adaptations and small extension to create new 2nd site, and	Community Special School	Secondary	MLD	98

	demolish/rebuild on main site				
Pinkwell School (Elliot Trust)	Agree permanent status beyond 2024 of the temporary Unit used by Eden Trust 2022-24.	Academy	Primary	SLD	TBC

Post 16 College Provision

Harrow, Richmond, Uxbridge College (HRUC) is a local Further Education (FE) setting which provides education for children and young people post 16. The college accommodates a large cohort of Hillingdon residents with SEND. In response to the growing demand for more specialist provision within mainstream FE, HRUC were recently successful in their bid for purchasing Barra Hall and are planning to create over 70 places post 16 and post 19 students with MLD/SLD from September 2025. This will offer our local residents more options for young people with EHCPs to be educated within Hillingdon.

Alternative Provision

The definition provided by the Department for Education (DfE) for Alternative Provision is '*education arranged by local authorities for pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education; education arranged by schools for pupils on a fixed period exclusion; and pupils being directed by schools to off-site provision to improve their behaviour*'. This is the definition which Hillingdon adopts.

Alternative Provision can take many different forms, and in all cases, the provision should be both efficient in its delivery of education and suitable to the child's age, ability, and aptitude; and to any special educational needs they may have. Hillingdon sees the use of Alternative Provision as a time-limited intervention for a child to address specific needs which cannot be done through their mainstream setting. The aim for all packages of Alternative Provision is to support successful reintegration.

The needs of most children and young people can be met through mainstream education provision, but a small proportion with the most complex needs require specialist support. This enables them to progress in their learning, going onto their next step towards adulthood. Some children and young people, however, need education or training arranged outside a mainstream or specialist setting in order to receive suitable education or training. This can be for a number of reasons:

- Children and young people who have been permanently excluded from their school.
- Children and young people who have medical and mental health needs preventing them from attending a school.
- Children and young people at risk of suspension, on a fixed period suspension, or directed by schools to off-site provision to support behavioural and emotional challenges.
- Young people aged 16 - 25 with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or other vulnerabilities needing additional support to progress to adulthood.
- Children and young people unable to cope with a full-time curriculum, missing out on

education, or who find themselves isolated in mainstream schools because of behavioural or other challenges.

The number of children requiring access to an Alternative Provision in Hillingdon fluctuates throughout the year. There are on average at any time approximately 100 children accessing Alternative Provision commissioned by the Council.

The majority of these places are commissioned by the SEND EHCP Team or the Exclusions and Reintegration team. In many cases, this is because a mainstream or specialist setting cannot meet the child's current SEND needs, or they have been permanently excluded.

Some children's needs are being met in a group setting and others require 1-1 support. Hillingdon commissions from a range of providers, including Alternative Provision Free Schools, Further Education Colleges and Sixth Form Centres, Tuition Centres and Personal Tutors.

Hillingdon launched a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for commissioning Alternative Provision in May 2024. This allows Officers to create and maintain an approved pool of Alternative Provision providers to ensure market availability and best value to meet the needs of the children in the borough who require access to Alternative Provision. Approved providers are invited to bid for individual placements or for block placements through mini competitions (a 'call off'), thus offering assurance on compliance and value for money.

Use of the DPS creates a competitive environment for suppliers whilst also ensuring a breadth of provision will be available to best meet the needs of a diverse and fluid cohort of children and young people. There are four lots providers can apply for:

- Lot 1: Full time education provision
- Lot 2: Part time education provision
- Lot 3: Bespoke provision
- Lot 4: Support for post-16 Education and Preparation for Adulthood

There are currently 23 providers listed on Hillingdon's Alternative Provision DPS.

Following a trend in recent years of permanent exclusions issued to primary-aged students, Hillingdon has identified a need for alternative provision places which are tailored to this age group. This type of provision is required to provide day-6 education to those students who are in receipt of a permanent exclusion, as well as short term places which can cater to children who require shorter term interventions to address specific concerns within their mainstream setting.

7. Predicted future demand

There were 3503 EHC plans maintained by Hillingdon as of January 2024 (SEN2 data). Whilst this indicates a net increase since January 2023, we have seen a decrease in year-on-year net growth which reflects the impact of new initiatives in meeting needs earlier and the cessation of plans. Based on current trends, in the next seven years the projected number of EHCPs is anticipated to increase by 16% whereas in the last 5 years the percentage change in the number of EHCPs was 50%.

The growth rate is monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure we can respond to the demand variation in a timely way. In order to promote a positive response to the predicted increase, there is a need for ongoing development of our specialist provision offer. We already know that the number of children and young people attending school out of the borough and/ or Independent Non-Maintained Special Schools (INMSS) is too high, and this has implications for their family lives, friendships, and future expectations and is often not best value.

8. Our Key Priorities

Our key priorities link to the ambitions from the Local Area SEND & AP Strategy especially Ambitions 2 and 3 – fully inclusive education for all and provision meets the needs of Hillingdon’s children and young people so that our approach is holistic, and outcomes are measurable.

- **Priority 1:** We will support all schools and settings in Hillingdon to be inclusive and welcome children and young people with SEND, whilst promoting the uptake of early help and intervention pathways.
- **Priority 2:** We will deliver new, ambitious and innovative provision that enables children and young people with SEND to receive excellent education in their local community, with sufficient places at all stages planned to meet the current and future demands.
- **Priority 3:** We will ensure children and young people with SEND are supported to access a curriculum which is appropriate for their learning needs, and which enables their transition at key stages and into adulthood.

Linked to our key priorities outlined above is additional commissioning work in relation to Short Breaks and Tuition in order to ensure we are able to meet the needs of all children and young people, including those of primary age who have been excluded from school.

Short Breaks for disabled children

Short Break opportunities (Short breaks - Hillingdon Council) are currently delivered through a range of ways, including:

- Universal services
Available to all children and young people with a disability, sometimes at an additional cost
- Targeted services
Accessed through a light touch early help assessment, and includes signposting and a range of services, sometimes at an additional cost
- Specialist services
Access is through a referral to our Stronger Families Hub, requesting a child and family assessment

The Council is in the process of reviewing this offer and will be recommissioning services jointly with the ICB during 2025.

