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| <b>Committee:</b>   | <b>Dated:</b>          |
| Education Board   | 3/02/2022              |
| <b>Subject:</b><br>Special educational needs and disability (SEND) – Strategy 2020–24   | <b>Public</b>          |
| <b>Report of:</b><br>Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children’s Services       | <b>For Information</b> |
| <b>Report author:</b><br>Theresa Shortland, Head of Service – Education and Early Years |                        |

### Summary

- The duties on local areas regarding provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) are contained in the Children and Families Act 2014. The Ofsted/Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection Framework sets out the legal basis and the principles of inspection.
- The SEND Strategy 2017–20 was the overarching driver to develop the SEND services in the City since it was launched in 2017. The three-year development plan was reviewed annually and culminated in a co-production workshop in October 2019.
- The SEND Strategy 2020–24 sets out the City of London Corporation’s ambitious vision for children and young people with SEND from birth to 25 years and details what we will do to achieve this vision. It builds on the previous SEND Joint Strategy 2017–2020.
- Staff in the Education and Early Years team maintained the capacity to provide services during the COVID-19 lockdowns. In May 2020, the Department for Education (DfE) made modifications to the law on Education, Health and Care needs assessments and plans due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The strength of the existing provision in the City of London across Childrens Services and partners has been robust and families have felt supported. Children have had access to their education, and progress and attainment continued to be monitored. Interventions to support children that need support continue to be provided.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. The duties on local areas regarding provision for children and young people with SEND are contained in the Children and Families Act 2014. The Ofsted/CQC Inspection Framework sets out the legal basis and the principles of inspection.
2. The SEND Strategy 2017–20 was been the overarching driver to develop the SEND services in the City since it was launched in 2017. The three-year development plan was reviewed annually, and a self-evaluation development plan underpinned the delivery of services.
3. The City of London has a Parent Carer Forum and an independent information and advice services (SENDIASS) for families of children with SEND. The SEND co-production group established a set of core values, and a co-production workshop in October 2019 generated the ambitions for the future for the City SEND community.
4. The Ofsted/CQC Local Area SEND Inspection in March 2018 concluded that: *“leaders and professionals have a detailed understanding of the needs of children, young people and their families. Professionals involved in meeting the needs of children and young people work well together, sharing information and communicating effectively. Strong support is also provided to parents and carers where needed.”*

### **SEND Strategy 2020–24**

5. The SEND Strategy 2020–24 sets out the City of London Corporation's ambitious vision for children and young people with SEND from birth to 25 years, and details what we will do to achieve this vision. It builds on the previous SEND Joint Strategy 2017–2020.
6. The SEND Strategy 2020–24 reflects the City of London's Corporate Plan 2018–23 and Children and Young People's Plan 2018–21. The principles of co-production are central to the delivery of the outcomes in the SEND Strategy.
7. The values within the strategy were established by a co-production working group of all stakeholders and focus on *‘Co-designing as equal partners through trusted relationships for the benefit of the City of London SEND community’*. Our aim is to provide an inclusive and safe environment where children and young people with SEND can learn, achieve and participate in activities with other children and young people.

8. The SEND Strategy 2020–2024 sets out three key outcomes to be achieved by 2024:
  - We have a robust and inclusive multi-agency approach to identifying, assessing, and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND.
  - All children and young people with SEND are well-prepared for and have successful transitions to adulthood.
  - Children and young people with SEND are integral and valued members of the City of London community.
9. These three outcomes were co-produced with COL families and we want to ensure that children and young people, as well as their parents and carers, are integral and valued members of the COL community are fully aware of these outcomes. We want their views to be at the heart of decisions when services are being developed. To support this, an easy-read version of the SEND Strategy is in production and consideration is being given to developing a video with children and young people so that they can readily understand and access the strategy and the plans. These will sit on the COL Local Offer, alongside the SEND Strategy.
10. We are also planning to carry out a review of how we work with the City Parent Carer Forum (CPCF) to ensure that we have a wider representation of the views of the local SEND community.
11. A self-evaluation form (SEF) and action plan are in place to plan and track the progress of these outcomes. These are being monitored through the SEND Programme Board and will be reported regularly to the Safeguarding Sub-Committee during the year.
12. The SEND Implementation and Development Project was commissioned in 2021 to provide the expertise needed to support the SEND Team with the development of the SEND Strategy priorities. 'Anne Hayward Associates' were awarded the contract and have been engaged since 1 April 2021.
13. In terms of the first priority, the COL Principal Educational Psychologist and Early Years Advisor have resumed visits to schools and Early Years settings. These visits comply with all necessary COVID-19 guidance and protocols. This engagement has been important in meeting the needs of our children and young people.
14. In March 2021, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator.(SENCO) Network ran a special training session on 'Returning to School: the wellbeing of children and adults in school' to help prepare the SENCOs in schools where children and young people from the City attend. This was led by the Counselling Psychologist who supports the Aldgate School through the City and Hackney Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools (WAMHS) Project.
15. Guidance for schools and settings on the provision that the local authority expects to be available for children and young people with SEND, and provision tables showing the interventions, responses, resources and

