



The City of London Corporation Local

Reforms in the City of London

Area SEF Summary: The SEND

Our Local Area vision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is that the City of London (the City) is a place where children and young people with special educational needs, disabilities, mental health conditions or other long-term medical conditions can thrive and experience a smooth progression into adulthood. We want our children and young people to be confident that they are highly valued, equal to all of their peers, and have high expectations for their futures.

Our SEND strategy includes six priorities that represent a cycle of support. These priorities are:

1. Identifying needs early
2. Effectively meeting needs
3. Protecting children from harm and supporting independence
4. Coproduction and participation
5. Creating smooth transitions between stages and services
6. Improving outcomes and creating area-wide impact

Areas where we are making the most progress

We have a clear strategic direction that is well understood

The City Corporation has a strong and clear vision for what needs to change and is driving that forward at pace. Leaders have consistently shown a high level of commitment and a sense of urgency towards improving services and outcomes for children and young people with SEN and/or disabilities. Elected members are well informed and offer a good level of challenge. There are clear policies in place that include a high level of ambition for City children and young people. There is good understanding of strengths across the local area and plans are underway further to develop service impact and reach. Key managers from education, health and social care coproduce strategies and work

in partnership on strategic decision-making groups. Sound governance structures underpin the SEND strategy, and action plan workstreams are beginning to have impact on provision and participation. The City is a small authority with relatively few children and young people; however, a wide range of services are commissioned so that pathways and support systems are in place for most eventualities.

A priority is to continue to drive a high level of ambition for excellent outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families within all Corporation and partners' systems and structures. (StrAP - Priority 3)

Sound governance structures have been developed and successfully implemented

The overall governance is clear with the Grand Committee, chaired by a Lead Member, having the overarching strategic overview. The accountability structure under the Grand Committee ensures senior leadership oversight via the Children's Executive Board which has achievement, Early Help and SEND as standing agenda items. Members are also kept up to date regularly through the Safeguarding Sub Committee and annually via the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee. The SEND Programme Board (chaired by the Assistant Director with responsibility for children and adult services, co-chaired by a representative from the CCG, and with a parent carer as vice-chair) is an effective forum that brings together all agencies and interested groups. In addition, the Health and Well-being Board maintains an oversight of children and young people with SEND as a significant vulnerable group as identified through the JSNA. This structure means that there is a high level of accountability throughout the local area with outcomes for children and young people with SEND a major priority.

Priorities are:

- ***to increase the level of challenge in the SEND Programme Board about outcomes and impact for children and young people with SEND rather than focusing on processes and actions.***
- ***to increase the participation of children, young people and families in co-production at a strategic level so that their voices are integral and impact on the specification, quality and delivery of services. (StrAP -Priority 1)***

Identification and assessment for children and young people is good because of effective multi-agency working.

The City Corporation proactively collects information from early years providers and the Sir John Cass Foundation primary school on the number of children who receive SEN Support. Information on pupils with SEND is also sought from independent schools, secondary schools and colleges in other boroughs where City-resident children and young people are educated. Good communication between City and Hackney CCG, Tower Hamlets CCG and the Education and Early Years' Service means that any needs identified through the Health Visitor progress checks are followed up and children are carefully monitored as they move through early years into school and so provision is made available in a timely manner. Early Help Services regularly bring together professionals from all agencies to develop effective strategies to support families, children and young people.

A priority is to improve communication with Tower Hamlets health visitors so that the consistency and impact of 2-year progress checks for families with a Tower Hamlets GP can be monitored and the information from the checks used more effectively to identify children's additional needs. (SAP – Priority 2)

Progress and attainment for children and young people with SEND in the City are better than national

The majority of children and young people with SEND resident in the City of London are educated in good or outstanding early years settings and schools, supported by the highly personalised SEN provision they receive. There is only one maintained school located within the City, Sir John Cass Foundation Primary School, and no secondary or special schools. Educational test results for children receiving SEN Support attending Sir John Cass and those with EHCPs, are better than national. Attainment gaps between pupils at SEN Support and those without are narrow. Results for 2017 show that in Key Stage 2, achievement at the expected standard in all subjects is 27% above the national average. At Key Stage 1 the results are above national average. Children and young people with SEND and their families have access to a wide range of social and cultural activities within the City and in neighbouring boroughs and this contributes to good outcomes.

The needs of children and young people who are in public care are well understood and the Virtual Headteacher is able to access support services (e.g. educational psychology) as soon as necessary and any identification of SEND or 'under attainment' triggers additional tuition support.

