



CITY PARENT CARER FORUM



August 2024 Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Self-evaluation



East London
NHS Foundation Trust



North East London

Summary



The City of London is a unique place, just one square mile, the financial heart of the UK and home to just under 9,000 residents.

The City of London Corporation (the City Corporation) provides local authority services to these residents and works in partnership with a wide range of organisations to deliver the best possible outcomes for its residents.

Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) is no exception, and our vision for all children and young people is that the City of London is a place where they feel safe, have good mental health and wellbeing, fulfil their potential and are ready for adulthood whilst growing up with a sense of belonging.

At the end of August 2024, there were 26 City of London children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The majority were male, and the biggest presenting need was Autism Spectrum Disorder. The number of EHCPs has increased from 14 in 2019.

With only one maintained school in the City of London (a primary school), City of London children and young people go to 66 different schools across neighbouring boroughs.

Amongst these children, 55 are receiving SEN Support in their schools.

Overall, there is currently one young person in alternative provision and one who is electively home educated. Neither have an EHCP or Special Educational Need.

Summary



We are proud that our services to children and young people with SEND are responsive, flexible and agile to respond to need.

We deliver all our EHCPs within the 20-week statutory timescale and as we have no direct provision within the City of London boundaries, we commission services that are person-centred and very much tailored to the child or young person.

We attend all Annual Reviews in person to meet with the children, young people and their families to ensure that the voice of the child and young person is paramount in the process.

Additionally, we engage with Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and Annual Reviews for children and young people for whom we are corporate parent who live and are educated outside of the City of London.

There is strong partnership working across our internal departments (Early Years, Social Care, Education and Adult Skills Education and Apprenticeships) and with external organisations such as health.

Working together, internally we keep a vulnerable children's register which includes children and young people with SEND.

Colleagues come together to regularly keep this list under review and respond to any emerging needs promptly.

Summary



We are also proud of the educational outcomes our SEND children and young people achieve and the contribution they make to their communities

Two of three EHCPs being ceased this summer are due to young people transitioning to university and/or apprenticeship.

There are strong relationships with employers through an Employer Forum and as a result seven supported internships have been developed which are available to eligible young people.

However, we are not complacent and there is always more we can do to ensure we deliver on our vision for children and young people in the City of London. To that end, we invited a peer review in Spring 2024 of our Area arrangements.

The review found that *there is a clear vision and ambition for children and young people with SEND and that professionals know children and young people well and place them at the centre of their thinking.*

Recommendations have been endorsed by our parent carer forum and an action plan is in place to address the areas for development.

For the next year, some of our focus will be on delivering our new strategy in partnership with our partners, children and young people and their families.

We will also be strengthening partnership arrangements with health and joint commissioning arrangements, reinforcing our understanding and oversight of children and young people on SEN Support in the range of schools attended and enabling more inclusive or specific activities for children and young people with SEND and their families.

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City of London context



My London artwork by a City of London young person

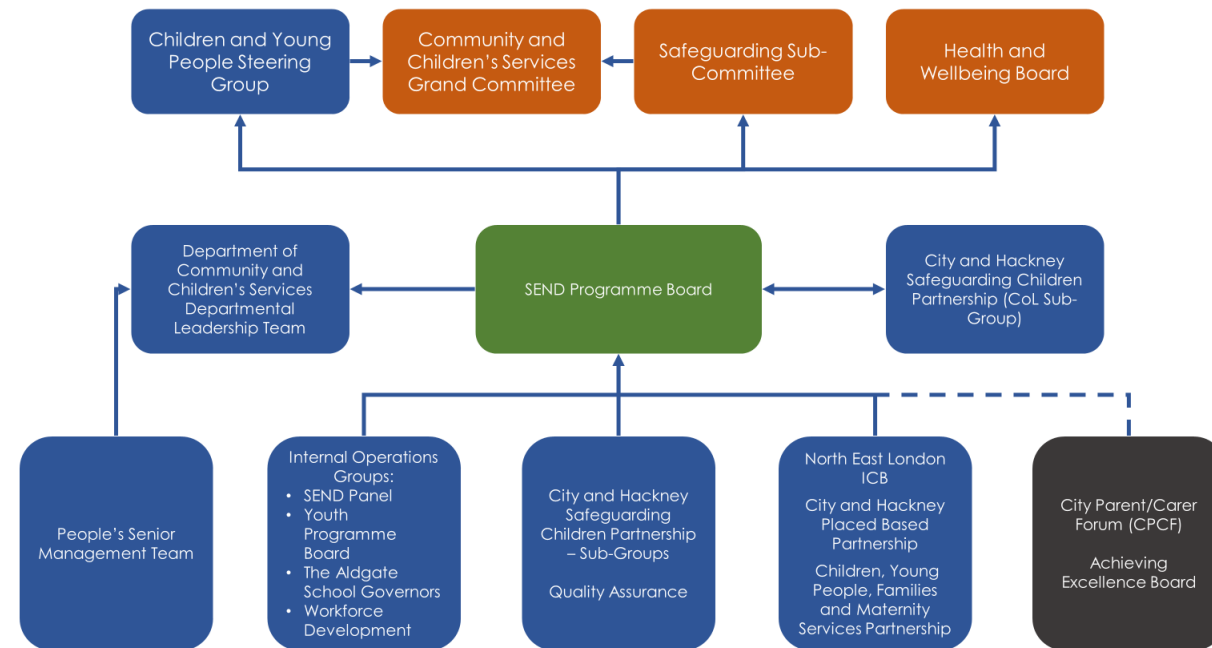
Our Local Area Partnership



At the heart of our partnership is the Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Programme Board and its collaboration with our children and young people with SEND and their families. Chaired by the Strategic Education and Skills Director, the Strategic Lead for Children and Young People (Health) and the Assistant Director – People (Social Care), it brings together parent carers, health, education, early years settings, safeguarding, information, advice and support services, and local authority partners to drive ambition and delivery.



The City of London Corporation (City Corporation) operates a committee system. The Community and Children's Services Committee has responsibility for SEND. There is strong political commitment to supporting children and young people with SEND and their families.