outcomes that could be expected, have been refreshed. These will further support schools and settings in identifying and assessing needs.

16. COL Early Years providers can access Early Years SENCO Level 3 training and six staff are currently enrolled on the course. Further training is currently being planned to ensure that practitioners have the necessary knowledge and skills to assess and support the needs of children attending their settings.
17. March 2020 to April 2021 saw a 25% increase in the number of children and young people with EHCPs, and a 50% increase in children and young people being referred for an EHC needs assessment. Despite this increase, statutory timescales have been met and the rigour around assessing needs and arranging provision has been maintained. The work of the SEND Consultant will further strengthen this work as they undertake visits and works with all education settings attended by COL children and young people.
18. In terms of children and young people transitioning to adulthood, there has been an increase since March 2020, with 35% of those with EHCPs within the 14 to 25 years age group. Person-centred planning meetings for those in this age range have been further developed to ensure that their views about the life they would like to have are captured during the annual review of their Education Health & Care Plans. An independent facilitator has been commissioned to use creative ways to develop plans with children and young people which focus on the three key areas for preparing for adulthood: employment, further education and/or training; independent living; and community inclusion and health. These collaborative and informal meetings, which include the young person's family, friends and key professionals, ensure that their views, wishes, and aspirations are at the heart of the meeting.
19. Transition to adulthood is a key area of work to develop further. A 'task and finish group' led by the SEND Team currently working with Children's and Adult's Social Care, Housing services, and Post 16 Partners to establish and develop a pathways document for families and young people, which will detail what to expect and consider at key stages from 14 to 25 years old. Alongside the Education and Skills Service, the SEND Team is pursuing opportunities in the City for work experience and apprenticeships for children and young people with EHCPs.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

20. Strategic implications – Corporate outcome: Contribute to a flourishing society by ensuring that all children and young people with SEND and their families have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential.
21. Resource implications – The SEND functions are resourced through the Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block.
22. Financial implications – The SEND functions are resourced through the Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block.

23. Legal implications – The duties on local areas regarding provision for children and young people with SEND are contained in the Children and Families Act 2014. This legislation sits in the context of the Equality Act 2010. The Ofsted/CQC inspection framework sets out the legal basis and the principles of inspection.
24. Risk implications – If children's SEND issues are not identified early, assessed and supported, this will impact the educational attainment, progress and wider lifetime chances for those young people.
25. Equalities implications – All children and young people, regardless of their special educational needs and disabilities, will be part of a community where they can learn, achieve and participate in activities with other children and young people, and will be prepared to have a fulfilled adult life. Disability is one of the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.
26. Climate implications – n/a
27. Security implications – n/a

## **Conclusion**

28. The SEND Strategy 2020–24 sets out the City of London Corporation's ambitious vision for children and young people with SEND from birth to 25 years, and details what we will do to achieve this vision. It builds on the previous SEND Joint Strategy 2017–2020.
29. Progress in implementing the SEND Strategy is on track and work has commenced on the three key outcomes to be achieved by 2024. The SEND service continues to meet statutory deadlines and provide resources to support schools. The SEND service also continues to work with children and young people with SEND and our key partners to deliver SEND services in the City.

## **Appendices**

- **Appendix 1. The City of London SEND Strategy for children and young people 2020–24**

### **Theresa Shortland**

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## Appendix 1. The City of London SEND Strategy for children and young people 2020–24

### The City of London SEND Strategy for children and young people 2020–24

#### *SEND City Together: ‘Going the extra Square Mile’*

#### **Our vision**

We want the City of London (the City) to be the best possible place for children and young people to grow up.