A priority is to develop closer relationships, including data sharing protocols, with the early years settings, schools and colleges outside the City and in the independent sector where children and young people with SEND who are resident in the City are educated so that we can evaluate outcomes for these pupils and more closely match services to their needs and aspirations. (SAP – Priority 2)

Statutory timescales are met and all statements have been transferred to Education, Health and Care Plans

Timescales are being met with regard to transfer of statements to EHCPs and in the production of new EHCPs. All transfers are complete. Due to the small numbers involved, children and families receive a highly personalised approach and senior officers know the children and young people well. Care is taken to ensure appropriate regard is paid to the wishes and aspirations of children, young people and their parent carers. There has been strong engagement with parent carers to transfer statements to EHC Plans and to develop each plan. This personalised approach extends into transition arrangements and young people eligible for adult social care are well known and well planned for. Recommendations from a recent independent review of EHC plans (November 2017) are being implemented as each plan is reviewed, with outcomes being more linked to children's aspirations, made 'smarter' and the overall quality improved.

A priority is to identify or develop a tool with which to evaluate/measure outcomes from EHC plans to link to and inform joint commissioning of services and the monitoring of contracts. (SAP – Priority 2)

Joint Commissioning arrangements have set firm foundations for achieving good outcomes.

The Commissioning Team is embedded in the work of Children's Services with a strong focus on outcomes for children and young people

with SEND. Pathways and access to services are well understood so that children and young people do not have to wait long for provision to be put in place. The City has excellent relationships and partnerships with City and Hackney CCG to underpin joint working and commissioning. A core specification has been developed ensuring that all services commissioned/ recommissioned are able to demonstrate inclusive practice. Pathways have been agreed so that City of London resident children at Sir John Cass primary are referred to City and Hackney health services, even where the family is registered with a Tower Hamlets GP. This ensures equity and consistency of service for all children and their families. There are a number of examples in the local area of effective integrated commissioning, such as those outlined in the Children, Young People and Maternity workstream and the well-developed plans for aligning budgets across the local area are a sound foundation on which to build effective joint commissioning for SEND.

Priorities are:

To move from 'integrated' to 'joint' commissioning for SEND, building on the existing plans for aligned budgets with health.

To ensure commissioning arrangements reflect and meet the needs of City of London children and young people with SEND and, to ensure clear pathways for City of London children and young people with SEND who are registered with Tower Hamlets GPs.

(StrAP - Priority 2)

Social Care provides high quality support and encourages families to be self-sustaining and access resources within the community.

Teams across education, health and social care know their children and young people and their families well. Joint working takes place when children and young people with SEND are also known to Social Care. If any child or young person with an EHCP is eligible for a short break, this is linked to the appropriate outcome in their plan. Adult Social Care and Health work closely with Children's Social Care and family from the age of 14 to support seamless transitions into adult services. An Early Help Toolkit has been developed that includes a 'distance travelled' tool to capture the impact of interventions. All recently commissioned youth and play services support children and young people with SEND to access their community.

A priority is to increase education, health and Early Help joint working through the multi-agency referral process in order to create more effective pathways and services for children and young people with SEND. (SAP – Priority 1)

The City of London SEND Local Offer is becoming established as the one place for up to date information about provision and how to access it.

The SEND Local Offer is a key tool for supporting and communicating information so that parents can find the information they need to access services and understand processes. "Communitas" was commissioned to engage parents to develop the local offer further and, based on this consultation, a more accessible and user-friendly version was launched at the end of October 2017.

Priorities for the local offer are:

- ***to promote the redesigned local offer to key target audiences through a range of communication channels. (StrAP – Priority 3)***

- ***to develop more direct information about online safety, and add information about housing options and independent living in the secondary and young adults pages.***

The Local Area system for Early Years and childcare is working effectively for families

The local authority Education and Early Years Team has built strong relationships with early years settings and provides effective support and challenge to improve provision and outcomes for children with SEND. Practitioners and settings are clear about the identification process and the graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review. Public Health services are performing well e.g. for vulnerable families, health visitors make two visits additional to the mandatory five and 100% of mothers are still breastfeeding at six weeks because of this good support. The Family and Young People Information (FYI) Service and Local Offer set out clearly what support is available from different targeted and specialist services for early years and how support can be accessed. Advice, guidance and training for early years providers is established, ensuring that children with SEND are supported by inclusive practice in early years and childcare settings. Children's centre activity is delivered across a number of sites but is not yet effectively coordinated so as to meet strategic priorities and will be subject to a full review in 2018.

