

Committee Health & Wellbeing Board	Dated: 02/02/2024
Subject: Special educational needs and disability (SEND) in The City of London Local Area	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributing to a flourishing society • Support a thriving economy • Shape understanding environments
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report authors: Theresa Shortland Head of Service – Education and Early Years Sharon Cushnie Lead SEND Advisor – Education and Early Years	

Summary

- This report provides statistical information about the number of children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) in the City who are known to the local authority (LA), those who receive additional support from the LA through an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) due to their complex needs, and those who are receiving SEN Support.
- This information is set against the national statistical information as reported by the Department for Education (DfE) publication, *Special educational needs in England 2023: January 2023*, published June 2023 (<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england>.) This publication is based on data for the January 2023 caseload, and for activity during 2022. From 2023 this data changed from aggregated figures at LA level, to person-level data.

- By the end of the Foundation Stage, children are at least at the expected level in communication and language so that they have the best academic start. In terms of early identification and responding to speech and language needs at the earliest opportunity, the City of London Talks and Listens Enthusiastically (COLTALE) programme continues to offer Early Years practitioners improved knowledge and skills in identifying children who may have SLCN. This also provides links between the home learning environment and early education settings in the earliest years.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report

Main Report

Background

The National Picture

1. The DfE report – *Special educational needs in England: January 2023* – provides data from the January 2023 school census on pupils with SEND, and information about special schools in England. The data is a national data set and presents a picture of SEND in England.
2. The percentage of pupils with EHCPs has increased from 4.0% in 2022 to 4.3% in 2023, continuing a trend of increases since 2016.
3. The percentage of pupils with SEN Support has increased from 12.6% in 2022 to 13.0% in 2023, continuing an increasing trend.
4. In January 2022, pupils with an EHCP made up one quarter (25%) of all pupils with SEN.
5. The most common type of primary need for those on SEN Support is speech, language, and communication need (SLCN). This is followed by social, emotional and mental health needs, and moderate learning difficulty.
6. For pupils with an EHCP, almost one in three pupils identified autism spectrum disorder (ASD) as a primary need.
7. The number and percentage of pupils with an EHCP has increased across all school types.
8. In terms of gender, SEND continues to be more prevalent in boys: 72.4% of pupils with an EHCP are boys; 62.8% of pupils with SEN Support are boys – although, both rates have been decreasing slowly in recent years.

Current Position – September 2023

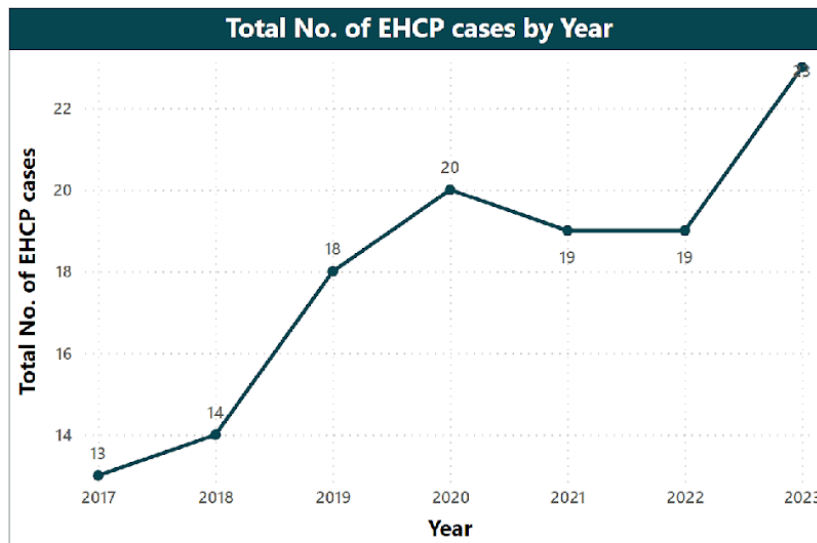
The Local Picture in COL and Key Data

9. Key data is captured by the Community & Childrens Performance team.

Table 1 below, presents the number of children for whom COL maintains an EHCP. The number of EHCPs has increased from 13 in 2017 to 23 as at December 2023,

the highest number to date in the COL. This is approximately 0.9% of the population of resident children and young people aged 0–25 years ([GLA Population Projections \(london.gov.uk\)](https://www.london.gov.uk/infrastructure/population-projections)).