Tuition

Tuition services are provided through a DPS arrangement, which will continue to develop during the lifetime of the contract. Commissioners are working with partners and Providers to extend provision to meet the needs of children of all ages and needs, so that they have access to appropriate tuition where required. The group tuition offer is in the process of being recommissioned, and a new model is expected to be in place for September 2025.

Travel Assistance

In Hillingdon we are constantly evolving the way in which our school travel assistance services operate, to better suit the needs of our children and young people with SEND. Our principles include ensuring the safety of the children and young people sustainably and promoting the independence and life skills of children and young people. A key focus within strengthening our travel assistance offer is to promote independent travel, and support preparation for adulthood.

In line with the other priorities in this strategy, the school transport sufficiency approach will help to reduce the amount of transport required by children and young people with SEND. The development of greater advisory and inclusion support for mainstream schools, increased resourced provisions, and increased special school places, coupled with a reduction in the number of children and young people accessing education in out of borough independent places, will all contribute to a reduction in the amount of travel assistance required. The School Travel Assistance Policies will reflect any developments in order to provide suitable and safe travel assistance to learners in Hillingdon.



Key Priority 1

We will support all mainstream schools, SRRs and early years settings in Hillingdon to be inclusive and welcome children and young people with SEND, whilst promoting the uptake of early help and intervention pathways.

The current context

As part of Hillingdon's SEND and AP Strategy, we are committed to encouraging greater inclusion in our mainstream educational settings. We are ambitious about increasing the uptake of ~~the~~ early help and intervention pathways which will lead to children and young people's needs being met, as far as possible, within mainstream provision where they are settled and are close to their home and local communities.

To support this ambition, we launched Hillingdon's SEND Advisory Service (SAS) in 2020 and continue to develop the team further to ensure it meets the current needs. This team, together with Educational Psychology Service and Education Improvement Team, is integral to supporting our schools in accessing the support needed to appropriately identify needs and develop strategies to enable schools to meet the needs of children who are not ordinarily able to access the curriculum through quality first teaching and in-house expertise.

We recognise that, in order to meet children's needs early, additional needs need to be appropriately identified in a timely way. Data tells us that the number of children accessing SEN Support in Hillingdon is lower than the London and national averages. This gives us an opportunity to work closely with our schools to ensure they have the right tools and resources to identify children who require SEN support as early as possible and, in time, achieving a decrease in reliance on EHCPs as needs will be met earlier. Developments such as the Early Identification Toolkit, Early Support

Funding, SENDEX, Ordinarily Available Provision Document with OAP checklists, the Stronger Families Hub and others are all part of the continuum of support available in the borough to support children, parents and schools alike to identify and meet needs early.

We will achieve this priority by:

- Continuing to deliver the 'SEND Review and Inclusion Commitment' to schools to standardise good practice and inclusivity across mainstream settings by promoting the use of SEND self-reviews.
- Full implementation of the co-produced SEND Early Identification Toolkit which supports early identification of needs.
- Embedding the effective use of 'Early Support Funding' which allows for more flexible funding arrangements for children and young people with SEND in mainstream provision to promote early intervention, without the need for an EHC plan.
- Embedding the Early Years Tracking Panel with Early Health Notifications and referrals to the new Assessment Centre for nursery children, to improve the identification of SEND from an earlier age to ensure appropriate services and support are provided in a timely manner. The panel oversees the 2-year-old tracking of all pupils with an Early Health Notification or known to a service such as Portage.
- Continue to expand the traded offer from the Educational Psychology service to offer more pre-statutory support to settings.
- Further develop the Early Years Assessment Centre to support nursery age children with complex needs where very specialist support may be required.
- Develop and pilot a new school's transition programme with a local 3rd sector organisation to support students with ASD/ ADHD and their families when transitioning from their primary mainstream to secondary mainstream phase of education.
- Support schools to deliver effective SEND Support as set out in Hillingdon's 'Ordinary Available Provision' Document.
- Creating a small new EHCP+ team who are highly skilled to support the most complex cases where children attend local mainstream schools to upskill schools and provide the right support for children and young people with additional complex needs.
- Review the current banding model for children with EHCPs to create a needs and provision matrices with clear distinction between mainstream settings and specialist provision to enable transparent and fair funding allocation to meet the needs of CYP with SEND. This will also support the local area in planning for needs more appropriately by having clear bands for children with SEND needs that can be used to ensure suitable provision is available to meet those needs.
- Reviewing the current training offer to schools and further developing the offer to ensure courses meet the needs of local schools to further improve the impact. Consider developing a traded offer for SAS for schools to buy into to offer a greater range of tailored support to empower schools.

- Conducting a review of the Local Authority's use of Alternative Provision (AP) and its impact on outcomes for children and young people with SEND. This includes the realignment of support relating to Exclusions, Reintegration and Alternative Provision into one service, with a focus on early identification of needs and supporting schools in how to address these unmet needs early and through their Ordinarily Available Provision.
- Developing an outreach model from special schools to support local mainstream schools to apply a variety of approaches to support children with a range of needs.