We will work in partnership to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where all our children and young people, regardless of background and circumstance, feel they belong.

We will provide high-quality services, world-class education and excellent opportunities that enable children and young people to be healthy, develop resilience, achieve their potential and thrive.

*(The City of London Corporation Children and Young People’s Plan 2018-21)*

#### **Our shared values**

*Co-designing as equal partners through trusted relationships for the benefit of the City of London SEND community.*

- **Commitment:** we are committed to supporting our SEND community to thrive
- **Partnership and transparency:** we work together as equal partners
- **Trust and honesty:** we share information and are open about our work priorities and challenges
- **Mutual respect and acceptance:** we value each other’s experience and expertise
- **High ambition:** we support and challenge each other to achieve the best possible outcomes for our children and young people with SEND and their families.

#### **Our aim**

Our aim is to provide an inclusive and safe environment where children and young people with SEND can learn, achieve and participate in activities with other children and young people. To create a City where the City Corporation and the City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) work together with children and young people with SEND and their families to give them real choices and to guide them on their future pathways: a City where everyone is welcome and children and young people with SEND feel they belong as equal members of our community; a City where we consider working with children and young people with SEND to be a privilege rather than a challenge.

**We can and together we will.**

In order to achieve our vision, we have three key outcomes for 2024:

- Outcome 1 – people are safe and feel safe
- Outcome 2 – people have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential
- Outcome 3 – communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need

The key outcomes link into the Corporate Plan and the Children and Young People's Plan.

They are based on what our families tell us, issues identified through the co-production workshop, and feedback from partners including health, social care, education settings, and community organisations.



In line with the SEND Code of Practice 2015, our SEND Partnership includes: the local authority and partner commissioners from across education, health and social care. This includes clinician's commissioning arrangements and NHS England for specialist health provision.

This is a joint strategy that will be adopted by all partners. The term ‘schools’ is inclusive of all education settings in the City of London family of schools, including academies. In partnership, we will jointly commission SEND services and work towards meeting our aims for all children and young people with SEND.

### **Our key partners**

- The City of London’s Education and Early Years Service
- Children’s Social Care and Early Help
- Adult Social Care
- City and Hackney CCG
- City of London Parent Carer Forum (CPCF)
- City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership
- City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board.

### **We also work with:**

- parents, carers, children and young people with SEND
- education providers in the City of London, including the independent schools and Early Years providers
- the City of London academies and education providers/settings where City resident children and young people are on roll
- commissioners
- community groups and leisure facilities
- housing
- local employers
- City of London Police.

We will offer a SEND development programme for the school/setting and children’s service workforce. The programme will provide training for professionals to improve identification of need, consistency of approaches and delivery of services.

Our well-established partnerships with the CPCF, Contact, and voluntary and community organisations are central to the implementation of this strategy. This strategy is based on liaison with CPCF over the past couple of years, including a commissioning mapping exercise, regular feedback from parent carers, and a co-production day that involved representatives from all stakeholder organisations.

## **BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

### **1.1 The purpose of this strategy**

The SEND Strategy sets out the City of London Corporation’s ambitious vision for children and young people with SEND from birth to 25 years and details what we will do to achieve this vision. It builds on the previous SEND Joint Strategy 2017–20.

The strategy should be read alongside the 2020 SEND Self-Evaluation and 2020 SEND Action Plan.

- The 2020 SEND Self-Evaluation is a tool for us to use to assess where we are on the road map, how far along the road we have travelled and how far we have yet to go.
- The 2020 SEND Action Plan sets out the things we need to do if we are to achieve our vision.

**The City of London’s Corporate Plan 2018–23** sets out 12 outcomes, under three key areas:

Contributing to a flourishing society

Support a thriving economy

Shape understanding environments.



The outcomes in this strategy are aligned to the outcomes for contributing to a flourishing society:

- People are safe and feel safe
- People enjoy good health and wellbeing
- People have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential
- Communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need.

The **Children and Young People's Plan 2018–21** sets out five priorities for outcomes for children and young people:

- **Safe:** Our children and young people are safe and feel safe.
- **Potential:** Our children and young people have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and are well prepared to achieve in adulthood.
- **Independence, involvement and choice:** Our children and young people are co-producers of cultural and support services and they will have the resources to develop independence and the empowerment to play an active role in their communities and exercise choice over their services.
- **Health and wellbeing:** Our children and young people enjoy good health and wellbeing.
- **Community:** Our children and young people grow up with a sense of belonging as part of cohesive and resilient communities. They are able to create and participate in the cultural and creative opportunities available in the Square Mile.

