

Halton Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Strategy 2016 – 2020



Contents

Introduction.....	3
Our Vision: Halton Together – Making It Happen	3
Scope of the SEND Strategy.....	3
Legislative Background	5
Definition of SEND	6
Local Context	7
Inclusion and Equality.....	8
What is working well for Children and Young People with SEND?	9
What do we need to improve?	9
What we will do by 2020	10
Monitoring, Review and Evaluation	11

Introduction

We are at a point of significant change, with some of the biggest shifts in national policy for health, Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) in over 30 years. Changes introduced through the Children and Families Act from September 2014 make it more important than ever that the Local Authority, schools, colleges, health and other partners, work closely with parents, carers, children and young people to improve services.

There is a requirement within the Children and Families Act for the Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Groups and NHS England to jointly commission services and promote integrated working based on shared outcomes and shared approaches. This Strategy is intended, therefore, to ensure that Halton is well positioned to implement these changes for the benefit of children, young people and families.

Our Vision: Halton Together – Making It Happen

Our vision is for Children and Young People with SEND to be included in the planning and development of services; to be provided with information to enable them to participate as fully as possible in decisions so that the personalised support they receive helps them to achieve the best possible aspirational outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood, allowing them to be as independent, successful and healthy as possible.

Scope of the SEND Strategy

This Strategy is for children and young people (and their families or carers) aged 0 to 25 years with SEND. Through this Strategy, Halton is working to demonstrate it is effectively meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND to improve their outcomes in terms of:





This Strategy does not exist in isolation as it contributes towards Halton's wider business plan objective to *'implement the national SEND Reforms, including streamlining our assessment and care planning, so that education, health and care needs of children with disabilities are responded to in an integrated and holistic way'*.

The SEND Strategy aligns with Halton's Sustainable Communities Strategy which aims to continue to focus on regeneration, improving the environment, securing a healthy, safer borough, with increased opportunities for employment, learning and skills for the community. Children and young people are a key priority within the Strategy which aims *"to build stronger, safer communities which are able to support the development and learning of children and young people so they grow up feeling safe, secure, happy and healthy, and are ready to be Halton's present and Halton's future"*.

Halton's Children and Young Peoples Plan describes what we will do together in Halton to ensure that regardless of their circumstances, every child and young person has access to services.

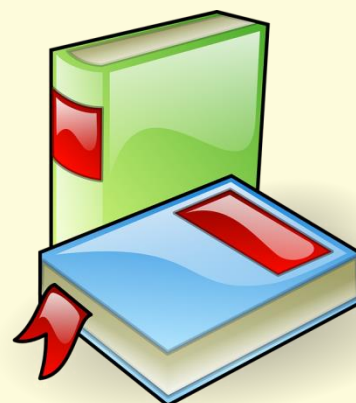
Halton Children's Trust has 3 main areas for improvement:

-  **1** WORKING TOGETHER TO deliver services in a joined up way to make sure children and their families get the right help at the right time (early intervention)
-  **2** WORKING TOGETHER TO plan and fund outcome focused services for children and families, that deliver high quality services that are value for money (integrated commissioning)
-  **3** WORKING TOGETHER TO focus services towards the needs of our most vulnerable children, young people and families to 'close the gap' by improving health, education, social and cultural outcomes

We are working together to make sure that children and young people are at the heart of everything we do and that different services come together to make sure that decisions and actions are joined-up. As well as the knowledge of professionals we are making sure that the voice of families and young people are included in all work to help inform and improve services and provision.

Legislative Background

The Children and Family Act 2014, The Care Act 2014 and The Single Equalities Act 2010 form the backbone of SEND reforms, offering simpler, improved and more consistent help for children and young people with SEND. The new system extends the rights and protection to children and young people by introducing education, health and care plans and extending provision from birth to 25 years of age. The reforms, which came into force in September 2014, require:



- The local authority to develop and publish a Local Offer, and to work closely with the NHS and schools to use resources through joint commissioning to improve the range of support available in a local area.
- A more flexible model of joint commissioning that promotes access to personal budgets, focuses on specific groups of children or areas within the county and ensures that children and young people's needs are met.
- A cultural change in the way in which we listen to and engage with children, young people and their parents and carers.
- Better commissioning of new provision to ensure the needs are met in local schools and by local community services.
- Positive transitions at all key stages within a 0-25 age range, especially a more successful transition to adult life.
- Improved quality and range of information available for children, young people and their parents and carers enabling them to make informed choices.

The Act sets out the expectation that children and young people with special education needs should be included within the activities of mainstream schools together with children who do not have special educational needs, so far as is reasonably practicable and is compatible with:

- a) the child receiving the special educational provision called for by his or her special educational needs,
- b) the provision of efficient education for the children with whom he or she will be educated, and
- c) the efficient use of resources.

