



DRAFT SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy 2025-29

You said, we did

September 2024

Various engagement activities with parent carers, children and young people with special educational needs (SEND) and professionals took place to inform the development of the City of London Local Area Partnership's SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy and Action Plan. A public consultation was also held on the draft strategy and 'easy read' version.

The City of London Local Area Partnership values and appreciates the time and expertise that parent carers, children and young people with SEND and professionals gave to this and recognises that it is important to provide feedback not only where we have taken forward ideas but also where we haven't.

This document summarises key themes from feedback in a 'you said, we did' format; where 'you' relates to parent carers, children and young people with SEND and professionals, and 'we' relates to the Local Area Partnership.

We hope that families and professionals in the City of London recognise their feedback and insight in the below, however, if not please email Hannah Dobbin, Strategy and Projects Officer – hannah.dobbin@cityoflondon.gov.uk – who can have a look and provide a response for you.

You said (Parent carers, children and young people with SEND or professionals)	We did (the Local Area Partnership)	Lead
Support for families		
There needs to be more accessible information about support and activities available for children and young people with SEND as families and professionals don't always know what is available.	A priority within the Strategy is that children and young people with SEND and their families get the right help at the right time. Within this, there is an action to strengthen the information, advice and support offer for families, including reviewing the Local Offer in partnership with the City Parent Carer Forum. Professionals can also access the Local Offer. We also recognise that the Early Help Manager is also in a position to share information about short breaks.	Family Information Service and City Parent Carer Forum
There need to be more accessible and inclusive activities, such as a summer holiday programme, for children and young people with SEND in the City of London.	A priority within the strategy is that children and young people with SEND and their families feel recognised, valued and part of their local community. Within this, there is an action to review the inclusiveness of existing universal services and where appropriate work with the providers to strengthen specific offers. The review will also consider what the barriers are to accessing services, e.g. location and transport. Where there are gaps identified, work with providers or the voluntary and community sector to explore how these can be met.	Strategy and Performance team
There needs to be assurance that there is equity for all children and young people with SEND, including those from global majority communities, in having their needs identified and met at the earliest opportunity.	A priority within the Strategy is that children and young people with SEND and their families get the right help at the right time. Within this there is an action to continue to identify children and young people's needs early and providing the right support ensuring equity across different communities.	SEND and Early Years teams

You said (Parent carers, children and young people with SEND or professionals)	We did (the Local Area Partnership)	Lead
<p>There needs to be greater consideration to parent carers' own needs or journeys that may require support.</p> <p>It was also noted that parent carers want safe spaces to be able to provide peer support.</p>	<p>We heard this from both parent carers and professionals. Working with parent carers to identify and respond to their needs is threaded through out the strategy and actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the support offer for families is co-designed with children, young people and their families • work with parent carers to review and develop the emotional wellbeing support needed • co-design the support offer for parent carers to better reflect and meet parent carers' needs during key transitions 	<p>Local Area Partnership</p>
<p>There needs to be consideration given to prioritising City residents to attend spaces in the City that have been identified to be used for things like therapies.</p> <p>It was noted that the provision of some health services within City boundaries is more limited and families have to travel.</p>	<p>City Corporation and Health colleagues have started to talk about whether there are options for providing services as close to home as possible.</p>	<p>Strategy and Performance team and Health</p>
<p>Mental health and emotional wellbeing</p>		
<p>There needs to be more to support parent carers mental health and emotional wellbeing.</p>	<p>A priority within the strategy is that children and young people with SEND and their families get the right help, at the right time. The needs of parent carers is reflected within this including an action to work with parent carers to review and develop the emotional wellbeing offer for them, this will include considering options for peer support.</p>	<p>Strategy and Performance team</p>

You said (Parent carers, children and young people with SEND or professionals)	We did (the Local Area Partnership)	Lead
Workforce development		
<p>There needs to be more support to help educational establishments better understand SEND and strengthen support to children and young people with SEND and their parent carers.</p>	<p>A priority in the strategy is around a skilled and valued workforce. Within this, there is an action to work in partnership with schools that City of London children attend and City of London early years settings to strengthen support and signposting around SEND. Another action is to deliver SEND Ranges training and expand implementation which will help professionals to identify and respond to the needs of children and young people with SEND.</p> <p>There is also the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinators (SENDSCO Network) which is open to SENDSCOs from any educational setting a City of London child attends, including secondary schools. This aims to share skills, knowledge and good practice.</p>	<p>Education and Early Years team</p>
<p>There needs to be further consideration given to embedding neurodiversity awareness within the City Corporation's wider workforce, policies and practice.</p>	<p>Within the skilled, valued workforce priority, there is an action to develop a plan to raise awareness of SEND within the wider workforce (including those who don't work directly with families). Increasing awareness and understanding will inform policies and practice.</p>	<p>Strategy and Performance team</p>

You said (Parent carers, children and young people with SEND or professionals)	We did (the Local Area Partnership)	Lead
Greater SEND presence across City of London communities and City Corporation activities		
<p>There is a need for a greater SEND presence in wider City Corporation and City of London initiatives and activities.</p> <p>It was also noted that there needs to be better use of City Corporation physical assets and spaces to support this.</p>	<p>A priority has been included around children and young people with SEND and their families feeling recognised, valued and part of their local community. Actions within this will contribute to raising the profile of SEND.</p>	<p>Strategy and Performance team</p>
Other feedback		
<p>There needs to be further thought given to the role of the City Corporation's social value procurement commitment in raising awareness and creating change around SEND.</p>	<p>Social value is currently considered on a project by project basis as part of the City Corporation's Responsible Procurement Commitments. Further consideration will go to how this can act as a lever for positive change around SEND.</p>	<p>Commissioning team</p>
<p>There is a need to quality assure all provision, including alternative provision which is highlighted in the strategy.</p>	<p>Quality assurance is built into City Corporation commissioned services for children and young people with SEND. The priority on high-quality, appropriate alternative provision includes an action on embedding the quality assurance framework for alternative provision.</p>	<p>Commissioning and Education and Early Years teams</p>