

Shropshire Local Area SEND Strategy



2020 to 2025

Forward:

Photo Karen/Claire

‘SEND, our priority and everybody’s business’.

Our refreshed 5 year strategy for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) aims to eradicate inequality and realise the collective aspiration of the Shropshire SEND community to live a life that others have come expect. We want...

“Shropshire children and young people with SEND to be healthy, happy and safe, and able to achieve their potential to lead a fulfilling life. We want them to have, and to expect, the same opportunities in life as other children and young people.”

To achieve this we will:

- commit to identify and understand the challenges that we face across the local area
- embed co-production across all aspects of our work so that parent carers and children and young people with SEND are recognised as equal partners and are fully involved in decision making
- challenge preconceived expectations where these may place a ceiling on what can be achieved
- embrace new ways of working to support innovative practice
- work in partnership to promote transparency and consistency in decision making and delivery of support
- commit to the principles of personalisation and embed these across all aspects of SEND commissioning so that the Shropshire SEND system is informed by accurate data; can effectively respond to local need; provide a diversity of choice, is financially sustainable and makes best use of all resources available.

Our strategy has grown from the collective voices of our SEND community and sets out our priorities over the next 5 years providing direction and challenge to ensure that we collectively invest in the Shropshire SEND community to ensure positive outcomes and provide effective preparation for life as an adult.

We are proud to....

Signatures

Context

In 2014 the Children and Families Act provided an overhaul of the system of support for children and young people with SEND nationally. These reforms required local areas across England to make significant changes to the way that children and young people with SEND are supported. These changes included:

- Giving children and young people with a special educational need and disabilities, as well as their parent carers, greater control and choice over how their needs are met.
- Ensuring that education, health and care plans (**EHCPs**) and annual reviews are used effectively to describe assessed needs and agreed support, for children and young people with complex and significant SEN.
- Providing an option for parent carers and young people to use a **personal budget** to personalise provision detailed in the EHCP.
- Producing a '**Local Offer**' website to provide information about education, health and social care services available in the area for children and young people with SEN/D.
- Requiring the local authority (LA) and clinical commissioning group (CCG) education, health and care providers and the voluntary sector to work in partnership to improve outcomes for children and young people aged 0 to 25 with SEND

Since the introduction of the reforms in 2014 much work has taken place across Shropshire to achieve change.

We have worked successfully with our parent carer representatives to replace Statements of Special Educational Needs and introduce a co-produced integrated Education Health Care needs assessment.

We have used data to better understand our SEND population so that we commission the right health and care services.

We have worked with our schools and other education providers to identify the changing needs of our SEND population and put in place the support that is required to reduce inequality and breakdown the barriers to learning. We are proud to have been successful in securing excellent outcomes for children and young people with an EHCP in comparison with their peers nationally.

We have introduced a 'Local Offer' of SEND services available across the local area which also enables us to share information and receive feedback to identify what is working and what we still need to do to secure further improvement.

We have sought to ensure that these developments have been co-produced with parent carers and young people.

Despite the good progress we have made we recognise that there is still much work to do to achieve our vision.

Our recent SEND inspection (January 2020) has highlighted some areas of weakness that we are now working to address within our **Written Statement of Action (WSOA)**. In response to this we have strengthened our partnerships in recognition that we cannot

achieve our vision in isolation and to ensure that all partners prioritise SEND so that SEND is everybody's business.

We are continuing to change the way that we work across the local area to gather and analyse robust data and to work closely with children and young people and those who support them so that **we understand where our focus and actions should be**.

We will work together so that **we commission and deliver the right services at the right time**, and to ensure that **our services support children and young people with SEND to achieve their aspiration of living a 'dream life'**.

How we have produced this new strategy

Our previous strategy, created in 2016, made a clear commitment to the person-centred principles within The Children and Families Act 2014, namely that:

- the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people must be taken into account
- their parents/carers views must be taken into account
- children, young people and their parents/carers must be supported to participate as fully as possible in decision making, and be provided with the necessary information and support to make decisions
- children and young people must be supported to effectively prepare for adulthood

However, a fundamental oversight in our previous strategy was our failure to co-produce it with children and young people, or their parents and carers. This meant that our strategic objectives did not necessarily reflect the aspirations of children and young people.

Therefore, our starting point when drafting this strategy was to go to children and young people with SEND directly and ask what a 'dream life' meant to them. A 'dream life', they told us was:

- having a job or vocation
- having friends and being able to play a full part in their community
- being independent and living in their own home
- having a voice on how they live their lives
- having access to good and consistent support, especially in times of transition

We believe that these aspirations should be expected and not be something that our children and young people with SEND are limited to dreaming about achieving. Our success in delivering these outcomes for children and young people will be central to how we measure the impact of our strategy.

