

<b>Committee</b> Safeguarding Sub-Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 04/03/2024
<b>Subject:</b> Special educational needs and disability (SEND) – Update	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributing to a flourishing society</li> <li>• Support a thriving economy</li> <li>• Shape understanding environments</li> </ul>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report authors:</b> Sharon Cushnie, Lead SEND Advisor – Education and Early Years and Theresa Shortland, Head of Service – Education and Early Years	

### Summary

- The City of London’s Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2020–24 sets out three key outcomes to be achieved by 2024. This report provides an update on the progress in implementing the second key outcome, which is to ensure that all children and young people with SEND are well-prepared for and have successful transitions to adulthood.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. The City of London (COL) SEND Strategy 2020–24 presents the City’s aspirations. The three key outcomes in the SEND Strategy are:
  - i. We have a robust and inclusive multi-agency approach to identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND.
  - ii. All children and young people with SEND are well-prepared for and have successful transitions to adulthood.
  - iii. Children and young people with SEND are integral and valued members of the City of London community.
2. As planning for the next SEND strategy starts, this report provides Members with an update on transitions to adulthood and progress on how children and young people are being prepared for adult life.

### **The SEND Transitions Task and Finish Group**

3. In July 2021, a Task and Finish Group was set up by the Education and Early Years Service to focus on and improve outcomes in key areas that support how the COL prepares children and young people with SEND for adult life from the earliest years. The SEND Code of Practice (2015) details that preparation for adult life should include a focus on: further education, training, and employment; living independently; being included within the local community; and being healthy. A group was established to ensure that progress was made in these four key areas. It was arranged as a multi-agency group which included the Education & Early Years Service, Children’s Social Care and Early Help, Adult Social Care, health, schools, colleges, housing, SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS), commissioning, City Parent Carer Forum representatives and young people.
4. In October 2022, Members were informed of the progress with this work. This included:
  - The development of a ‘Steps to Adulthood’ pathways guidance document for parents, carers, and young people with SEND to provide a range of accessible information on preparing young people with SEND for adult life, which can be accessed on the SEND local offer website.
  - A Preparation for Adulthood Hub, which is live on the SEND local offer website.
  - A review of the housing policy to include young people with SEND as a priority group for housing allocation and the development of guidance for parents, carers and young people with SEND on how to apply for housing, and the housing options available.
  - A sports programme at Golden Lane Leisure Centre was commissioned to provide children and young people with SEND access to a range of sporting facilities and clubs. The City SEND project has provided a range of activities for children, including football, gym sessions, and swimming. A short film from

September 2022 documents the work and the impact of this provision – see the film at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eR8Tsn5-zZI>.

- Children and young people with SEND continue to enjoy and benefit from these activities. Swimming lessons are continuing, with 16 sessions per week; football and gym sessions take place on Friday afternoons. There are plans this quarter to implement respite sessions for parent carers on Friday afternoons, incorporating gentle exercise and mindfulness as well as nutritional advice.
  - The offer of independent travel training for all young people with SEND from the earliest appropriate age. A new travel training service through Tower Hamlets local authority has been commissioned. This will support children and young people to develop the skills and confidence to travel independently.
  - A 'Ready, Set, Launch' transition model from children's to adult's health services has continued to be developed, and a consistent approach is applied across the COL and Hackney and Tower Hamlets Integrated Care Board (ICB), to ensure that the model will apply similarly for all COL residents.
  - Chapter 8 of the SEND Code of Practice is about preparation for adulthood from the earliest years. The Early Years Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) Level 3 Training and documentation and guidance were reviewed and updated to include how to prepare children with SEND for adult life from the early years. All participants on the SENCO Level 3 training course in previous years have reported that the training makes them feel more confident in their roles and more confident to talk to parents about their child's needs.
  - The SEND Ranges – a framework for staff in educational settings 0–25 years to address the early identification of any SEND – provides ideas for curriculum adaptation, guidance on assessment and the effective deployment of resources, and includes guidance on preparing for adulthood from the earliest years. This guidance was rolled out to settings in the COL in the summer of 2023. The Aldgate School have reported that they are finding the preparing for adulthood guidelines particularly helpful in preparing their children for transition.
  - An evaluation of the SEND Ranges is in progress and will be reported to a future SEND Programme Board meeting.
5. In terms of areas for development, we reported that there was work to be done to develop the pathways and offer within the COL for further education, training and employment opportunities for young people with SEND. The Adult Education and Skills Service was to lead on this.