We will know we are successful when

- There is an increase in the number of schools engaging with the Annual Review process and demonstrating more inclusive practice resulting in an increase in the number of children who receive SEN Support and make appropriate progress.
- There is a measurable impact of SEND exceptional needs funding (SENDEX) which supports children and young people with SEND who do not yet have EHCPs and cannot access support through regular pathways.
- There is an increase in early identification of children 0-5 years old with SEND needs through the Early Years Assessment Centre, Early Years Tracking Panel and Early Identification Toolkit.
- There is an increase in schools buying into the Education Psychology Service for support to identify needs early and put suitable provision in place to close the gap without delay.
- More schools sign up for training delivered by SEND Advisory Team with clear evidence of staff being successfully upskilled and having increased confidence to support a range of SEND needs.
- There is a decrease in the use of part time timetables for children and young people with SEND, as needs can be met by applying a range of interventions and support.
- More early year's settings attend workshops and training sessions with SEND Advisory Team to strengthen their knowledge and skills to identify and meet the need of children with SEND early.
- There is a robust [commissioning and quality assurance framework](#) in place with Alternative Provision providers to ensure that any provision is improving outcomes, is cost effective and contracted appropriately. Provisions will meet the needs of pupils and enable them to achieve good educational outcomes based on their starting points. Providers will be quality assured and audited to ensure they meet due diligence and safeguarding thresholds.
- There is a decrease in the number of children being permanently excluded from school who are undergoing Education Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) or who go on to attend an AP and undergo an EHCNA within the first three months.
- There is a decrease in the number of children with SEND receiving multiple suspensions for Persistent Disruptive Behaviour.
- There is an increase in the number of children with SEND who successfully reintegrate into a mainstream setting after attending an AP for an identified, time-limited intervention.



Key Priority 2

We will deliver new, ambitious and innovative specialist provision that enables children and young people with SEND to receive excellent education in their local community, with sufficient places at all stages planned to meet the current and future demands

The current context

We are committed to increasing the provision available for children with SEND in Hillingdon. The journey of increasing the number of places available has already begun with the creation of almost 700 new school places in 14 local schools across the borough. Expansion of Uxbridge College to provide bespoke provision for young people with SEND will provide additional 70 places for student with MLD/SLD. Further work is planned to focus on developing more resourced provisions within secondary schools to further support children transitioning from primary provision.

We will achieve this priority by:

- Analysis of available data to enable us to accurately project demographic changes and projections of demand for high-quality school places.
- Ensuring that students with moderate (MLD) or specific learning difficulties (SpLD) needs are supported to attend mainstream schools, as far as possible.
- Continuing to reduce the reliance on Independent Non-Maintained Special Schools (INMSS) placements for our children by developing good quality, in-borough local provision to meet their needs.
- Promoting and supporting rapid delivery of free special schools to increase the capacity in the borough, particularly for pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and Profound Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD).
- Creating an effective pathway from primary to secondary school for children attending special schools, with sufficient places available to meet their needs.
- Creating more Specialist Resource Provisions (SRP) and Designated Units in mainstream secondary schools across the borough to meet a range of needs. This will enable more children to attend their local schools within their local communities whilst also benefitting from more specialist support.
- Review current Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs) to ensure there is a consistent approach to quality assurance and to ensure all Service Level Agreements (SLA) reflect the correct designation for children and young people with SEND. This will in turn ensure children are placed in an educational setting which appropriately meets their needs.
- Create new admissions guidance for special schools in order to ensure that the spectrum of provision offered matches the needs of children and young people in Hillingdon and to ensure schools support broadly similar needs to make best use of resources.

- Providing suitable support to ensure that, where possible, students with social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) remain in mainstream schools without the need for an EHC Plan. Where an EHCP is required, we will support a mainstream school in meeting the child's needs with the resources identified through the plan.
- Develop more provision locally for time limited AP placements to support the reintegration of children into mainstream, following appropriate interventions and support. To attract more providers to deliver AP support for primary aged children.
- Conducting a review of the Local Authority's use of Alternative Provision and the needs of the children and young people who access it. We will also work with the main AP providers to further develop relationships with mainstream schools to improve communication and ensure children do not slip through the net when they transition to AP settings.

We will know we are successful when:

- The provision in the local area is sufficient to meet the needs of all children and young people in Hillingdon.
- There is a sustainable increase in the number of children being able to attend placements in Hillingdon maintained schools and academies.
- There is a reduction in the percentage of children and young people attending independent placements and in the number of pupils with SEND travelling for more than one hour to attend their school.
- We maintain and improve the high level of special schools and mainstream schools with resource provisions being rated as 'good' or 'outstanding' (86%).
- There is improved resident satisfaction regarding school placements as measured through feedback from children, young people and their families.
- The length of time children and young people require access to an Alternative Provision is reduced in a sustainable way.



Key Priority 3

We will develop a continuum of support, including outreach and local Alternative Provision to enable those young people to be successful in mainstream schools.

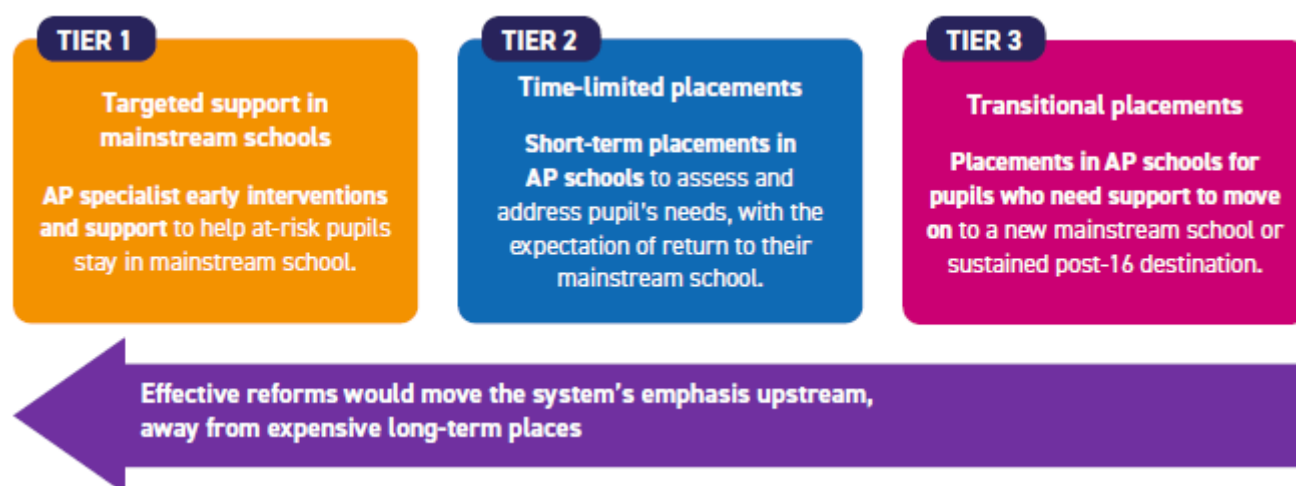
The current context

Hillingdon Alternative provision aims to be a collective system in which educational settings, community services, health and education support services all play a crucial part in responding to vulnerable children and assisting with reintegration to school; this moves away from viewing alternative provision as a 'market' with a selection of services, or a number of places to be commissioned.