**The strategy is also informed by the:**

- Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017/18 – 2020/21 – Working in partnership to achieve longer, happier, healthier lives in the City of London
- Borough of Hackney & City of London All Age Autism Strategy 2019–24 – Autistic people living and working in the City of London and the London Borough of Hackney should be able to live fulfilling and rewarding lives within a society that accepts and understands them
- Early Help Strategy 2019–21– *The right help, at the right time, in the right place*
- Short Breaks Policy and Guidance
- Early Years Strategy 2019–22 – *Quality and Inclusion for all children under five*
- Education, Cultural & Creative Learning and Skills Strategies 2019–23 – *Preparing people to flourish in a rapidly changing world through exceptional education, cultural and creative learning and skills which link to the world of work*
- City & Hackney Safeguarding Children's partnership (CHSCP)
- City & Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board (CHSAB).

## 1.2 National strategic context

### The legal framework

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

- SEND Code of Practice (0–25years) 2015
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Equality Act 2010 – Section 6 Disability
- Education Act 1996/2002/2006
- Children Act 1989/2004
- The Equality Act 2010
- Care Act 2014.

The Children and Families Act 2014 established a clear programme of SEND reforms which developed best practice in service quality and delivery into a set of robust requirements:

- a person-centred, joined-up approach to identifying and meeting the needs of children, young people and their families

- increased engagement and participation of young people and families so that they have greater choice and control, are listened to, and their concerns are resolved swiftly
- a published Local Offer of support, services and provision, how to access it and how to raise concerns or seek redress
- the use of effective practice, data and wider intelligence and independent assessment to drive improvement
- clearly defined and understood roles and responsibilities
- increased integration of services and joint commissioning across the local authority and health service.

This legislation sits in the context of the Equality Act 2010.

Public bodies must give due regard to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

### **1.3 The national impact of the COVID-19 pandemic**

This SEND Strategy was at the final stage of being formulated during the first acute phase of COVID-19 in March 2020. COVID-19 swept across the world, leading to the World Health Organization pronouncing a global pandemic. The UK Government responded to this threat by imposing a nationwide lockdown, which included the temporary closure of many businesses, all educational establishments, and restrictions on travel and outside activity. Many people, including those in local government, switched to working from home, meaning that some services were necessarily curtailed while others had to be delivered in different ways. Children and young people continued their studies at home using resources from their schools, reinforced with online and television resources.

In May 2020, the Department for Education made modifications to the law on Education, Health and Care needs assessments and plans due to COVID-19. While there is no change to the legislation covering special educational needs, the Government introduced some flexibility around aspects of the Children and Families Act 2014 through the Coronavirus Act 2020.

The modifications are:

- Rather than an ‘absolute duty’ to provide the provision contained in an Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in Section 42, the local authority now has to make ‘reasonable endeavours’ to provide this during the period of the pandemic. This should be reviewed regularly as situations change for families and services.
- Where there is a reason related to COVID-19, the usual statutory timescales within the EHCP process are replaced by the requirement that it must be completed as soon as possible. This was in place until 25 September 2020.

The City of London will continue to have the highest aspirations for all children and young people resident in the City, including those with SEND. However, the uncertainties around the future will mean that some services for these children and young people and their families will need to be shaped and developed around the priorities and restrictions applicable at any one time.

There are also opportunities to consider different ways of working that have emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic. The partnership should draw on national, regional or local evidence of any improved outcomes that might have emerged. The increased use of technology in multi-agency working has been central to our work practice and keeping everyone safe during the early stages of the lockdown.

#### 1.4 Local strategic context

The City of London Corporation is the smallest local authority area in London. The population of children with SEND is also small and, partly because of this, our families enjoy well-resourced services and a stable team of professionals, some of whom have worked with the children and young people for many years. We are deeply committed to maintaining the quality of services and the strength of our relationships as we move forward, to go beyond service improvement to achieving true excellence for our children and young people with SEND and their families.

Since the introduction of the SEND reforms in 2014, the City of London Corporation has completed all statutory assessments within 20 weeks of commencement, which is the legal timeframe.