Table 1. EHCP cases by year



10. Several factors have contributed to the increase, including the number of pupils moving into the COL, early identification of needs, and parental requests for assessments. In 2022, referrals and assessments also increased to meet the needs of the Afghan and Ukrainian communities who lived in the City at this time, although assessments that were initiated (two Afghan children) and EHCPs issued (one Ukrainian child), have all been transferred to the receiving LAs as these families have moved out of the COL. Specialist SEN Support was also provided to a small number of other children from these communities. Had all these children and young people remained here, the COL would be maintaining a further four EHCPs.
11. The most common type of primary needs for pupils with an EHCP in the COL is ASD, at 60% (14 children and young people), which is higher than the national average, where almost one in three pupils have ASD as a primary need. Children and young people with an SLCN make up the second highest at 17% (four children and young people).
12. The COL and Hackney’s Autism Strategy 2020–2025, which was co-produced with autistic residents and their families and carers, and the City and Hackney Children and Young People’s Emotional Health and Wellbeing Partnership –Neurodevelopmental Subgroup, provides a framework for us to plan and improve services for autistic people in the COL. The City Parent Carer Forum is represented on this group.
13. Table 2 below, shows that there are more children and young people in the upper age range than in previous years. Preparation for adulthood has been a key area for development that we have focused on over the last two years. A transition guide, *Steps to Adulthood*, was co-produced with partners, including the City Parent Carer Forum. The purpose of this guide is to support parents and young people through the preparation for adulthood pathways. A COL Transitions Forum meets termly to consider the needs of children and young people (aged

14+) across education, health and social care. Pathways into supported internships are being developed for young people with EHCPs.

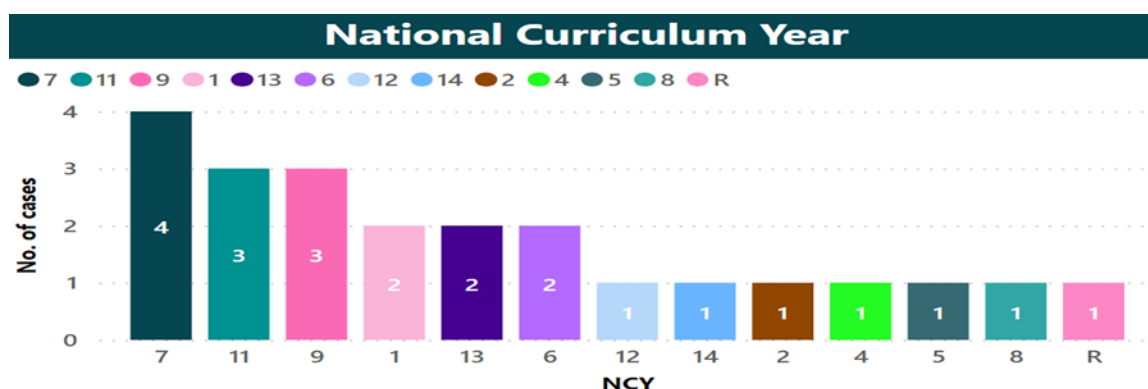


Table 2. EHCP pupils by National Curriculum year

14. Most COL resident children and young people with EHCPs are boys: 19 out of 23 (83%), compared to the national average of 72.4%. As with the national figures, this rate has decreased. Previously there were two girls with EHCPs. During 2022/2023 two secondary aged girls who are on the autistic spectrum received an EHCP. Many autistic girls remain undiagnosed because the signs of autism are less obvious than they are in boys. Recent research suggests that girls with autism may be under-identified or given another diagnosis, such as anxiety or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), because their symptoms can be easier to miss as they are more likely to 'mask' their autistic traits.
15. The Children and Families Act 2014 is clear that children and young people with SEND should be educated in mainstream provision, unless their needs require more specialist provision. In COL, 17 of the 23 children and young people attend mainstream settings. Six children and young people attend special schools, of which two attend a special residential setting.
16. Out of 23 children and young people, 22 attend maintained educational settings rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted, or independent settings at which standards are met. One young person attends a further education college which has been judged as "requires improvement", although learners with high needs are reported to be well supported to make progress. Although the LA advised the family of the LA's standard for all children and young people to attend good or outstanding settings, the young person and parent made the decision to attend this setting.
17. Statutory timescales in COL for issuing EHCPs are consistently met, with 100% of EHCPs being issued within 20 weeks. This has been the case since September 2014. This is higher than the national figure of 49.2% for EHCPs issued within 20 weeks in 2022. This figure demonstrates that national timeliness has reduced in recent years.
18. Parents and young people (children over 16 years) have a right of appeal to the SEND Tribunal if:
 - the LA has refused to carry out an EHC needs assessment
 - the LA refuses to issue an EHCP following an assessment, or if they are not happy with the content of an EHCP.

In COL in 2023, one appeal was lodged with the SEND Tribunal. This concerns

the provision specified in the EHCP. There was one appeal in 2022, two in 2020, one in 2019 and three in 2018. In terms of these seven appeals: one moved out of the area, three were resolved without the need for a hearing, two were upheld by the SEND Tribunal, and one was not upheld.