City of London context

Our vision and aspirations



Our vision: The City of London is a place where children and young people feel safe, have good mental health and wellbeing, fulfil their potential and are ready for adulthood whilst growing up with a sense of belonging
(City of London Children and Young People's Plan 2022-2025)

Our aspirations for children and young people with SEND and their families:

- support at the earliest opportunity – delivered in good quality local settings for education, health and care
- happy, healthy long lives with the support to fulfil aspirations and achieve outcomes.
- support to become independent adults, with transition enabled by education, training, volunteering and employment opportunities.
- equity and equality for our children and young people – securing access to services and opportunities that any other child would have,
- opportunities to try new things, make new friends and know that they are valued, successful members of their school, college, and community
- recognition of the experiences and expertise of our children and young people, and their families – to shape their lives, our services and our strategies

Our aspirations for the services we deliver for children and young people with SEND:

- creating a City that is a safe, accessible place to play, learn and work
- providing access as close as possible to the homes of our children, young people and families
- sharing a determination to evaluate and improve services
- building and delivering services based on a robust understanding and evidence of needs based on qualitative and quantitative information
- celebrating the diversity and strengths of children, young people and families – and placing that at the centre of what we do
- ensuring our children, young people and their families understand who does what, who is responsible and where they seek help, through communications and processes that are clear, easily found and break down barriers
- working collaboratively so that our services are joined up, designed on shared understanding, knowledge and experience of the children, young people and families we work with, and using the strength of that partnership to innovate and develop
- meeting needs by bringing together the best trained staff that can respond to the range of need and opportunity

City of London context

About the City of London



The City of London is the birthplace of the capital. At just 1.12 miles in area, it is home to 8,600 residents and a financial centre that has six hundred thousand workers. It is a place of unique and historic governance, economic vibrancy, cultural richness and diverse communities.

With just one maintained primary school (the Aldgate School) and five independent education settings within the City of London's boundaries, children and young people attend over 66 different schools across London. The population is served by a single GP practice with 20% of residents (and 50% of children with an Education Health and Care Plan [EHCP]) registered with practices within Tower Hamlets.



Like the seven London local authorities that border the City of London, areas of deprivation sit alongside affluence. Income deprivation is significantly lower than the England average, but in the east of the City of London lie areas within the top 20% for income deprivation. Academic attainment is high, and issues of crime and anti-social behaviour are consistently low.

City of London context

About the City of London



The City of London is home to a population in which the majority are working age, but also to 1975 children and young people aged 0 to 25 (713 aged 0-18) (Census 2021). The Census 2021 breaks down the overall City of London population into 65% White, 25% ethnic minority (6% other).



The City of London is the oldest and most historic part of London



Smallest local authority area in the country at 1.12 miles



The Square Mile is the financial centre of the capital



We have one primary school, four independent schools, and one independent college in the City



We have a unique system of administration



Half a million workers
Ten million tourist visits



We have 8600 residents, 1975 children and young people aged 0 to 25



We provide local and police authority functions

City of London context

Understanding our need



At the end of August 2024, 26 City of London children and young people had an EHCP. Of those 26:

- 18 (81%) were male.
- 9 (35%) were under 12 years of age, the rest were between 12 and 25-years-old.
- 22 (85%) of those with an EHCP attended educational settings outside of the City of London, mainly mainstream with a small number attending specialist day provision and two are placed in specialist 52-week residential placements.
- 54% supported were from Global Majority communities.
- The primary need (65% of children and young people) supported was Autistic Spectrum Disorders.
- 1 was receiving alternative provision (EHCP finalised end of August 2024)
- There has been an increase in EHCPs from 14 in 2019 (mirroring national trend) and cases were becoming more complex.

Of all City of London children and young people:

- 1 child is Electively Home Educated (does not have an EHCP).
- 53 receive SEN Support at their school.

City of London context

Educational attainment in City of London settings



Children with SEND in Early Years settings

In August 2024, there were 13 City of London resident children on the Inclusion Register. Of these:

- 10 children had SEN Support. Of these:
 - 1 is not attending an early years setting
 - 3 are in reception class at a school outside of the City of London and 1 is in reception at the Aldgate School
 - 4 are in an early years setting in the City of London and 1 is in an early years setting outside of the City of London
- 3 children had an EHCP (1 in reception class at the Aldgate School and 2 in nursery; 1 in the Aldgate School and 1 at a setting outside of the City of London)
- Early Years settings are making timely and appropriate referrals. More referrals are received by settings who have a trained early years SENCO

Number of City of London children with SEND at Aldgate School who reached a 2 (expected) in at least one area of the EYFS

Area	EHCP	SEN Support
Communication and language		1
Personal, social and emotional development		
Physical development	1	1
Literacy		1
Maths	1	1

City of London context

Educational attainment in City of London settings



KS1 Teacher Assessment % of pupils achieving the expected standard or higher

Year	No Special Needs			SEN support			EHCP		
	2018/19	2021/22	2022/23	2018/19	2021/22	2022/23	2018/19	2021/22	2022/23
Reading	98%	90%	83%	67%	43%	55%	0%	100%	0%
Writing	94%	90%	83%	50%	43%	55%	0%	100%	0%
Maths	98%	85%	94%	83%	43%	27%	50%	100%	0%

Source: Data from the DfE website – analysing school performance

KS1 Teacher Assessment % of pupils achieving the expected standard or higher

Subject	Year	No Special Needs			SEN support			EHCP		
		2018/19	2021/22	2022/23	2018/19	2021/22	2022/23	2018/19	2021/22	2022/23
Reading	Aldgate School	98%	90%	83%	67%	43%	55%	0%	100%	0%
	National	83%	75%	77%	75%	N/A	N/A	75%	N/A	N/A
	Gap	15%	15%	6%	-8%	N/A	N/A	-75%	N/A	N/A
Writing	Aldgate School	94%	90%	83%	50%	43%	55%	0%	100%	0%
	National	78%	66%	69%	69%	N/A	N/A	69%	N/A	N/A
	Gap	16%	24%	14%	-19%	N/A	N/A	-69%	N/A	N/A
Maths	Aldgate School	98%	85%	94%	83%	43%	27%	50%	100%	0%
	National	84%	75%	77%	76%	N/A	N/A	76%	N/A	N/A
	Gap	14%	10%	17%	7%	N/A	N/A	-26%	N/A	N/A

Source: Data from the DfE website – analysing school performance

Children with SEND at The Aldgate School

- At Key Stage One children with SEN Support achieve well:
 - the proportion of children with SEN Support meeting the expected standard for reading, writing and maths exceeded national levels in 2019, 2022 and 2023
 - in 2023 the proportion of children with SEN Support meeting the expected standard for reading, writing and maths exceeded the performance of their contemporaries at the Aldgate School without special needs
- 75% of children with SEN Support met the higher standard for reading and writing in 2023, and half for maths.
- There were no children with an EHCP at KS1 in 2022/2023.