How we organise ourselves to achieve our vision

To achieve our vision for children and young people to be healthy, happy, safe and able to achieve their full potential, we need to ensure that:

- we identify children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities as early as possible
- we are effective in accurately assessing and meeting the needs of children and young
- we work together to plan and coordinate our work to assess need in Shropshire and to provide necessary and effective support
- we provide a local offer of education, health and social care services to support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities, as well as their families
- we engage children and young people, and their parents and carers in informing decisions about the strategic commissioning of services
- we continually assess our success in delivering the key elements of a “dream life” for children and young people with SEND, and what we need to do further to improve, through continual feedback from children and young people, and their parents and carers.

Working together to achieve our vision

At the centre of our work is our refreshed SEND governance structure. Our governance is organised to ensure strong strategic leadership providing challenge and support to drive improvement and effect change where necessary. At the centre of SEND governance is the SEND Strategic Board. It works across organisations to understand, develop and coordinate services to support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and their families with a focus on the continuous improvement of outcomes. Parent carer representatives are integral to SEND governance and we have nominated SEND champions to ensure that SEND is a priority within all partnership boards and strategies.

We do not ask children and young people to represent their sector within the strategic boards and workstreams but instead seek input from them in developing strategy and practice in ways that are appropriate to them.

Measuring Success

We will measure our success based on what children and young people with SEND have told us are the crucial elements of a “dream life” for them. To this we have added a further crucial element of a fulfilling life: good health. We will monitor progress of the strategy by evaluating data collected from a range of sources and which will include the views and experiences of children and young people with SEND and their families.

We have developed the following outcomes that we will use as measurements of success:

- 1. More young people with SEND with an EHCP will be in paid employment and/or undertaking a voluntary role**

Our Vision:

Is to work with young people local businesses, training providers, colleges and schools to create opportunities to experience the world of work with the long-term aim of securing employment and/or meaningful work related activity

Why is this important:

Participating in a work environment can benefit individuals by providing a sense of self-esteem, opportunities for social interaction, mental health benefits and economic security and independence.

- 2. Young people with SEND will report that they have access to appropriate opportunities which enable them to be active in their community and spend quality leisure time in friendship groups**

Our Vision:

Is to support young people to develop a network of friends and be part of a community that enables young people with SEND to be confident to socialise and enjoy their recreational time

Why is this important:

Being able to participate in leisure activities contributes to good quality of life, supporting both physical and mental health.

- 3. YP aged 16 to 25 with an EHCP or who have previously had an EHCP are able to make a choice about where they live and with whom, ensuring it is suitable, safe and meets the young person's needs.**

Our Vision:

To support young people's choices so that they can live in sustainable, safe and appropriate accommodation throughout their life and, where possible, live independently.

Why is this important:

Being able to exercise choice about their home environment will have a positive impact on quality of life and emotional health and wellbeing of young people with SEND.

- 4. Children and young people with SEND and their parent carers have the opportunity to actively participate in decision making both on an individual and strategic level.**

Our Vision:

Children and young people with SEND will have the skills needed to influence decisions on the support they receive as an individual. The SEND workforce will have the skills to co-produce with young people and their families so that they influence commissioning and support decisions.

Why is this important:

Evidence demonstrates that the involvement and engagement of the SEND community delivers better outcomes. It motivates people to achieve their goals and develop personal self confidence in their abilities.

- 5. Children and young people with SEND, and their families, report that they receive good quality support, at the earliest opportunity, and particularly to support them to prepare for adulthood.**

Our Vision:

Children and young people with SEND are provided with personalised support at all stages of need and at key transition points.

Why is this important:

SEND can be challenging for both the individual and their families. Personalised support from the earliest point of need will reduce barriers and challenges to enable young people to achieve the best possible outcomes for their 'Dream Life'.

- 6. There will be a reduction in health inequalities experienced by children and young people with SEND**

Our Vision:

Children and young people with SEND will experience equitable opportunities to lead healthy lives. There will be full access to health services and support to maintain good physical and mental health.

Why is this important:

Being fit and healthy will contribute to achieving the outcomes that are important to key elements of the "dream life" – access to employment, active social life and to living independently.

Other Measures

Each of the above outcomes have a series of specific measures which form part of the overall performance framework. The SEND Strategic Board will establish A performance workstream reporting to the SEND Strategic Board will be responsible for further development of the framework and ensuring key process, progress and additional outcome measures are developed and tracked as our children and young people progress towards adulthood.