The Ofsted/Care Quality Commission (CQC) Local Area SEND Inspection in March 2018 concluded that: *“leaders and professionals have a detailed understanding of the needs of children, young people and their families. Professionals involved in meeting the needs of children and young people work well together, sharing information and communicating effectively. Strong support is also provided to parents and carers where needed.”*

Our schools and settings provide excellent services and support to children and young people with SEND and their families. The 2018 inspection identified that, due to its small size, the local area faces significant challenges. A large proportion of children and young people in the City who have SEND are educated outside the local area. Although the inspection judged that *“leaders have effectively mobilised resources and staffing, and used joint commissioning, to manage these challenges effectively”*, we still need to understand much more about all children and young people with SEND, including those at SEN support, to make sure they have the high-quality services they need. We want to know what is working well for them and what additional or different support and advice they might need. We also want to make sure that they know how to access the support and opportunities necessary to enable them to meet their individual potential and life outcomes. Achieving this goal is highly dependent on the quality and effectiveness of partnership working in the City.

There is a very high satisfaction rate among our families. The 2018 Local Area SEND Inspection reported that *“parents find professionals and leaders in the local area friendly, responsive and welcoming. There were numerous examples where parents explained to the inspection team that professionals working in the local area listened to their concerns and responded quickly.”*

Children and young people with an EHCP enjoy a comprehensive suite of services and feel that they have their needs well met. Parents meet regularly with City of London Corporation officers – and children often come along too.

Our one maintained primary school in the City, Sir John Cass’s Foundation Primary School, has an outstanding judgement from Ofsted (April 2013) and offers a rich curriculum and inclusive learning environment for all its pupils. In addition to Sir John Cass, we work closely with the local independent schools and the City of London family of schools that includes the City of London academies, the Early Years providers and independent schools in the City, through the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCO) forum and other informal networks.

The City of London Corporation’s published Local Offer (everything that is offered to children and young people with SEND and their families at a local level) was refreshed in co-production with parents, children and young people. We know that we still need to go further to make the information even more accessible, to highlight opportunities, and to facilitate greater participation. The Local Offer contains a comprehensive level of information, but we need more children, young people and their families to give us feedback on how we can make it even more useful.

The Local Offer can be found on the City of London website:

<http://fyi.cityoflondon.gov.uk/kb5/cityoflondon/fyi/localoffer.page>

Families tell us that they experience good multi-agency working. Often this means that they have a close relationship with one agency or individual within an agency who then acts as a gateway for

other agencies. The Local Area SEND Inspection reported that “*leaders have ensured there is effective multi-agency working... a culture has been created which means that professionals in the local area work well together to identify, assess and meet the needs of children and young people.*” However, working in partnership across agencies can have its challenges in the City. For example, the sharing of information by and with Early Years providers and related agencies is an area still to be developed further. The City’s children receive their healthcare services through either the Tower Hamlets CCG or the City and Hackney CCG, so the City of London’s partnership with both CCGs is equally important. The Ofsted Local Area SEND Inspection also acknowledged that “*with some commissioning that relates to health needs, there is confusion as to how arrangements work for families that live in different parts of the City*”. Since the inspection, the joint work across the City Corporation, the City and Hackney CCG and Tower Hamlets CCG has been strengthened. As a result, health and care pathways are now more aligned and families receive a more coherent and consistent service wherever they live.

Because of the size of the City’s resident population, joint commissioning activity has been reframed specifically to meet the needs of the City’s children and young people, particularly where there is a joint commission of services targeting large numbers across two boroughs. Innovative governance arrangements and multi-agency participation at SEND Programme Boards have created a new paradigm in which the voice of the City child and young person is the first voice in all that we do. The Ofsted Local Area SEND Inspection highlighted that “*leaders use joint commissioning effectively*” and recent co-production with the CPCF means that commissioned services now better reflect the requirements and aspirations of children and young people with SEND and their families.

One of the outcomes in the City of London’s Corporate Plan 2018–23 is that people have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential. The SEND Strategy 2020–24 fortifies this outcome for the City’s SEND community. We believe that education is the pathway for all children to reach their potential and achieve their dreams and ambitions in life. The belief that all children have the right to their education, their identity and the right to be proud of their heritage, culture and who they are. All children from black and minority ethnic backgrounds will always be treated with dignity and respect and the SEND City community will not be silent witnesses to any form of discrimination and harassment within our community.