Existing strategic place planning aligns to the ambitions of early intervention and fully inclusive education for all, however the growing profile of students with SEMH and cases of CYP with EBSNA is linked with the need for effective Alternative Provision. This is likely linked to the development of outreach programmes, strong outcomes across the system and a continued focus on early intervention and support within mainstream settings.

We will achieve this priority by:

- Creating a three-tier alternative provision system, focusing on targeted early support within mainstream school, time-limited intensive placements in an alternative provision setting, and longer-term placements to support return to mainstream or a sustainable post-16 destination.



- Establishing a database for all children accessing alternative provision so that a single register of children using alternative provision can be maintained, and the data gathered to understand the impact of alternative provision on children and young people's educational and wellbeing outcomes.
- Sharing best practice with focus on developing trauma-responsive practice in our schools ensuring there is a high skilled workforce to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.
- Increase the number of pupils successfully reintegrated into mainstream provision through an increased focus on establishing unmet needs and how these can be addressed.
- Evolving SEND Advisory Team as a preventative service which is aligned to support in-school settings for children who are at risk of exclusion or in need of personalised education
- Ensuring that schools and settings through Annual Reviews provide opportunities for CYP to reintegrate after accessing Alternative Provision and set targets for employability and progression towards Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) outcomes (employment, independent living, community inclusion, health).
- Improving commissioning of independent providers to have a more flexible approach, offering a range of support tailored to children and young people's needs by setting up Dynamic Purchase System for providers.

- Establishing an Early Intervention Panel, Inclusion Clinics to support school with sharing information about all agencies involved in supporting CYP while planning for reintegration to mainstream.
- Utilising outreach support from Teaching School Hub to support schools struggling with complex behaviour.
- Working with schools to promote inclusion and tap schools into new models of support and therefore have less children needing alternative provision.
- Setting out our alternative provision 'offer' clearly as part of the Local Offer.
- Developing new service level agreements with our AP providers which will ensure the emphasis will be on providing temporary education with a view to reintegration to mainstream settings or swift transition to special schools

We will know we are successful when:

- Children and young people are given access to a diverse, imaginative and engaging curriculum that is relevant, appropriate and includes core subjects.
- Children and young people are involved in developing a plan which focuses on their reintegration back into mainstream school, where appropriate.
- Children and young people are supported by a flexible, multi-disciplinary intervention according to need which considers the whole child within their family context.
- Children and young people are educated in their local community, where possible and appropriate.
- The number of exclusions and suspensions for CYP with SEND will decrease.
- The time CYP will be accessing Alternative Provision will shorten when appropriate and they will be reintegrated to their local mainstream school.

9. Specific areas of development

Increasing the number of school age children receiving SEND Support

Although the latest data points towards a stabilisation of EHC plan growth, we continue to see a significant disparity with London and National figures. Nationally, 12.89% of the school population are on SEN Support. In London, the same indicator is 11.91%. However, in Hillingdon this figure is 11.09%.

Table 6. Hillingdon, London and National Comparison of SEND Support

	% EHCPs 22/23	% EHCPs 23/24	Change in EHCPs (%)	% SEND support 22/23	% SEND support 23/24	Change in SEND support (%)

Hillingdon	4.36%	4.72%	+ 0.36%	11.09%	11.86%	+ 0.77%
Statistical Neighbours	4.07%	4.41%	+ 0.34%	11.61%	12.28%	+ 0.67%
London	4.61%	5.06%	+ 0.45%	11.91%	12.37%	+ 0.46%
National	4.25%	4.71%	+ 0.46%	12.89%	13.41%	+ 0.52%

We recognise that investing in early identification and intervention pathways, is crucial for addressing the needs of our children in a timely and proportionate manner. This is a key focus area for us, and we are committed to ensuring that schools identify needs effectively at the earliest opportunity and provide consistent support across the borough, avoiding any postcode lottery

In Hillingdon, on average since 2020 around 40% of EHC needs assessments requests each year have been for children aged 0-5 accessing early years settings, or not currently in a setting. Identifying a significant demand for further development or upskilling staff in nursery settings, by offering bespoke training and expertise through SAS and EPS Services.

As of January 2024, two of the greatest areas of need for children with EHCPs under 5 years old were ASD and SCLN with 46% and 32% out of the 0-5 EHCP cohort respectively. They also are the greatest area need for CYP age 0-25 with EHCPs as of January 2024 were 51% CYP with ASD as a prime need and 18% with SCLN. SEMH is the prime need for 9% of CYP age 0-25 with EHCPs as of January 2024.

Our objective is to better monitor 0–5-year-old children with SEND, to provide them with appropriate provision and improve targeted support where needed. The established Early Years Tracking Panel is helping to support this work. Analysing our data enables us to support and forward plan for both specialist and mainstream placements, accommodating those who need an EHCP, and those who will have their needs met via OAP or through pre-statutory support pathways. Colleagues in the Exclusion and Reintegration team also provide training to our schools to improve their awareness of Attachment Aware Trauma Informed practice (AATI). During this academic year, 9 mainstream schools have undertaken a 7-day intensive training course to help them with not only identifying unmet attachment needs early, but also with how to develop bespoke support plans for children over 1-3 years. This initiative encourages schools to access support from SAS rather than applying for an EHCNA where needs could be met otherwise. This initiative will be rolled out to a further 18 schools in the next academic year.