Pupils on SEN Support

19. An area for development and challenge since the last Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) Area SEND inspection in 2018 has been around data collection. This relates to children and young people who receive SEN Support, particularly those educated outside of the COL. During the last academic year, we delivered a data collection project to identify and monitor children and young people in receipt of SEN Support, who were also attending schools within and outside of the COL. The SEND team contacted all known schools (83 schools) where COL children and young people attend, and data was collected from 92% of those schools contacted.
20. SEN Support is the process that schools and other settings use to initially identify and meet the needs of children with SEND, and to provide extra help to the support provided as part of the school's usual arrangements. This assistance is provided from the school's own resources, sometimes with advice or support from outside specialists. These pupils do not have an EHCP. This data shows that 49 COL resident pupils are in receipt of SEN Support (13% of the pupils who are statutory school age and attending an educational setting). This is in line with the national average of 13%. (DfE: *Special Educational Needs in England 2022/23*).

Outcomes

21. Outcomes for pupils with EHCPs are reported through the annual review of their EHCP. Annual reviews are closely monitored, with the SEND Officer and/or the Principal Educational Psychologists attending all meetings. Progress and any concerns are addressed at the LA's SEND Panel as appropriate.
22. Pupils make good progress towards their aspirations and preparation for adulthood outcomes, and in line with their special educational needs. At the end of the academic year 2022/23, there was no movement of any young people into further education placements for the first time, although one young person moved to a different placement that is best suited to them for meeting their personal aspirations. This was a well-planned and smooth transition, with the young person providing positive feedback on their experience.

Early Years

23. In terms of early identification and responding to speech and language needs at the earliest opportunity, the City of London Talks and Listens Enthusiastically (COLTALE) programme continues to offer Early Years practitioners improved knowledge and skills in identifying children who may have SLCN. This also provides links between the home learning environment and early education settings in the earliest years. The programme also links to literacy, early reading and writing skills. The main aim of the programme is to ensure that practitioners, teachers, and parents have a secure understanding of language development and how it relates to a child's development.
24. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children are at least at the expected level in communication and language so that they have the best academic start. Inclusion audits were carried out between May and July 2023 across all Early Years

settings in the COL. Evidence was supported through dialogue, policies, practice, and observations. Settings were asked to be reflective and look at their SEN and inclusion systems and practices. Judgments were agreed on by the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinators (SENDCO)/Manager and Early Years Advisor. Discussions demonstrated that SENDCOS had a clear understanding of the needs of children, including those with SEND, and knew their children and families well.

25. All staff are aware of children with additional needs and are involved in supporting them. Therefore, children make good progress. One-to-one support is effective in extending children's learning when support staff have been trained and are included in the child's targets. In some nurseries, there was discussion on how temporary or new staff were provided with information to ensure that children's needs were consistently supported. Individual Outcome Plans (IOPs) show targets which are specific, measurable, achievable and time-bound (SMART), with identified outcomes.
26. All Safeguarding policies and procedures include children with SEND, and appropriate Early Help referrals are made to support children's and families' needs. Overall policies are personalised to the individual setting, even within settings that are part of a chain of nurseries. All stakeholders – such as parents, governors and advisors – are involved in the development and review of policies, and one smaller playgroup is planning to develop this more in the autumn term. Policies refer to current legislation and SEND policies identify a named SENDCO. The Local Offer from settings is available on the COL Family Information Services (FIS) website and updated annually.
27. Feedback received from families following transition to primary school or Key Stage 1 has been very positive and shows that support from the Early Years' Service is valued. From 26 referrals made to the Early Years Service between May 2021 and September 2023, only five have led to a request for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment. Of these, only two were COL residents. All requests made by Early Years settings to the COL for an EHC needs assessment have been accepted, showing that these requests were made appropriately. This shows that our work is having an impact on identifying needs early and addressing the needs of all children, including those with a greater level of needs.
28. The purpose of the SEN (Early Years) Inclusion Fund (SENIF) is to support Early Years providers to address the needs of individual children, and to make it easier for families of children with SEND to take up their free entitlement to nursery provision. All Early Years providers in the COL who are eligible to receive funding for the early education entitlement (for 2-, 3- and 4-year olds) are also eligible to receive support from the SENIF, and £ 8,762 inclusion funding was allocated in the academic year 2022–23 for two children.
29. The Early Years Advisor is in regular contact with the COL Health Visitors to ensure that, where a child's development causes concerns at a health review, their details are shared so that a suitable Early Years place can be sought and educational support can be provided as early as possible.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

30. 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.

31. Resource implications – The SEND functions are resourced through the Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block.
32. Financial implications – The SEND functions are resourced through the Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block.
33. 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.
34. Risk implications – If children's and young people's SEND issues are not identified early, assessed and supported, this will impact on their educational attainment, progress and wider lifetime chances.
35. Equalities implications – All children and young people, regardless of their SEND issues, 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.
36. Disability and race are protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.
37. Climate implications – n/a
38. Security implications – n/a

Conclusion

39. The number of EHCPs has increased from 13 in 2017 to 23 as at December 2023, the highest number to date in the COL. We have strengthened the data around children and young people at SEN Support who attend educational settings outside of the COL. We are also strengthening the early identification of children in early years which is supported by the SENDCOs and COLTALE activities.

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