City of London context

Educational attainment in City of London settings



	No Special Needs			SEN Support			EHCP		
Year	2018/19	2021/22	2022/23	2018/19	2021/22	2022/23	2018/19	2021/22	2022/23
Reading	100%	94%	91%	67%	100%	64%	N/A	50%	0%
Writing	100%	94%	93%	56%	86%	64%	N/A	0%	50%
Maths	100%	94%	82%	89%	86%	55%	N/A	50%	50%

Source: Data from the DFE website – analysing school performance

		No Special Needs			SEN Support			EHCP		
Subject	Year	2018/19	2021/22	2022/23	2018/19	2021/22	2022/23	2018/19	2021/22	2022/23
Reading	Aldgate School	100%	94%	91%	67%	100%	64%	N/A	50%	0%
	National	81%	84%	82%	73%	44%	45%	73%	16%	18%
	Gap	19%	10%	9%	-6%	66%	19%	N/A	34%	-18%
Writing	Aldgate School	100%	94%	93%	56%	86%	64%	N/A	0%	50%
	National	88%	80%	82%	78%	30%	34%	78%	11%	12%
	Gap	12%	14%	11%	-22%	56%	30%	N/A	-11%	38%
Maths	Aldgate School	100%	94%	82%	89%	86%	55%	N/A	50%	50%
	National	87%	81%	74%	79%	40%	42%	79%	15%	16%
	Gap	13%	13%	8%	10%	46%	13%	N/A	35%	34%

Source: Data from the DfE website – analysing school performance

Children with SEND at The Aldgate School

- At Key Stage Two, children with SEN Support achieve well, exceeding national averages since 2021 in Reading, Writing and Maths.
- Where children with EHCPs were admitted for Standard Assessment Tests, children exceeded national averages, and all children with EHCPs exceeded national average in Maths by 34.5% since 2021.

City of London context

Summary of strengths



My London artwork by a City of London young person

What works well



- SEND leadership across the City of London and **partners are committed to securing the best possible outcomes** for children and young people with SEND. Leadership of SEND is embedded in all layers of local strategic organisations through the SEND Programme Board which acts as the Local Area Partnership and is tri-chaired to reflect the education, social care and health partnership. The Board has representation from all local area partners as well as from parents and carers.
- The **SEND Programme Board provides strong governance**, and consistent and focused scrutiny for improving performance and assuring quality, delivering a co-produced [2020-2024 SEND Strategy for children and young people ages 0-25](#) which gives clear strategic direction for work with our children, families and partners. There are also comprehensive strategies, plans and guidance that support the delivery of the main SEND Strategy.
- Our SEND service is characterised by **a responsive, outcomes-based, person-centred approach**; changing needs can be responded to immediately and respond to meet individual needs with the commissioning of bespoke and specific services.
- **Our graduated approach**, known as the City of London SEND Ranges, supported by training, is proving effective in strengthening the identification and response to needs for children and young people with SEND and the quality of referrals to the SEND Panel.
- **A strong multi-agency approach** which brings Children's Social Care and Early Help, Health and Education professionals together, is an effective feature of the local SEND landscape and has a positive effect on the quality of EHCPs. The City Corporation has commissioned independent evaluation and assessments of the quality of our EHCPs.

Summary of strengths

What works well



- **Arrangements for joint commissioning** impact provision positively and produce positive outcomes for children and young people with SEND. With a culture of joint commissioning reflected across the local partnership area of the City of London and Hackney, a broad range of needs are identified including speech and language therapies and autism training. **Leaders use local intelligence well to commission the services that children need and that help them to achieve their aspirations. (SEND Peer Review June 2024).**
- Outcomes for children and young people with SEND include pupils making **good progress towards their aspirations and preparation for adulthood (PfA) outcomes** in line with their special educational needs.
- Outcomes and progression of each young person with an **EHCP are reviewed annually in meetings**, enabling full involvement of the parent, child or young person in order to consider their views, wishes and feelings especially when making decisions.
- **Planned and effective transitions are secured** through the Transition Forum which meets termly to monitor young people with EHCPs aged 14 years and over to facilitate collaboration between Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, Health and other partners.
- The implementation of recommendations of the Local Area for SEND Inspection 2018 – reported to the City Corporation's Safeguarding Sub-Committee – have delivered **a better start and improved outcomes** for children and young people with SEND. Progress is reported to the Safeguarding Sub-Committee where there is a regular focus on SEND.
- **Support for children in the early years** is a considerable strength with a good local offer in place for families in the City of London. There is effective identification of children with additional needs by health visiting services. This enables effective signposting to services, the provision of support, and referrals for assessments where needed.

Summary of strengths

What works well



- **Professionals know children and young people well and place them at the centre of their thinking and actions.** The SEND caseworker knows children extremely well and works well with professionals to make sure that children's plans and support packages reflect their views and aspirations. There is a trusting relationship between families and the service, and any concerns or issues are resolved quickly.
- **The SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinators) Network** includes education settings outside of the City of London that City of London children and young people with EHCPs attend. Also provides SENCOs with a network for discussing issues – including local, regional and national developments - and sharing best practice with the support of City of London Early Years, Primary and Secondary SENCO toolkits and the SEND Ranges.
- **Co-production has been strengthened** by the development of the City Parent Carer Forum (CPCF) which includes parents with children at a mix of educational settings and with a variety of needs. Co-production played a key role in developing the SEND Strategy 2020–2024. A new strategy is currently being developed with the input of parent carers, professionals and children and young people. There are strong relationships and regular engagement with parents and carers who tell us they feel supported. Families with children and young people with SEND are also taking part in the Lord Mayor's Show.
- **Strengthened role for the Designated Medical Officer (DMO) and the Designated Clinical Officer (DCO)** with the DCO attending City of London SEND Panels so that medical information is readily available and there is a direct link for any follow up information.
- **Feedback from the Peer Review** confirmed our assessment of what is working well.

Summary of strengths

Our impact



A drawing by a City of London young resident

Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND



Children and young people's needs are accurately assessed in a timely and effective manner with:

- Emphasis on early identification of needs across the spectrum.
- All early years settings have a named SENCO, supported by the City Corporation's Early Years Lead Adviser.
- The City Corporation's Education and Early Years Service has two designated Early Years Area SENCOs supporting our settings, their staff and parents through observations, meetings and advisory support.
- Level Three SENCO training is offered annually to early years settings by the City Corporation annually.
- Settings are provided with an Early Years SENCO handbook and SEND Range descriptors based on national best practice in determining and describing the needs of children and young people.
- Referrals for support in early years are referred to the City of London SEND Panel.
- Children and young people coming into care are assessed by the Virtual Head Teacher – who collaborates, where SEND needs are identified, with the SEND teams in the authorities in which they are placed to ensure support. SEN officers support the Virtual Head with Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and annual reviews for our corporate children living and being educated outside of the City of London.
- An Inclusion Register held by the Early Years Team supports early identification of children whose development causes concerns; it is linked with attendance data to identify poor attendance among children or young people with SEND and to explore whether attendance may indicate masked SEND issues.

Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND



- At the end of August 2024, there were 24 children on the Attendance Improvement Group List including children known to the Education and Early Years Service, Children's Social Care, Early Help service and the Virtual School. Children with low attendance or not attending school are at risk of not reaching their full potential and therefore a key driver to ensuring that children are safe is ensuring that they are in education. The Group also monitors children who are NEET (aged 16-18) and home-educated children where there are concerns about the suitability of education being delivered.
- Specific, higher-risk cases on the List are reviewed every half term with actions agreed. This provides support and challenge, reduces the possibility of drift and quickly highlights incidents of low school attendance and missing education so that support can be provided.
- A multi-agency professional group led by Homerton Hospital – and including the City Corporation's Early Help and Education and Early Years services - meets weekly at the Hackney Ark Multi Agency Referrals (MARS) session to consider children and young people with SEND needs; interventions include allocation of a keyworker or setting up a team around the child (TAC) meeting.
- The understanding and identification of speech, language and communication skills and needs has been strengthened by the City of London Talks and Listens Enthusiastically ([COLTALE](#)) programme - set up in 2019.
- Health visitors carry out development checks early on to identify potential risks, using Early Language Identification Measure (ELIM) – a tool rolled out alongside Speech and Language Therapy practitioners.

Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND



- A lead social worker for disabled children in Children's Social Care has facilitated joined-up working with Adult Social Care and the Early Years Team in respect of children and young people with EHCPs and transitions into adulthood; the Head of Children's Social Care acts as the Designated Social Care Officer (DCSO) to strengthen engagement across teams.
- Children eligible for NHS continuing care are reviewed at the Joint Complex Care Panel (JCCP) led by the North East London (NEL) ICB with multi-agency membership across health, social care and education. Joint assessments and reviews are undertaken wherever possible and the NEL ICB supports the continuation of care packages in hospital when this supports the needs of the child, family and provider team.
- The needs of high-risk children and young people up to 25-years-old are reviewed monthly through multi-agency discussion of the City and Hackney Dynamic Support Register.
- Robust assessment and annual review processes ensure all EHCPs are issued within the 20-week timescale.
- Annual reviews are undertaken within the statutory timescales and attended by the Casework Manager, the Principle Educational Psychologist and other key partners.
- Children and young people are actively involved in their annual reviews and the PATH process is used for those at key transition points.

Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND



- The City of London SEND Ranges provides a framework for staff in all settings 0-25 to address early identification of needs, provide ideas for curriculum adaptation and set out guidance on assessment and the effective deployment of resources including staff; a training package for professionals and families was piloted in Summer term 2023 at the Aldgate School; the approach has been evaluated in 2024.
- A school tracker has been developed to record the school settings that City of London children attend in other parts of London to secure better information about the children and young people who receive SEN Support.

Independent audit May 2023

Fourteen open SEND cases were selected for independent review in May 2023. The audit noted:

Vulnerabilities associated with SEND are addressed in a timely way with appropriate intervention and allocation of services. Evidence of timely and ongoing communication between social workers and partner agencies is documented in plans, case notes and records of multi-agency/network meetings. The impact of these relationships is evident in the outcomes for children and young people.

There are excellent examples of joined up working with SEN EHC caseworker, Virtual School, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Educational Psychology, Schools and Colleges and Health Professionals. There is strong evidence on children's files and in discussion with allocated workers of their understanding of the professional network and the importance of their role in coordinating services.

Our impact

Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND



- The Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools (WAMHS) Programme aims to improve mental health and wellbeing support for children and young people in schools, colleges, specialist and alternative provision education settings in City and Hackney and provides an allocated CAMHS worker bi-weekly in the Aldgate School.
- WAMHS has engaged the school community including staff and parents, to embed wellbeing initiatives throughout the school culture, and provides an adapted offer available to the independent schools within the City of London boundaries.
- Our [Local Offer](#) provides clear, accessible information about services for parents, children and young people with SEND, and practitioners supporting them - including information on the CPCF, health, short breaks, SEND, EHCPs , personal budgets and Preparing for Adulthood (PfA).
- The Local Offer can be found on the City Corporation's online Family Information Service (FIS) which maintained its quality award for information services in February 2024.
- Free, impartial advice to parents and young people with SEND is provided by the Tower Hamlets and City of London SEND Information Advice and Support Service ([SENDIASS](#)).
- Positive feedback through the Peer Review.

Our impact

Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND



Children and young people participate in decision making about individual plans and support

- A person-centred and multiple agency approach to EHCPs focuses on individual needs and enabling children and young people to make choices.
- A stable and experienced workforce across Education and Early Years, Children's Social Care and Adult Social Care enables children and young people to form and sustain meaningful, consistent and stable relationships with professionals throughout their life course.
- Education, Early Years and Children's Social Care services trained in systemic practice which uses relationships as a resource and empowers people to participate in decision making about their plans and support.

I think that it [EHC needs assessment process] helped me motivate myself to go to the one-to-one tuition and pursue into a career I may be able to do.

I would say nothing [didn't go well] but maybe the fact the distance I would need to travel to come to this place but the teacher is very supportive.

Young person

Our impact

Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND



- City and Tower Hamlets SENDIASS provides impartial information, advice and support for families with SEND through a dedicated worker for the City of London who works collaboratively with families, City Corporation's SEND Team and the SEND Programme Board.
- Targeted events – such as a Year Five transition event and a Let's Talk SEND event - support parents to forward plan and prepare their child for transition and strengthen their understanding of law, practice and what to expect from local authorities.
- Easy read versions of documents, such as the SEND Strategy and forthcoming Preparing for Adulthood brochure, have been produced to make them more accessible to young people.
- Tools such as images and signing support for children and young people to have their voices heard when reviewing short breaks.
- One young person with SEND participated in the local Super Youth Hub (commissioned by Public Health) to train as a young researcher – a role that has also supported their securing part time employment.
- A young person with SEND participates in the City Youth Forum.

Our impact

Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND

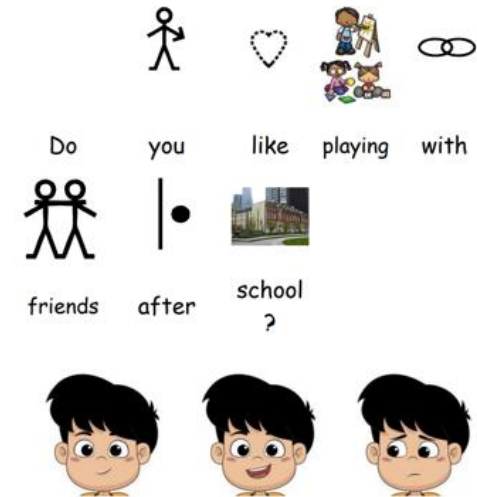
Case study

A young person with an EHCP has transitioned to a creative media college to pursue a career in creative media production. This was a setting they had researched and decided they would like to go to themselves. This has been a successful transition and they have made friends at the college and are enjoying the placement.

With the support of the SEN team, who assisted with a college application, and brought together the young person, their parents, previous school and future college, a successful transition was secured.