Reducing the reliance on independent non-maintained special school (INMSS) provision

We have a good range of specialist provision within the borough with 7 special schools and 19 areas of SEND provision in mainstream schools (16 Specialist Resourced Provisions, 2 Designated Units, and 1 Assessment Centre) of which all but one, are rated 'good' or 'outstanding'. However, currently all seven special schools are full (as of Jan 2024, 1053 children and young people were on roll) and demand for new entrants has been continuous throughout the year, not just at key stages of transfer. This has resulted in a year-on-year increase in the numbers of children and young people funded from the high needs block in the independent sector. We know we need to increase the number of available specialist places in the borough in line with the forecasted demand. The lack of sufficient

specialist places has resulted in some children and young people having to remain in a mainstream setting where it has been identified they require a specialist provision.

We are working with special schools to develop Admission and Exit Guidance for specialist provision to ensure common understanding of definitions for CYP who require specialist setting.

Our SEND data tells us that as of January 2024 out of a total number of 3503 children and young people who had an EHC Plan:

- 14% of the CYP with an EHC plan issued by Hillingdon attend maintained (maintained means they are funded by LBH) special schools, which is below the national average of 15% and is 2% lower than in previous year despite growth in number of EHC plans.
- 10% of the CYP with an EHC plan issued by Hillingdon attend INMSS schools, which is higher the national average of 7% and is 1% lower by than in previous year despite growth in number of EHC plans.

We are developing our Commissioning Strategy to increase the available maintained provision in the Borough and reduce reliance on the Independent School sector. This will be achieved through an increase in the specialist provision available within mainstream schools with an SRP or DU and working with our Post 16 colleges to provide a wider offer that will support our children and young people.

The implementation of greater engagement and monitoring of providers will drive up performance and improve outcomes for children and young people and identify how we can continue to improve our education offer to meet emerging needs. This will be complimented by the introduction of a Brokerage and Commissioning function within the service which will ensure that the most appropriate provision is identified to meet the needs of children and young people, based on evidence and availability, and will support further market development.

A new Dynamic Purchasing System has already been delivered to support children and young people who are unable to access a mainstream curriculum for a range of needs, and work is underway to jointly commission a new Mediation contract with other London Boroughs.

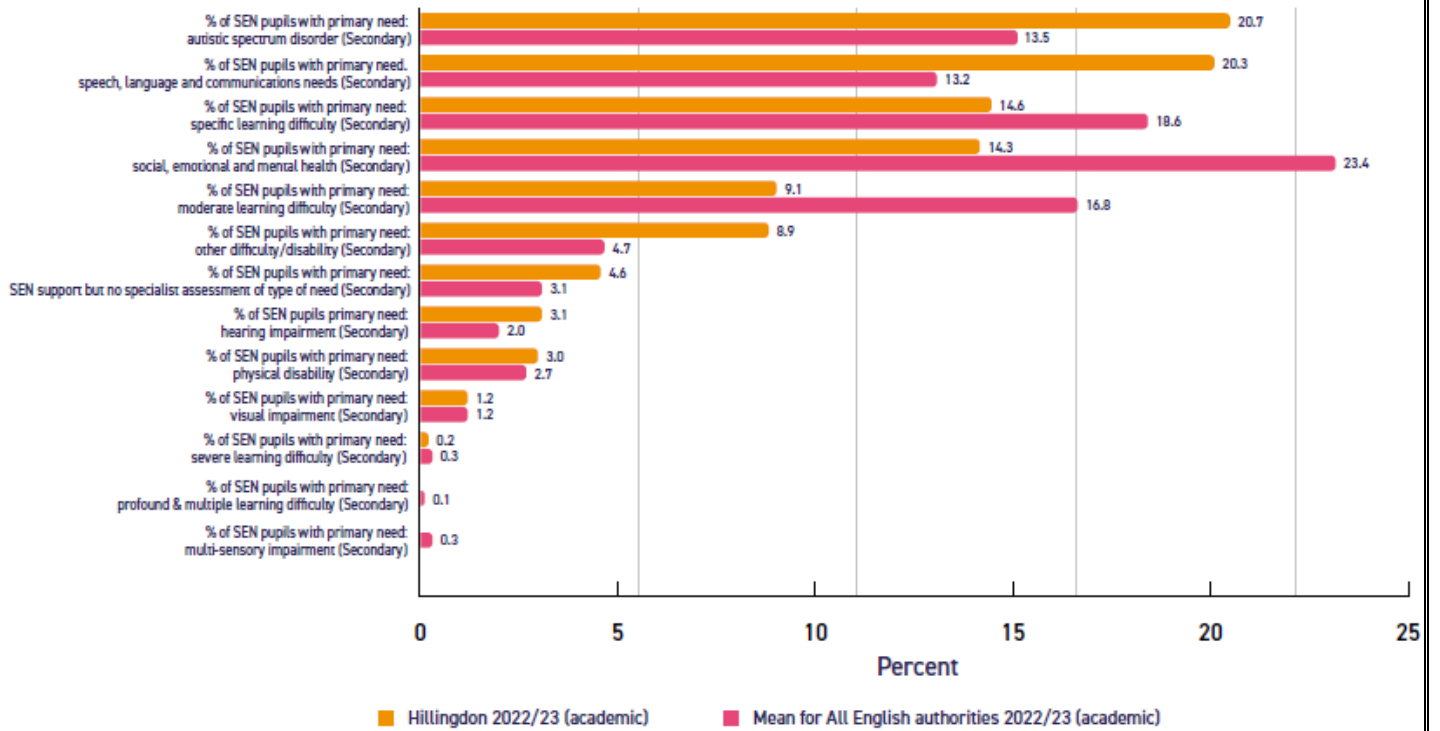
Addressing the Demand for EHC plans with a primary need of Autism

The primary need for children with SEND in Hillingdon is Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN), followed by autism (ASD). This is followed by Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH). The table below shows the primary needs for children across Hillingdon compared to national (The following charts show the breakdown of need in Hillingdon by primary, secondary and special school, compared to the national averages and ranked by prevalence):

In Hillingdon we have seen a growing demand for provision for pupils with autism (ASD) as a primary need with moderate and severe learning difficulties (M/SLD). There are currently a total of 142 SRP and DU places in primary schools compared to 61 places in secondary schools. Around 65% of the total number of places in these SRPs and DUs are for pupils with ASD. Projections suggest these two designations will continue to increase for the next 7 years.