### **1.5 The ‘new normal’: the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on services for children and young people with SEND in the City of London**

The City of London Corporation has addressed the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic with customary sensitivity and vigour. All children and families who are vulnerable were quickly identified and offered support and the necessary resources to enable them to continue their schooling at home, including the provision of laptops and WiFi capability. The small number of children and young people in this category meant that social care teams and the Education and Early Years team were able to contact all families of vulnerable children and young people, including those with SEND, to identify their particular and individual needs.

The welfare of children and young people with EHCPs was very closely monitored, including regular contacts made with their families and their schools. Risk assessments were carried out by all schools for each of the children and young people, and records kept of the provision made for them throughout the period of school closures.

Sir John Cass’s Foundation Primary School and the Cass Child and Family Centre remained open throughout the lockdown for the children of key workers and children with EHCPs. Sir John Cass’s Foundation Primary School and the City of London School also provided education hub facilities for children whose own schools were closed.

A significant priority has been the support of children and young people who are about to face a major transition in education or move out of education and into training or employment. The key groups for this support were those children about to enter school for the first time, children who are transferring from primary to secondary school, and those transitioning into further education or training. Alongside the support for children and young people to prepare them for transitions, support was

offered to parents to help to alleviate their anxieties regarding their children returning to education in their usual settings and schools.

In addition to supporting children, young people and their families, the Education and Early Years team has had to address significant limitations and challenges, especially in how the team works with children, young people and families to assess individual needs and to provide therapeutic, emotional support. This means, for example, that an educational psychologist must conduct psychological assessments and other personal interviews using online meetings. This inevitably has some impact on the accuracy of assessments, given that some children with SEND will find the unfamiliar virtual medium challenging. There are also challenges around ensuring that sensitive information is kept private and secure.

## **1.6 Communication**

Regular and effective communication with children and young people, families and key partners was crucial throughout the global crisis. The FYI and City of London websites have proved to be valuable modes of communicating with City residents. The SEND Local Offer is updated frequently to offer parents of children and young people with SEND the latest guidance and information on all aspects of their children's education and wider welfare.

The City of London has well-established working relationships with local partners such as the City and Hackney CCG and SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS). This has meant that children and young people with EHCPs have been able to continue to receive some therapeutic provision, albeit delivered virtually, and parents have continued to have access to specialist advice. Equally important throughout the COVID-19 pandemic has been the wider communication network with other organisations and national charities working in the SEND field, such as the Council for Disabled Children, Contact and I Can. These networks have helped us to stay abreast of the latest information and to access additional resources for families.

## **2. Our key outcomes**

### **Outcome 1**

**We have a robust and inclusive multi-agency approach to identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND.**

This means that:

- we listen to and act on the voices of children and young people with SEND and their families to develop a shared vision for the future
- children and young people with SEND and their families are full partners in all discussions and developments regarding SEND
- provision and opportunities are created around both individual needs and aspirations and on community-level data from families, partners and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)
- we have a shared determination with key partners to evaluate and improve our services
- children and young people with SEND enjoy good health and wellbeing
- we communicate openly and with honesty.

### **Our current practice and successes**

We are committed to working with our key partners and the local community to ensure that we accurately identify, assess and meet the special educational needs, the health needs and social care needs of the children and young people who live in the City of London. The needs, aspirations and interests of children and young people with SEND and their families are at the heart of all decisions about joint commissioning of SEND provision. As a result, services increasingly support families to have greater choice and control of their own lives while offering a high level of personalised support where and when it is needed. We work with our family of schools, particularly through the SENCO network – and schools in other boroughs where City children and young people are educated – to

identify special educational needs and disabilities as early as possible and put in place effective, evidence-based provision in a timely manner.

Contact has been commissioned to support the further development of our small Parent Carer Forum, and a representative from Contact sits on the SEND Programme Board that has a strategic overview of the progress and outcomes of children and young people with SEND. A number of children and young people with SEND are members of the City of London Youth Parliament and they are active and vocal representatives on behalf of others.

A co-production working group met regularly during the academic years 2018/19 and 2019/20 to develop new or to review existing policies and procedures. The work of this group included the development of a shared vision for SEND, the 'Expectations of all schools' document for the SEND Local Offer, contributions to the SENCO Toolkits for Early Years provision, primary and secondary schools, and a provision mapping exercise with commissioning. Significant progress was made as a result of our co-production workshop event in October 2019 that involved colleagues from Early Years provision, schools, health services, social care and the voluntary sector. This facilitated workshop captured the feelings, views and aspirations of representatives from across the City, and the output from the workshop forms the basis of this SEND Strategy.