Children and young people have their voices heard as part of their short breaks review through images and signing. This child chose pictures to show they like singing, outside, swimming, dancing, football, music, jumping, horses, museums and computers. They do not like loud noises.



Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND



Children and young people receive the right help at the right time

- The City Corporation SEND Panel, which includes professionals from Education, Children's Social Care and Early Help, Adult Social Care and the DCO, confirms provision levels and resourcing for EHCPs, recommendations for additional provision following annual reviews and early years inclusion fund requests.
- The SEND Panel Terms of Reference have been updated to strengthen the focus on more evidenced-based and focused approaches rather than case work discussion and have widen representation to include SENCOs to provide a better balance of practical evidence and advice.
- No City of London children and young people are on the Dynamic Support Register but its review meetings retain representation and space for City children and young people so they can be quickly added.
- Children and Young People with SEND benefit from the local CAMHS alliance, including access to some services without referral to the CAMHS Service.
- Families of children that attend the City of London's children's centre have access to emotional wellbeing and mental health support provided by Family Lives supporting parents with strategies and approaches to support their child.
- All children and young people who are Electively Home Educated (EHE) are known to the Education and Early Years Service and are visited by an education officer at least once a year to assess suitability of education.
- Skilled and co-located staff working across education, early years and social care enables the provision of the right help at the right time.

Our impact

Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND



- Workforce development has included Autism training for all Children's Social Care, Social Work and Early Help staff, along with some Education and Early Years service colleagues, to improve knowledge and skills, and anti-racism training to support the identification of the impact of identifying racism and how it affects the early identification of need in children.
- Children supported through the Early Years Inclusion Fund (which supports settings to meet their responsibilities to provide inclusive practice) are monitored by the SEND Panel to ensure that needs are being best met.
- The Inclusion Fund has enabled one child to have 1:1 support for most of the day, impacting positively on the child's development and attention span.
- A flexible approach to short breaks enables access to neighbouring borough provision or parents can be assisted to identify activities tailored to the needs of their child and use direct payments to access the identified social activity.
- Children and young people have used their short breaks to access music lessons, afterschool programmes, personal trainers, tennis lessons and horseback riding, supporting improved physical and spatial awareness, motor skills and social and communication skills. They also reduce stress and anxiety and support the development of emotional regulation.
- Short breaks enabled one young person who attended swimming lessons to increase their muscular strength and mobility and play table tennis with friends to improve their spatial awareness and motor skills, be social and build communication skills.

Our impact

Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND



- Assessment does not delay provision in relation to urgent need - during the period of assessment, provision can be arranged to ensure a child's educational needs are met; one-to-one tuition has been offered during the assessment stage when children are unable to attend school and while suitable school provision is found.
- Annual review meetings consider the progress a child has made towards the outcomes in the EHCP and whether any changes to their support are required for current or anticipated need – such as school transition.
- City of London children are referred to community and acute services based on their GP registration – either to City and Hackney services, or to Tower Hamlets for families registered in the local authority – and experience the same waiting times as children in those authorities based on assessment of needs.
- Waiting times are not impacting statutory EHCP processes but it is recognised that waiting times for CAMHS and neurodevelopmental assessments do impact on the experience of children, young people and families.
- The NEL ICB has invested additional funding into the 0-5 autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) pathway at the Hackney Ark and in 2023/24 the wait has reduced from around 15 months to around 12 months.
- For the over 5s, pathways waiting times are approximately 14 months (consistent with the national picture).
- There is ongoing work at the City and Hackney Place-Based Partnership and across NEL to strengthen pre-diagnostic support.

Our impact

Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND

Early years case study

The City Corporation's Lead Early Years Advisor worked closely with the nursery SENCO and the parents to support a child. When the child moved from the toddler to pre-school room, it was quickly highlighted that they would need additional support. Inclusion funding was applied for, to cover from Autumn term 2022 to Summer term 2023. The inclusion funding was used to provide 1:1 support for most of the child's days in nursery. Within two terms, the child's development had significantly progressed, and the child could use their voice to make choices about where to sit and which activity to be engaged in.

The child's keyperson, SENCO and parents continued to work together to support the child to develop life skills to prepare them for adulthood; through role play, understanding their world and how to keep safe and be independent. The support in place for the child's language development helped them to be confident in their community, develop friendships and play with their peers.

Early years parent feedback

'Our child's development has come very far. When they joined the nursery they could say less than 10 words. Now they can say sentences and communicate their needs. They have learnt to regularise their emotions and share their feelings with others.'
Parent.

Picture of a City Corporation Early Help worker by a child they have supported.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your support throughout these years - There is a real improvement in [child's] life and we are so appreciative for the effort you put in in order to see that we are okay.

Thank you so much

Quote from a parent to one of the Early Help team.



Our impact

Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND



Aidhour independent audit May 2023

'Vulnerabilities associated with SEND are addressed in a timely way with appropriate intervention and allocation of services. Evidence of timely and ongoing communication between social workers and partner agencies is documented in plans, case notes and records of multi-agency/network meetings. The impact of these relationships is evident in the outcomes for children and young people.'

'Excellent examples of joined up working with SEN EHC caseworker, Virtual School, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Educational Psychology, Schools and Colleges, and Health Professionals. There is strong evidence on children's files and in discussion with allocated workers of their understanding of the professional network and the importance of their role in coordinating services.'

'Examples of excellent practice were noted in many cases. As in previous reviews the relationships that allocated workers develop with children and their families are of high quality, with an emphasis on systemic practice. The review found many excellent examples of the positive impact the support offered to children and their families has had and continues to have. One review noted, 'This is a great piece of intervention with demonstrable outcomes for the child and family. The allocated worker has worked closely with the family and network and co-ordinated services and sensitively encouraged them to accept the help being offered'.'

Our impact

Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND



Children and young people are well prepared for adulthood and achieve strong outcomes

- Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) is a key priority in early years settings, schools, colleges, and work-based training.
- City of London SEND Ranges highlight PfA outcomes from the early years so that all settings 0-25 can plan these across the curriculum at all stages.
- A health commissioned Strategic Partnership Lead for PfA works across City and Hackney, that focuses initially on all health pathway transitions arrangements, leading on the development of a transition strategy for health pathway transition arrangements and co-produced with families and professionals.
- A Transitions Task and Finish Group - including parent carer and young people representation – was set up to agree and strengthen PfA pathways, leading to a transitions information document that was co-produced with the CPCF.
- Adult social care representatives sit on the SEND Programme Board and Transition Forum, and the service contains social worker transitions champion on transitions to enable early planning of transition cases, provides peer support and advice to other social workers when they work with children and young people at the transition stage.
- A commissioned provider of information and guidance for young people known to Children's Social Care and those who have an EHCP or SEN, attends EHCP meetings and works with the SEND team to review the progress and map out individual support plans for the year, tailored to individual needs.