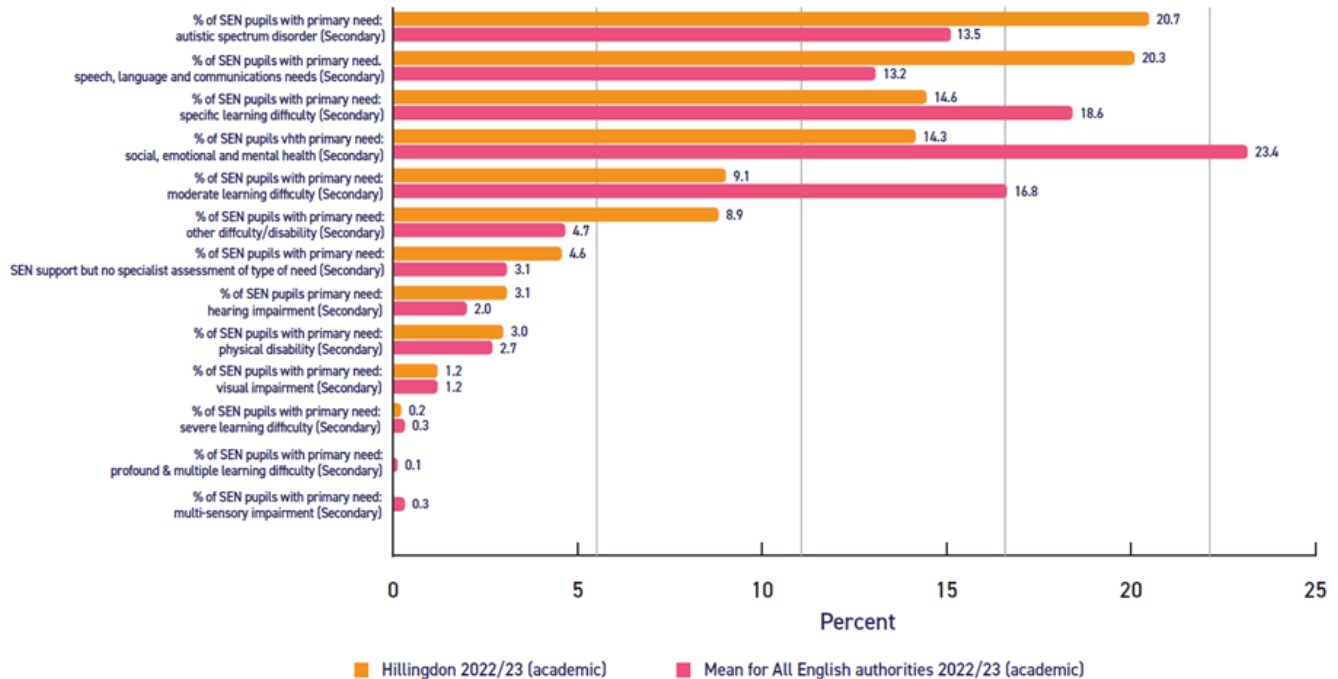
Graph 3. Primary Need in Primary Schools 2022/23

Primary need in secondary schools (2022/23 (academic))



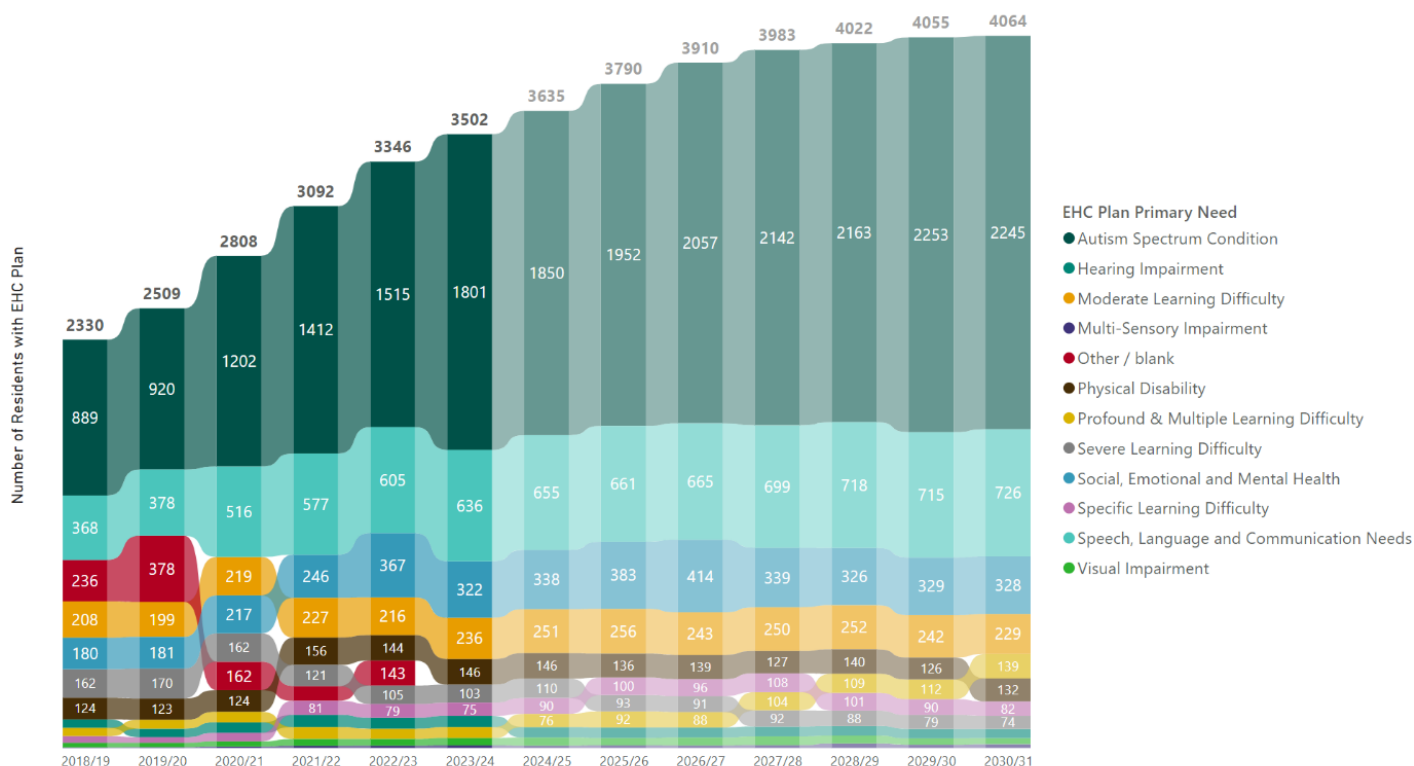
Graph 4. Primary Need in Secondary Schools 2022/23