In partnership, we want to build on this success by:

- working with key partners in health and social care to strengthen our team around the child approach for children and young people with SEND
- increasing the participation of families of children and young people with SEND with the CPCF and wider parent carer and family events
- developing a charter with the parents and carers of children and young people with SEND
- involving more children and young people with SEND to find out about their hopes and aspirations for the future and how we can help them to achieve these
- improving the consistency of identification of children and young people with SEND across education, health and social care
- developing an effective system to evaluate the outcomes achieved across education, health and social care by children and young people with SEND
- supporting our family of schools to become even more inclusive, and better meet the needs of children and young people at SEN support and those with EHCPs.

### **Our measures of success**

- Children start school with their needs identified and appropriate provision in place.
- Children and young people with SEND and their families report that the range of services offered matches their needs and aspirations.
- New services are in place that have been developed and commissioned jointly across health, education and social care, including the development of personal budgets.

### **Outcome 2**

**Children and young people with SEND have good preparation for adulthood and are well supported through all major transitions.**

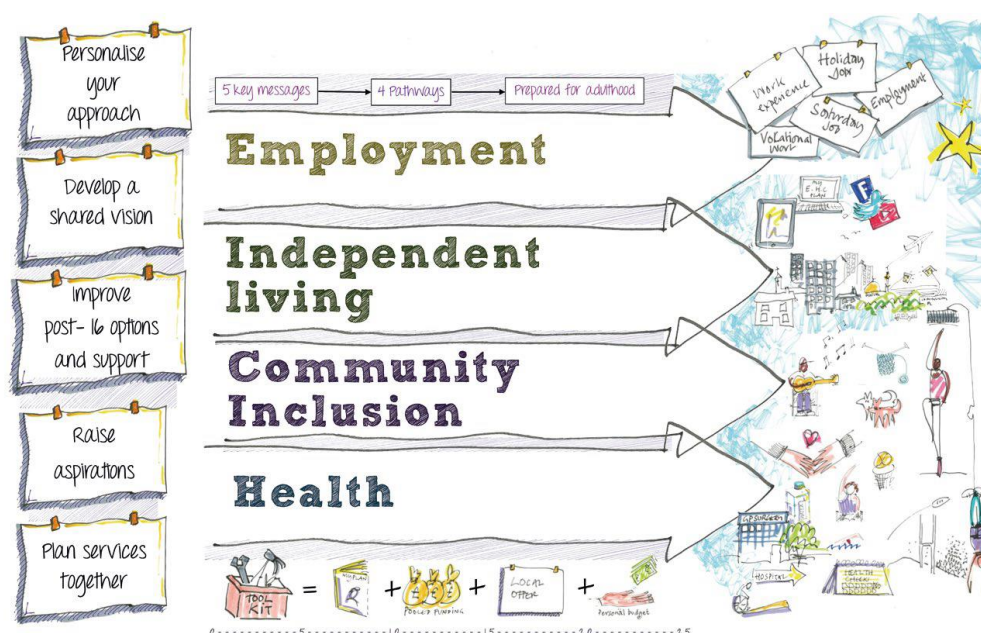
As a result:

- children and young people with SEND and their families can live 'ordinary' lives as independently as possible
- flexible options are available to young people across housing, training, employment, health and leisure
- all young people with SEND have meaningful and fulfilling work and/or training, and children are well prepared to achieve this.

### **Our current practice and successes**

We want all children and young people with SEND to have the opportunity of paid employment and/or voluntary work, to enjoy good health, to be able to live as independently as possible, to have

friends and meaningful relationships, and to be part of their community. These aspirations align with the Preparing for Adulthood outcomes that inform and guide our development of services and opportunities for young people with SEND.



We work with our Early Years settings, schools and colleges to support them to prepare our children and young people with SEND for adulthood from their earliest years. This means ensuring that pupils receive high-quality provision that is delivered effectively. All children and young people with SEND are educated in schools and Early Years settings that are rated by Ofsted to be ‘good or better, and make good progress towards their individual outcomes and aspirations. They have access to an inclusive and inspiring curriculum so that they can achieve their outcomes and so realise their aspirations for the future.