Our impact

Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND



- This service has supported a young person to apply for work in the security industry, and a family to negotiate with an education provider.
- The City Corporation established Employer Forum provides a clear, strategic plan to identify pathways into employment, supported internships and meaningful work experience including voluntary work for young people with SEND.
- The Employer Forum aims to increase the number of supported internship provision and employer champions across the City of London and Greater London areas, and by April 2023 had seven employers committed to being part of the supported internship programme.
- The City Corporation offers two supported internships and hosted [an event](#) in December 2023 to promote supported internships and discuss what employers can offer adults with SEND.

Parent carer feedback at end of an education key stage:

What do you feel has gone well? Early discussions about transition.

What do you feel hasn't gone well? Nothing specific has not gone well.

Our impact

Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND



Case study

A 12-year-old with physical and complex needs has been carefully supported with their transition to a secondary school provision. The young person has attended transition days at the new school and been visited by school staff. School staff attended the EHC transition review meeting. The family is well supported by professionals from education, health and social care and has been involved in the young person's transition planning. The young person's EHCP has been updated to provide an accurate picture for the new school and the Education and Early Years Service has agreed to provide a personal budget to use for taxis to and from school. The young person will be starting at the secondary provision in September and the family feel positive about this transition. The dad shared he has valued the good and consistent support from the school and SEND Team.

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Our impact

Experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND



Aidhour independent audit May 2023 (Children's Social Care)

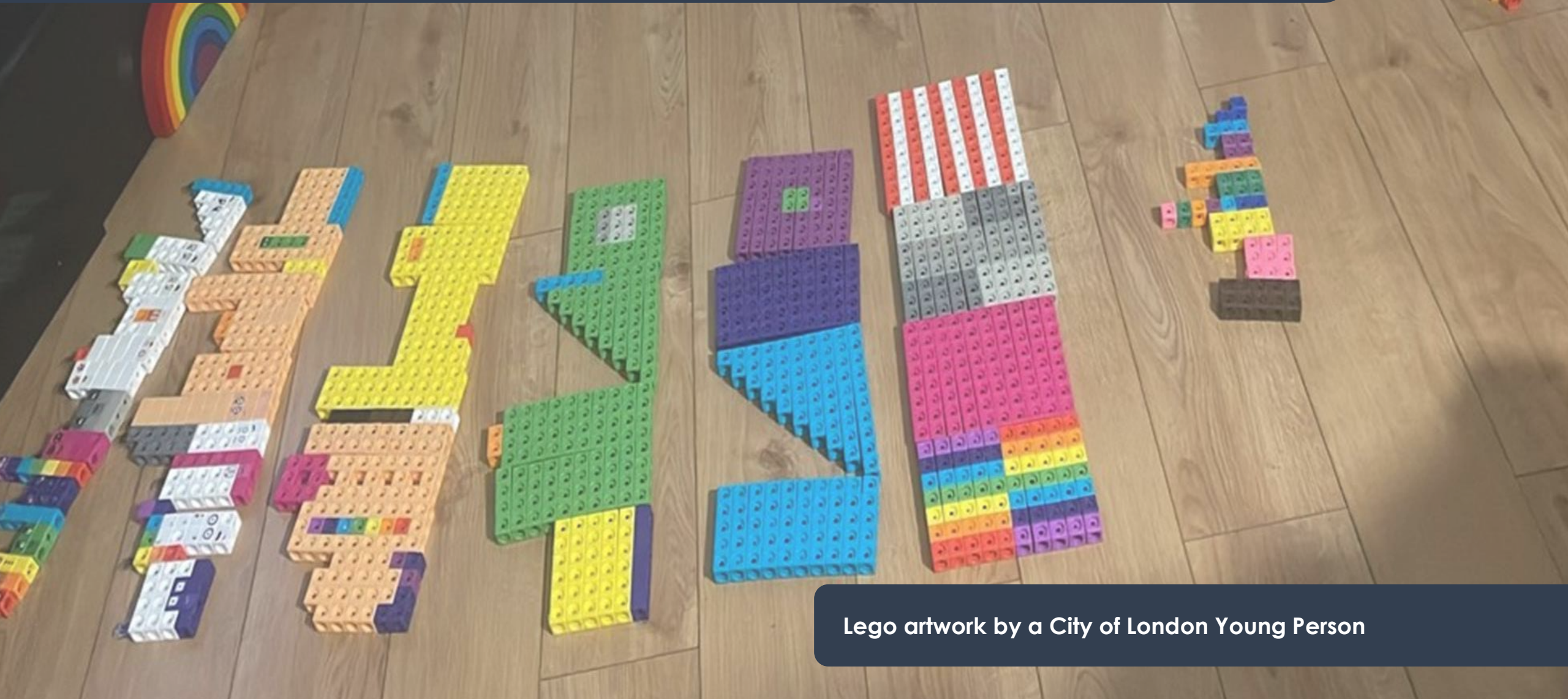
EHCPs are of high quality and for the most part are easily located on files. Timescales for specialist assessments are well documented and where services are not accessible pending the outcome of the assessment there is excellent evidence of children's social care seeking out alternative provision.

Children and young people are valued, visible and included in their communities

- Children and young people's educational outcomes are celebrated.
- A Pan-London Shining Star award was given for exceptional progress and excellent attendance to a child in care who has an EHCP and is in a residential placement. A personal ceremony was arranged for them so that their routine was not disrupted.
- Children, young people and their families have been involved in recruitment exercises – most recently the CPCF has been involved in the recruitment process for senior staff in the Education and Early Years Service.

Our impact

The impact of leaders and local partners



Lego artwork by a City of London Young Person

How local partners work together to plan, evaluate and develop the SEND system



Leaders are ambitious for children and young people with SEND

- A golden thread sets out strong strategic ambitions for children and young people with SEND and their families across the local partnership and system to ensure:
 - there is 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
- The SEND Strategy links ambitions in the City Corporation's Children and Young People's Plan 2022-25 which sets out the City Corporation's vision and expected outcomes for all children and young people, including that children can meet their full potential and are ready for adulthood.
- The City Corporation's Corporate Plan includes the objective to provide 'excellent services supporting people to live healthy, independent lives and achieve their ambitions'.
- The NEL Integrated Care System priorities include 'the best start in life for babies, children and young people of North East London' and includes specific objectives around 'supporting our children and families with SEND through strengthening safeguarding, addressing workforce challenges and supporting data capture' and 'extending our services for autistic children and young people including the introduction of a new keyworker scheme'.
- At a local place level, the City and Hackney Placed Based Partnership sets out a priority to give every child the best start in life, accompanied by a transformation programme focused on children, young people, maternity and family services (CYPMFS).