Primary need in secondary schools (2022/23 (academic))



Based on the data available, we predict there will be an increase of 25% in the number of EHCPs where autism (ASD) is identified as the primary need. We know that the current available provision in the borough will not be meet this demand. Through this strategy we aim to continue the work we started in increasing the local provision to meet the needs of pupils with autism in Hillingdon schools.

Graph 5. Actual and Projected Students with EHCPs by Primary Need



We have been successful in the bid for a free school and one of our Mult Academy Trusts have been appointed to develop an all through school (Reception to post 16) for 180 students with autism who have complex sensory needs and/or SLD. We are currently in the process of securing the site for this development with an aim for it to be opened in September 2027.

To enable continuum of support we identified the need for further development of secondary SRP provision for students with autism following the expansion of primary SRP provision.

Graph 6 . A Spectrum of Provision



As you can see in the diagram above, there is a graduated approach to the structure of our education provision, starting with mainstream school for the overwhelming majority of pupils, and reaches specialist provision for pupils with the most complex needs. It is expected that pupils will access the level of educational provision that best meets their individual needs, which are assessed and reviewed regularly by a range of professionals.

We also identified the need for further development of post 19 provision for more complex students with ASD/SLD who cannot access FE provision without significant support.

10. What we have achieved so far

Rising demand and costs have put pressure on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and the LA has developed a DSG Deficit Recovery Programme with a 'safety valve' agreement with the DfE linked to bids for revenue and capital funding. This is a key strategic priority for the Council, underpinned by sufficient resources and capability to ensure timely and successful delivery.

The purpose of the recovery plan is to:

- Put mainstream inclusion and high-quality SEND services at the heart of education in Hillingdon.
- Reduce total costs of EHCPs and special placements
- Add more specialist provision in the borough
- Embed financial sustainability
- Reduce the in-year deficit as far as possible
- Eliminate the in-year deficit completely by 2027/28. This reflects the aims and direction set out by the DfE in the March 2022 publications of the White Paper for schools and the Green Paper for SEN.

Creating new Specialist places in Hillingdon schools (Priority 2)

The following projects have been completed in the last year to create additional places in Hillingdon schools:

Provider	Description	Type	Phase	Type of SEND need	Number of additional places to be created
Charville Primary Academy (South)	Primary SRP	Academy Primary	Primary	ASD	16
Eden Trust: Grangewood Primary & Moorcroft Secondary Special Schools.	Satellite provision of Grangewood and Moorcroft at Pinkwell	Academy Special	Grangewood Primary	SLD	16
			Moorcroft Secondary		24

Strengthening Early identification and access to SEND support (Priority 1)

There is national evidence that helping families as early as possible and providing support at the right time by the right person can reduce the likelihood of problems escalating (and the need for more serious interventions) and improve long term outcomes for children, young people and their families, enabling them to move on and thrive after facing difficult situations.

In order to promote the early identification and proportionate and effective intervention for our children, in the last few years we have invested in our SEN Early Help and Intervention model offering SEND Reviews, Inclusion Commitment, Partnership for Inclusion and Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) project, Early Support Funding and specialist advisory offer. This model sets out how pre-statutory support will be offered and how this will support demand management. As part of the model, we designed our SEND Specialist Advisory Service (SAS) enabling the LA to better identify emerging SEND needs earlier and offering pre-statutory support to our children and families. By developing this model further, we aim to work more collaboratively across SAS, EPS and Education Improvement Teams to offer more holistic support to schools. The aim is to strengthen good practice, support schools in creating inclusive environment for their more complex students with SEND.

This leads to the right support being offered at the right time. SAS are working in close partnership with our Early Years provisions and mainstream schools to jointly support children in an environment they are familiar with and in a non-intrusive, child focussed way.

The service is designed to upskill professionals to provide inclusive provision for all children with SEND and empower families to gain the right support at the right time. This is achieved through a Team around the child/young person approach and the collective use of the My Support Plan (MSP). This approach is also supported by the development and implementation of a multiagency developed Early Identification Toolkit that promotes a graduated approach. The toolkit, which was launched in January 2023, supplements the Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) guidance and OAP checklists which provides guidance on assessment and strategies that should be implemented as standard, to facilitate equitability in an educational setting.

The Early Support Funding (ESF) was introduced in response to the trend observed by us and schools for those children who require additional support, over and above OAP, for a specified period of time (between 1 and 3 years). For the children in this cohort the enhanced support provided at this stage enables timely referrals which can prevent escalation to EHCPs or reduce the level of banding required.

11. Sufficiency delivery plan

Hillingdon SEND School Places Expansion and Development Plans

SRPs and DUs provide additional specialist facilities on a mainstream school site for a small number of pupils. In an SRP pupils spend most of their time in mainstream classes whereas pupils in a DU spend the majority of their time outside mainstream classes, only attending them for a few lessons. There are 107 pupils (in the 15 SRPs, 2 DUs, 1 Assessment Centre), 76 in primary and 31 in secondary, to meet the needs of pupils requiring some specialist support and therapies.