Transitions at each stage, from early years through to adulthood, are carefully planned and co-produced with children, young people and their families. Clear transition pathways have been established in partnership with young people with SEND and their families, both when they have an EHCP and when they are at SEN support and, in the early years, even before they are at SEN support.

A multi-agency Transitions Forum has been established to make sure that young people who previously received services as a child have their future needs as an adult assessed long before they become one. This enables a fresh assessment to be made in which the young person’s needs are central. This assessment is used to secure resources, maintain continuity of service, and to offer an early introduction to any new professionals and services before the current ones stop supporting the young person and their family.

In partnership, we want to build on this success by ensuring that:

- embedding the Preparing for Adulthood outcomes in all our planning for children and young people with SEND, from the earliest years
- EHCPs contain SMART and aspirational outcomes that are linked to individual aspirations and that are important to the child or young person
- all children and young people with SEND have access to high-quality careers advice
- opportunities are increased for young people to access work experience and supported internships
- there is a robust system to evaluate young people’s progress against their individual outcomes
- all young people with SEND are well supported by services from education, health and social care to have a smooth transition into adulthood.

### Our measures of success

- Children and young people with SEND make good progress above national expectations at all levels.
- Young people with SEND report that they are satisfied with the support they receive through and after transition to adulthood.
- All young people with SEND aged 16 to 25 are in education, training, supported internships, paid employment or supported voluntary work.

### **Outcome 3**

#### **Children and young people with SEND are integral and valued members of the City of London community.**

This means that:

- the City celebrates diversity, and all services have a shared intent to make the lives of children and young people with SEND richer and more fulfilling
- the City is a safe and accessible place to play, learn and work for children and young people with SEND
- children and young people with SEND are welcomed and supported to participate in the cultural life of the City.

#### **Our current practice and successes**

The City of London is a vibrant and exciting place for all children and young people to live and learn. There is a rich offer of cultural and community activities – from visits to world-class museums and art galleries to participating in amazing events such as the Lord Mayor’s Show and the Aldgate Festival. Many families of children and young people with SEND participate in leisure, creative and sporting activities such as play schemes, youth clubs, art classes, yoga and swimming lessons. In addition to these activities that are open to all children and young people, the City commissions additional activities specifically for children and young people with SEND. The specialist activities are designed around what the children and young people with SEND and their families tell us they want.

The City of London Corporation has a joint contract with Hackney Council with commissioned specialist Short Breaks providers. However, many of these activities take place in neighbouring boroughs, often requiring families to use public transport, which can be difficult for some families. Most activities also require parents to stay with their children. Parents tell us that they want us to provide more activities within the Square Mile and more activities where siblings can join in too. Many residents of the City of London live very close to the border with Tower Hamlets or Islington. For this reason, some families may prefer to access provision within these boroughs. The City commissioning team has built links with these local authorities and with providers within both areas that are happy to accept City of London resident children.

Where there are no opportunities appropriate for a particular child or young person, the City of London Corporation will consider designing bespoke provision around the individual’s needs and interests.

In early 2020, the SEND team commissioned a short film of children and young people from the City talking about their interests, likes and concerns. This film has been shared across the City Corporation, including with Members, and the views expressed are now being used to inform and shape policy and practice.

In partnership, we want to build on this success by:

- introducing the SEND Friendly City audit to build awareness, understanding and capacity and to identify our strengths and areas for development
- building commissioners’ relationships with providers directly to enhance the offer for families of children and young people with SEND



- increasing the number and range of activities available for children and young people with SEND within the Square Mile
- further developing the participation of children and young people with SEND in City of London groups, such as the Youth Parliament, so that we hear their voices clearly and their views and opinions shape all developments
- increasing the number of parents/carers of children and young people with SEND engaged in the CPCF, especially parents of children and young people at SEN support.

#### **Our measures of success**

- There are 50% more universal and specialist activities available within the Square Mile for City children and young people with SEND.
- The CPCF has at least 10 active members and a functioning committee.
- At least 10 children and young people with SEND participate in City groups, such as the Youth Parliament.
- The SEND Friendly City audit evidences continuing improvements over time in the life experiences and opportunities of children and young people with SEND and their families.
- Colleagues from all teams across the City Corporation, including the City of London Police, are supported and trained in how to approach and deal with children and young people with SEND with sensitivity and compassion.