The impact of leaders and local partners

How local partners work together to plan, evaluate and develop the SEND system



- A City and Hackney Emotional Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board delivers a system response to increasing Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) demand and provide oversight and scrutiny of the shared commitment to provide help at the point of need.
- A CAMHS Crisis Summit and Autism Summit have shaped our partnership's focus on the integration of neurodevelopmental pathways across providers to improve efficiencies and a Single Point of Access (SPA) to City and Hackney CAMHS services since November 2022 – an initiative welcomed by schools who have experienced shorter times from referral to allocation.

Feedback on partnership working

'Having worked with colleagues from the City of London and from feedback given by parents, we would agree that the City of London uses a multi-agency approach and works well with other departments, agencies, and organisations to ensure that the outcomes are met for children and young people with SEND. They have demonstrated this commitment through working collaboratively on cases where children and young people have EHCPs as well as those on SEN Support. They have been able to bring together colleagues from education, health, and social care as well as voluntary organisations to support young people to improve outcomes. They use a positive outcomes approach and are able to identify and set achievable targets.'

Tower Hamlets SENDIASS Family Partnership Officer.

The impact of leaders and local partners

How local partners work together to plan, evaluate and develop the SEND system



Leadership and governance are effective because leaders' responsibilities are aligned with their legal duties and there is strong oversight at various levels.

- An effective SEND Programme Board brings together partners from health, education, Children's and Adults Social Care, SENCOs, and the CPCF, and makes decisions about our statutory responsibilities.
- The City Corporation's Achieving Excellence Board (AEB) was established in 2020 to drive the transition to and sustain excellence across services for children including SEND.
- Elected member oversight is provided by a lead member as SEND champion and oversight by the Safeguarding Sub-Committee (of Community and Children's Services), the Health and Wellbeing Board, and Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee.
- The City and Hackney Health and Care Board brings together the executives of health and social care providers at place level, to provide strategic direction and ambition.

The impact of leaders and local partners

How local partners work together to plan, evaluate and develop the SEND system



Leaders actively engage with children, young people and their families

- City Corporation staff and relevant health organisations actively engage with the CPCF and bring together parents and carers of children and young people with SEND in the City of London.
- The CPCF has been involved in a range of work including the SEND Ranges and associated training, the local leisure centre programme and development of the SEND Programme Board.
- City Corporation staff and senior leaders met the CPCF to hear directly from parent carers and a “you said, we did” approach has been developed to provide transparency and accountability around decisions and actions in response to their feedback.
- A City young person with SEND was appointed as a young researcher within the Super Youth Hub (a service across City and Hackney to promote the health and well-being of young people) to collect and develop the understanding of young people’s views around health, well-being, mental health, alcohol and drug use and sexual health.
- CPCF influenced planning officers to create an inclusive play area at the St Paul's Gyrotory development.
- Children, young people and their families co-produce the SEND and AP Strategy.
- Young people produced a film – [What Makes Me Happy](#) was introduced by and involved the elected Member with responsibility for children and young people.
- A five-year City and Hackney Autism Strategy was published in 2020 and was co-produced with local residents.
- The SEND Programme Board enables better sharing of ideas, development of practical solutions and improved communication.

The impact of leaders and local partners

How local partners work together to plan, evaluate and develop the SEND system



- Parent carers were involved in the development of the City Corporation's new Carers Strategy 2024-27 strengthening the reflection and ambition for that group's needs.
- The Children's Social Care Team has reviewed and co-produced a standalone parent carer assessment in response to a parent carer request. This focuses solely on the parent carer's needs.
- The Local Offer was reviewed with families, young people, and partners in 2021, and redesigned to reflect parents' request that information was accessible by both age range and by information area.
- Resident engagement and co-production is central to the Local Area Partnership, but the small population of the City risks overburdening residents with engagement requests.

Leaders have accurate, shared understanding of needs

- A SEND data dashboard is reviewed quarterly at the SEND Programme Board meetings to provide line of sight and inform decision making and strategic priorities.
- Previous Public Health Needs Assessments (HNAs) include a Disabled Children's Needs Assessment (2017) and a 0-19 year old assessment which includes a chapter on SEND to strengthen insight and understanding of the health and wellbeing needs of children and young people with SEND; a new HNA is being undertaken.
- Health assessment data (e.g. timescales) has been more difficult to secure but is now coming through, and the Local Area Partnership will continue to work together to improve this.

The impact of leaders and local partners

How local partners work together to plan, evaluate and develop the SEND system



Leaders commission services and provision to meet the needs and aspirations of children and young people

- The NEL ICB commissions statutory services, such as therapies for City of London children, augmented by the commissioning of City and Hackney Public Health of health visiting and school nursing service.
- There is continued focus on hearing the voices of children, young people and families to ensure services meet local needs.
- A review of the Speech and Language Therapy Service is underway to rationalise the approach to commissioning, and to strategically rebalance the service to offer more early intervention support and less need for specialist support.
- Verbo, a digital platform developed by Homerton Hospital to strengthen universal screening and intervention with recorded targets and outcomes, is being piloted in the Aldgate School.
- Wellbeing and Mental Health Support in Schools (WAMHS) is well embedded within the Aldgate School and again supports a whole school approach.
- The Director of Integrated Commissioning has the mandate to ensure all statutory responsibilities across education, health and social care are reflected in system commissioning plans.

The impact of leaders and local partners

How local partners work together to plan, evaluate and develop the SEND system



Leaders commission services and provision to meet the needs and aspirations of children and young people

- Commissioned provision by the City Corporation strengthens our approach and can respond swiftly to need; includes spot purchase of alternative provision, SEND mediation, educational psychologists, home to school transport and independent travel training.
- The London Borough of Tower Hamlets is commissioned to provide youth justice services in the City of London. In September 2024, the Tower Hamlets/City of London Local Area Partnership was awarded the Youth Justice SEND Awards Quality Lead with Child First Accommodation issued by Microlink and the Association of Youth Offending Team Managers. The quality mark reflects effective SEND practice in the youth justice system.
- The commission of universal services – such as youth services, have a requirement to deliver SEND inclusion.
- There are low levels of alternative provision use for City of London children and young people.
- Children and young people are only placed in alternative provision that is Ofsted rated good or outstanding.



The impact of leaders and local partners

How local partners work together to plan, evaluate and develop the SEND system



- Commissioned contract arrangements are in place for tuition services which can be accessed in situations and circumstances where tuition is an interim provision.
- Homerton Hospital is commissioned to deliver a range of services including effective speech and language therapies which during 2022-23 delivered nine specialist interventions at the Aldgate School resulting in 78% of targets fully met and 22% partially met.