There is additional capacity due to become available at 4 schools during this academic year, with an additional 71 places in SRP's and DU's.

12. Funding Arrangements

A framework for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of high needs block spending in Hillingdon has been developed. This sets out a range of measures to ensure 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 improved effectiveness and efficiency of resources will assist in addressing the forecast overspends and pressures on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This is being monitored through the DSG Programme Board and quarterly progress submissions to the DfE.

Any new buildings will be funded through Hillingdon's Capital Funding programme, and this will be subject to any capital funding being agreed over the period of the plan. It is expected that there will be revenue savings resulting from the delivery of the plans outlined in the SEND Education Sufficiency Strategy.

13. Governance and review arrangements for this strategy

Decisions relating to the SEND Education Sufficiency Strategy are agreed at the DSG SEND Delivery Group Meeting. Recommendations are also made to the Hillingdon Schools Forum High Needs Working Group and the Hillingdon Schools Forum. The active engagement of schools will be encouraged through these groups.

Hillingdon will annually review the SEND Sufficiency Strategy to ensure that it still meets the needs of our children and considers any variations in demand.

Appendix 1: Terminology

- **ASC/ASD:** Autism Spectrum Condition/Disorder/Autism
- **SEMH:** Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- **HI:** Hearing Impairment
- **MLD:** Moderate Learning Difficulties
- **MSI:** Multi-Sensory Impairment
- **PD:** Physical Difficulties
- **PMLD:** Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties
- **SLD:** Severe Learning Difficulties
- **SpLD:** Specific Learning Difficulties
- **SLCN:** Speech, Language and Communication Needs
- **VI:** Visual Impairment

Broad Categories of SEND:

- **Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (SEMH):** 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 that prevents or hinders them from

making use of the educational facilities generally provided in a mainstream setting. This includes pupils with visual impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) who are likely to require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning or support. It also includes those with a severe physical disability (PD).

- **Cognition and Learning:** 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 have associated difficulties with mobility and communication - through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). Children with PMLD are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment. This range of needs also includes specific learning difficulties (SpLD), which encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.
- **Communication and Interaction:** Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. 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. This area includes those children and young people with autism who also are likely to have difficulties with social interaction, and with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Other Terms or Acronyms:

- **Academy:** Schools controlled and funded directly by the Secretary of State for Education and include: academies, free schools, UTC schools, studio schools, academy special schools, alternative provision academies and academy boarding schools.
- **Alternative Provision:** Alternative provision is usually a temporary placement for a child until they can return to mainstream education or move to specialist provision. For some pupils it may be a longer-term solution. The provision can be part time and be part of a broader curriculum delivered alongside education at a school, further education college or other provider (i.e., when specialist facilities are required for vocational courses).
- **Coproductio**n: Co-production is a way of working which builds on the strengths of families, communities and services and involves everyone from the beginning as equal partners.
- **Early Health Notification** – a notification process for health professionals to register potential SEND needs for children aged between 0-5 years old, as part of the duty of health bodies to bring certain children to local authority's attention.
- **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP):** An EHCP details the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child or young person who has SEN or a disability. It is drawn up by the Local Authority, after an EHC needs assessment of the child or young person has determined that an EHC plan is necessary, and after consultation with relevant partner agencies.
- **Independent Mainstream School:** Schools that charge fees instead of being government funded.
- **Independent Special School:** The DfE defines an independent special school as a private school that specialises in teaching children with special educational needs.
- **Mainstream School:** School provision other than special schools, hospital schools, alternative provision, i.e., mainstream community schools, voluntary-aided, trust, foundation, or grammar schools.

- **Maintained School:** A school that is funded by a local education authority.
- **Non-maintained Special School:** Non-maintained special schools are defined by the Department for Education as schools for children with special educational needs that the Secretary of State for Education has approved under Section 342 of the Education Act 1996. They are independent of the local authority and operate on a not-for-profit basis.
- **ONS:** Office for National Statistics.
- **Pupil Referral Unit (PRU):** A type of alternative provision that caters for children and young people who are not able to attend a mainstream school and may not otherwise receive suitable education. This could be as a result of illness, or they may have been excluded or need more specialist intervention or support.
- **Satellite Classrooms:** A classroom, within a school, designed specifically to provide education for supported learners who cannot be accommodated within inclusive education.
- **SENCo:** Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. Every school is required to have a teacher responsible for special educational needs to enable children and young people to achieve the best educational outcomes.
- **SEND Information, Advice and Support (SENDIAS) Service:** All local authorities, by law, have to provide free impartial information, advice and support to children and young people with SEN or disabilities, and their parents/carers. Hillingdon SENDIAS Service is the information, advice and support service here. The service is free, confidential, impartial and at arm's length from Hillingdon Council.
- **SEND Local Offer:** Local authorities are required to set out in their Local Offer information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in their area who have SEN or are disabled. Local authorities must consult locally on what provision the Local Offer should contain.
- **SEND Sufficiency Report:** Hillingdon has a statutory duty to ensure there is sufficiency of school places available to meet the needs of all children and young people within the borough, including those with SEND. To ensure the best educational outcomes for all children and young people the report reviews historic demand for school places. This enables future demand to be assessed and monitored to ensure the correct provision is in place to continue to best meet the needs of all children and young people within Hillingdon.
- **SEN Support:** SEN support is the approach that all education settings are required to provide for children with SEND. It has four stages of action: assess, plan, do and review. This graduated approach aims to ensure that progress is regularly monitored, and appropriate interventions are made to support the child or young person to achieve their goals.
- **Specialist Resource Provision (SRP):** Are special provisions, with an area of specialism such as ASD, based within a mainstream school where the children are taught mainly within separate classes. Children integrate into mainstream classes for between 50-85% of their timetable and receive specialist input when in the resource provision.

Special School: A school which is specially organised to make special educational provision for pupils with SEN.