A priority is to develop a systematic, comprehensive Children's Centre offer. (SAP – Priority 1)

Areas where we are making less progress

The engagement of parent carers of children on SEN Support and the engagement and participation of young people

Feedback from parent carers of children and young people with EHC Plans shows a high level of satisfaction and engagement. Engagement with parents and carers has recently been strengthened through parents being represented, including as vice-chair, on the SEND Programme Board. We have commissioned Contact and the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) to support parents to set up a more formal Parent Carer Forum which more effectively represents their views, including those parents with children receiving SEN Support but who do not have an EHC plan. The City of London forum is now established and members are working with the local area to improve services and outcomes for all children and young people with SEND. The engagement and participation of young people is at an early stage of development, but is seen as a vital and urgent initiative if strategic and service developments are to be effective. An officer has been commissioned to lead on coproduction and advice and support has been sought from KIDS as part of the Making Participation Work project.

A priority is to improve the engagement and participation of young people with SEND. (SAP – Priority 1)

The consistent use of data to evaluate and drive outcomes

A SEND dataset has been developed that monitors changes in cohorts of children and young people with SEND. The dataset is updated before and discussed at each SEND Programme Board. However, there is limited use made of the information in the JSNA and that comes from the Health and Well-being Board. This is because previous JSNA data was reported across Hackney and the City, making specific City data difficult to disaggregate. However, the most recent JSNA includes greater detail about SEND in the City and so provides a sound basis on which to base judgements and service developments. Work to use the Local Offer or the outcomes and provision in EHC plans to identify gaps in services and to inform SEND commissioning is at an early stage. While teams across education, health and social care are far more aware of the need to evaluate their interventions, impact on outcomes is not routinely measured making effectiveness and value for money difficult to determine.

A priority is to develop an effective system to evaluate outcomes that will inform our commissioning and strategic planning, oversight and scrutiny. (StrAP – Priority 1)

Personal Budgets linked to Education, Health and Care plans

City and Hackney CCG has offered personal health budgets to all children with continuing care packages for several years – but there have been no City children in this cohort, however the offer is there as and when needed. However, the development of personal budgets for EHC provision is at an early stage. Discussions are underway across the local area to agree protocols, including integrated and pooled budgets, to underpin a successful personal budgets programme. Currently, no families have taken up the option of a personal budget to cover elements of the provision in their children's EHC plans, other than direct payments for short breaks. A personal health budget is available for children and young people with EHC plans but no mechanisms are yet in place as none have been requested.

Priorities are to improve coordination of personal budgets across agencies, and to develop the market of services from the public, charity and commercial sectors to offer parents greater choice and control over delivery of provision in EHC plans.

Short breaks

Due to its small resident population, the City of London does not currently commission its own specialist Short Breaks providers but has arrangements with both Hackney and Tower Hamlets that enable access to a range of service provision. The SEND local offer includes a number of activities within the City and in neighbouring boroughs but not all are accessible for children and young people with more complex needs nor is the overall leisure offer directly informed by children and young people with SEND and their families. Parents have asked for more short breaks and accessible leisure provision to be developed with the City itself, which would offer children and young people and their families greater social opportunities within their community.

A priority is to work with families, City organisations and/or charities to develop new short breaks and social and learning opportunities for children and young people with SEND, particularly young people in the 14-25 age group. (SAP – Priority 4)

Preparing children and young people for adulthood from the earliest years

Pathways and opportunities to prepare children and young people for adulthood have yet to be fully developed. Young People's views are sought on their experiences and their involvement in identifying their own needs, but these are not currently collated and analysed. Consideration is being given as to how young people with complex needs can access social activities in their community and with growing independence. This will include support during holiday periods for children and young people to practice independence skills in the community to support long term inclusion and to embed skills being taught in schools and colleges. There is some supported housing provision available for young people with learning disabilities who are resident in the City, which offers them the opportunity to live independently. However, information about this provision is not available in the Local Offer and so young people and their families may not be aware of the provision or eligibility criteria.

A priority is to put broad scope plans into place for Post 16 and Post 19 progressions and exit pathways so that when children and young people are transitioning into adulthood their access to training, employment and independent living is facilitated. (SAP – Priority 5)

Pathways to employment for adults with learning difficulties

Work is underway to facilitate smooth transitions to adulthood, with cases being discussed at the transition forum and effective planning for Post 16 and Post 19 for individual children and young people through the EHCP process. However, few adults with learning difficulties resident in the City of London are currently in employment and the City is working with local businesses to identify possible routes to employment, including supported internships. To date, outcomes-focused assessments and the use of desired outcomes has not been part of planning/service development and so low aspirations may be limiting the degree of independence and employment opportunities for young people moving through the system. The Local Offer is being developed to include more information about preparing for adulthood and employment and to signpost pathways to employment and skills for independence.

A priority is to develop links with available resources to support employment and training and to ensure action pathways are in place to work towards increased employability and raised employment levels. (SAP – Priority 6)

StrAP - SEND Strategic Action Plan

SAP - SEND Service Action Plan