6. Progress on this work includes:

The development of the SEND Employment Forum:

- In 2022, the Government reinforced its commitment to supporting more young people with SEND into employment, with the Department for Education (DfE) funding a three-year programme to strengthen Supported Internship provision.

The programme is delivered by the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi), British Association of Supported Employment (BASE) and DFN Project SEARCH.

- The NDTi has supported the Adult Education and Skills Service to develop a SEND Employment Forum and supported internships for young people in the COL. The aim of the SEND Employment Forum is to bring together all the local partners who can develop and deliver supported internships in the local area to create routes that will support more young people with SEND into paid employment. Partners include representatives from the local authority, schools, employers (which includes St Bartholomew's Hospital), the City Parent Carer Forum and the careers service. The SEND Employment Forum meets once a term.
- Supported Internships are work-based learning placements within mainstream employment settings for young people aged 16 to 24 years who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The aim is to secure a job at the end of the placement.
- Although there are no COL young people who are ready to access the programme, the offer is being developed for young people in the future. Of the three young people who are leaving secondary or further education provision in 2023/2024, they are currently being supported to explore the options of apprenticeships and university.
- On 7 December 2023, the Adult Skills and Education Service held an outstanding breakfast event at Mansion House, with the goal to encourage businesses to provide opportunities for young individuals with SEND through supported internships. The event boasted a range of esteemed speakers who discussed the importance of advancing social mobility and creating a more inclusive future for young people. The speakers included a wide variety of advocates who provided vital insights on the narrative around supported internships, emphasising the importance of collaboration between educational institutions and businesses to create more inclusive work environments.
- Deputy Chairman of the COL Corporation's Education Board, Naresh Sonpar, said: "By combining structured training, work experience, and learning, we can help to bridge the gap between education and employment. Supported internships can also enable young people with SEND to develop a sense of independence and achievement, knowing that they have secured a nationally assessed qualification and good quality work experience."
- Attendees were able to discuss these important issues and exchange ideas on how to best provide opportunities and break down barriers to empower young individuals with SEND. The inspiring discussions highlighted the importance of creating a supportive environment that encourages skill development as well as professional and personal growth for young people with additional needs or disabilities.
- A short film of the highlights can be accessed at this link: <https://f.io/MyuS72Jv>.

7. Currently there are 23 children and young people supported through an EHC plan, with three EHC needs assessment in progress. The SEND Team has recruited a part-time EHC Caseworker to bring additional capacity. The caseworker will also bring expertise in transitioning to adulthood.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

8. 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.
9. Resource implications – The SEND functions are resourced through the Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block.
10. Financial implications – The SEND functions are resourced through the Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block.
11. 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/Care Quality Commission inspection framework sets out the legal basis and the principles of inspection.
12. 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.
13. 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 they will be prepared to have a fulfilled adult life.
14. Disability and race are protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.
15. Climate implications – n/a
16. Security implications – n/a

## **Conclusion**

17. As part of the area SEND inspection arrangements, in addition to the area SEND inspections, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission also carry out a series of thematic visits each academic year. They visit a small number of areas to investigate a particular aspect of the SEND system in depth. The theme for 2024 is 'preparation for adulthood'.
18. We will continue to develop and monitor this key strategy outcome to ensure that children and young people with SEND are well prepared for and have successful transitions to adulthood. Our aim is that this is well evidenced when the COL local

area is inspected through the area SEND inspection, as well as through any thematic visits.

## **Appendices**

- None

### **Theresa Shortland**

Head of Service – Education and Early Years

T: 020 7332 1086

E: [theresa.shortland@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:theresa.shortland@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

### **Sharon Cushnie**

Lead SEND Advisor – Education and Early Years

T: 020 7332 1537

E: [sharon.cushnie@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:sharon.cushnie@cityoflondon.gov.uk)