Leaders evaluate services and make improvements

- In August 2022, the Education and Early Years Service commissioned the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) to review the City Corporation's EHCPs. The work identified improvements secured since the SEND Area Inspection in 2018.
- Colleagues across education, health, social care and early help have ensured a more consistent use of PATH and worked to ensure that the language in EHCPs is more "ordinary", the outcomes (particularly around friendships) are more specific and that the EHCPs are even more accessible to young people and parents.
- Children, young people and families with an open case in Children's Social Care (including those with an EHCP open to Early Help or Children in Need) are surveyed annually by Action for Children.
- The City Corporation commissioned an external consultant to review SEN provision at the Aldgate School, supported by the City Corporation's Principle Educational Psychologist and the Lead Early Years Advisor. This raised the profile of SEND and increased the Governor for SEND's awareness of the issues and quality of provision, and secured the Trust Board's agreement that SEND was a key area for development.

The impact of leaders and local partners

How local partners work together to plan, evaluate and develop the SEND system



Action for Children survey August 2023

Overall, the majority of responses (66%) indicate a good or very good satisfaction level with the social work support they receive – an improvement on 2022 when 46.3% expressed dissatisfaction. They describe staff as considerate, attentive and calm. They feel listened to and have regular, proactive contact/visits.

Most of the families interviewed have children with disabilities and/or SEN. They gave examples of positive input (e.g. provision of disability aids and equipment for the home, effective care packages and after-school activities, excellent therapeutic placement). One participant said 'my last social worker had a disabled child herself. She understood' and another shared that 'we now have an EHCP, we have direction.'

Families also raised issues including 'monthly payments are a great source of worry' and 'we always go on waiting lists'. They shared concerns around complex multi-agency involvement and accessing appropriate medical, mental health, educational and recreational services.

Families in this cohort shared suggestions for improvements and further advice/support including clearer explanations as to entitlements and rights, and how to access services, greater support around housing needs, and financial advice and support.

A 'You Said, We Did' document is being developed to capture feedback and track what was done, or not, in response to aid transparency and provide a clear feedback loop. This will appear on the Local Offer.

The impact of leaders and local partners

How local partners work together to plan, evaluate and develop the SEND system



Leaders create the environment for effective practice and multi-agency work to flourish

- There is effective joint working between the Education and Early Years Service and Children's Social Care, with both the Children's Social Care and Early Help Team Manager attending SEND Panel meetings, EHCP review meetings and staff from the education service attending children in need (CIN) meetings and TAF (Team around the Family) meetings when required.
- A lead role for children who are disabled in social care strengthens links and shared learning and meet twice yearly with the CPCF, together ensuring children who are disabled have social workers who understand their needs and support their transition to adulthood.
- A multi-agency practitioner forum develops effective strategies to support families, children and young people.
- The development of an integrated outcomes framework for children and young people's services has begun through the City and Hackney Place-Based Partnership, and the integrated Population Health Hub (Public Health).
- The Place-Based Partnership is working with the ICB to contribute to the development of a SEND dashboard for London, informing the priorities in place.
- No City of London child or young person with SEND is involved with the youth justice service, but positive relationships are in place with the provider - Tower Hamlets Service - to enable support to be activated should it be required.

The impact of leaders and local partners

Areas for development



My London artwork by a City of London Young Person

Priority areas for development



The areas for development identified following the SEND Peer Review will be addressed through an Area Action Plan.

Co-production

- Continue to strengthen communication with families around access to services and pathways across borough boundaries.
- Review the Local Offer with the CPCF and respond to learning from the Peer Review.
- Implement findings from audits about strengthening the voice of the child, building on the work of Inclusive Solutions during the person-centred planning process, annual review activity and film production.
- Fully involve families in the co-production and development of the SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) Strategy 2025-2029. Project plan signed off by Departmental Leadership Team following consultation with key stakeholders.
- Strengthen our co-production including working more closely with the CPCF and exploring innovative ways of engaging more children, young people and their families. Develop a new approach to reward and recognition for co-production as exemplified by our SEND and AP strategy 2025-2029 activity.

Areas for development

Priority areas for development



Preparing for adulthood

- Further strengthen pathways to internships, apprenticeships and employment by promoting the opportunities acquired as an option for eligible young people. Seven supported internship vacancies have been sourced as available for eligible City young people.
- Case file audits of any young people transitioning to Adult Social Care will be undertaken annually as part of a programme of case file audits led by the Principle Social Worker for Adults, building on the existing Transition Forum arrangements.
- Further develop the pathway plan for 15 3/4 to 25-year-olds with complex disabilities which brings partners together to set goals in every aspect of a young person's life, as this will be a new area for care leavers as the cohort ages.

Identifying children on SEN Support

- Further embed the school tracker and develop this to request data on children and young people who have been placed in alternative provision by their schools. Currently we know that our resident children attend 66 schools across greater London and receive data from those schools.
- School attendance for children with SEND is available to the SEND Programme Board for scrutiny through the dashboard.
- Maintain an overview of the quality of education for children and young people who are in settings outside area boundaries, particularly those on SEN Support through the lens of attendance. Ofsted status of schools educating children with EHCPs is reported to SEND Programme Board.

Summary of areas for development

Priority areas for development



Area development work

- Health partners are leading on a review of the primary care offer of annual learning disabilities health checks to ensure that those entitled to one receive it and access the services and support offered within health services, building on the existing offer for quality assurance purposes.
- Accelerate plans for the development of a Neighbourhood health model so that children and young people with SEND can access the health services they need in their local area.
- Consider options to develop the cross-border commissioning of services to improve the SEND Local Offer, and particularly to increase the local availability of health services and specialist school places.
- Ensure the SEND Health Needs Assessment adequately reflects City of London needs through disaggregated data feed for City of London residents, recently made available in part.
- Strengthen City of London specific data from health services including agreeing a strategic approach to data collection of specified vulnerable cohorts in the City of London, through disaggregated data feed for City of London residents, recently made available in part.
- Continue to ensure SEND is high on the political agenda by working closely with the SEND Member champion to ensure children, young people and families continue to influence the political environment.
- Respond to a local review of the children's centre model to support children, young people and families up to the age of 19 (or 25 for young people with SEND). Existing services continue to be fully available.

Summary of areas for development

Priority areas for development



Quality assurance

- Develop a multi-agency quality assurance framework for SEND that can be used by partners. A more formal quality assurance process would be of benefit for the EHC assessment, planning and review process.
- Develop a quality assurance framework for alternative provision to strengthen existing bespoke spot purchased arrangements.
- Drive our ambition to further develop local systems to enable more joint commissioning for children and young people with SEND.
- To continue the evaluation of our EHCPs by the National Development Team for Inclusion
- To build on the external evaluation of our SEND Ranges (graduated response) work.

SEND Ranges

- Further disseminate the City of London SEND Ranges in schools and early years settings to build upon their introduction and welcomed receipt, including hearing Partnership feedback and producing a parent-friendly version and in translations into community languages.

Summary of areas for development