Definition of SEND

Under Section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and Section 312 of the Education Act 1996, a child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

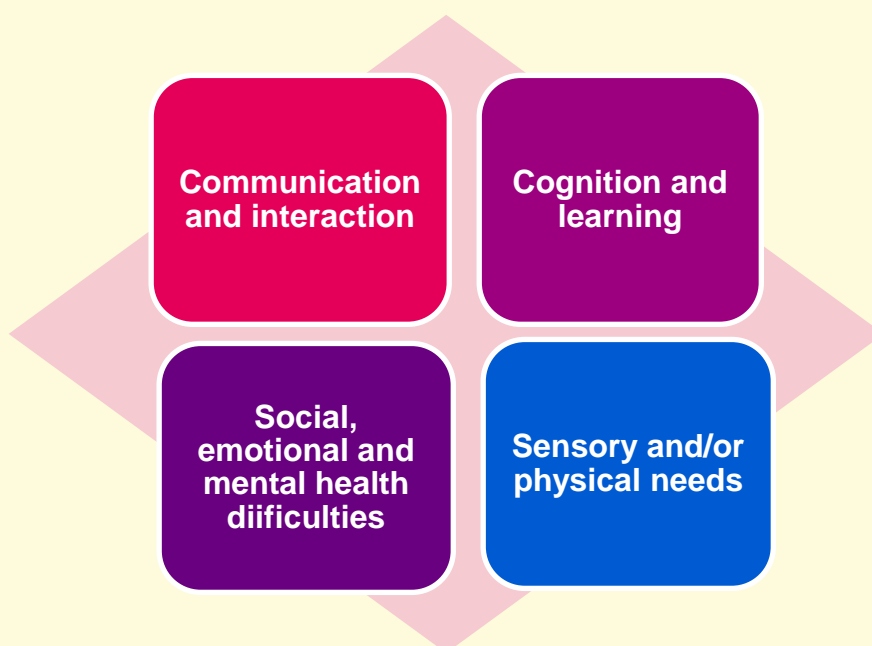
Children have a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age;
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions; or
- are under compulsory school age and fall within one of the definitions above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught. Special educational provision means:

- for children of 2 years or over, educational provision additional to, or different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools maintained by the local authority, other than special schools, in the area;
- or for children under 2, educational provision of any kind.

In addition, the SEND Code of Practice sets out four broad areas of need and support which may be helpful when reviewing and managing special educational provision. These are:



Further information can be found within Section 6.28 - 6.35 of the SEND Code of Practice.

Local Context

Halton's population of children and young people aged 0 to 25 years is 40,141 (ONS June 2016)

Total school age population (ages 4 to 16) is 17,822 (January Census 2016)

2,773 (15.6%) children aged 4 to 16 have special educational needs

369 (2.1%) children and young people with special educational needs have an Education, Health and Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs

Currently only 17% of pupils with a statement or an EHC Plan attend a mainstream school, 83% attend a special school and 2.4% attend a Resource Base. We believe that more of these pupils could be educated in mainstream settings. 13.6 % of this cohort attends costly specialist provision outside the borough.

We would like to meet the needs of more children and young people with special educational needs within local schools and within their local community. To achieve our aim of establishing a well- planned range of provision from birth to adulthood, we plan to undertake a review our existing resources and provision.

Halton is making good progress in establishing an ethos of inclusive learning for children and young people with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD). We want children and young people to lead the lives that they want and there are many different types of support and provision in Halton that can make this happen. It is important that we continue to help “close the gap” in achievement and attainment, so that children and young people can make good progress and have positive choices as they grow up. To do this, we use the principles of early help, to ensure that everyone concerned is aware of what the needs are and how best to help.

In education, we use “the Graduated Approach” to make sure that the needs of a young person are recognised and supported. Schools and settings can use different approaches to help and guide a young person, so that they make good progress and feel happy to learn. There are wide-ranging resources and teaching expertise that can make the difference to how an individual child or young person accesses their learning; in some cases the Local Authority will provide additional support through Enhanced Provision or agree that there should be an integrated assessment that could potentially lead to an Education, Health & Care Plan.

There are also different specialists that school and families can access for additional information, advice and guidance. These can include; for example, an Educational Psychologist, a Speech & Language Therapist, Community Nurses, Health Professionals and Social Workers.

Inclusion and Equality

We are committed to ensuring inclusive education, health and social activities of children and young people, and the removal of barriers to learning and achievement. In producing this Strategy, we have considered the impact its implementation may have on the equalities and needs of all those who might be affected. In addition, there is an expectation that all settings will work to enable all children and young people to develop, learn, participate and achieve their best possible outcomes.

The SEND Code of Practice sets out that when early years settings, schools, colleges, local authorities, health and others, plan and review special educational provision and make decisions about children and young people with SEND, they must consider the reasonable adjustments and access arrangements required for the same child or young person under the Equality Act. They have a duty under the act to prepare an accessibility plan to:

- increase the extent to which disabled children and young people can participate
- improve the physical environment of settings, increasing the extent to which disabled children and young people can take advantage of facilities and services; and
- improve the delivery of information to disabled children and young people, their parents and carers which is readily accessible to them, their parents and carers who are not disabled.

The Local Authority encourages its maintained schools to bid for capital funding to improve access. In addition, schools should regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the support they offer or can access to children and young people with special educational needs. They should collaborate with local education providers to explore how different needs can be met most effectively, and be must aware of general responsibilities to promote disability equality. Halton is able to offer support to schools and early years settings wishing to review their provision for pupils with SEND.

To support the child, young person and the child's parents to participate as fully as possible in decision making, The Local Authority will provide an impartial, confidential and accessible information, advice and support service. The service will promote independence and self-advocacy and will provide information and advice about matters relating to SEN and/or Disabilities, including take up of personal budgets and matters relating to health and social care. This dedicated and easily identifiable service is provided by Halton SEND Partnership Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS).



What is working well for Children and Young People with SEND?

- ✓ New 0-25 SEND Service team
- ✓ Pupil voice which is at the heart of all planning
- ✓ The child or young person is involved and valued
- ✓ Parental involvement - parent and carer views are valued and respected
- ✓ Improved collaboration working towards shared outcomes
- ✓ People working together to form a team around the child and family
- ✓ More collaborative working between health, schools, post-16 providers and social care
- ✓ Local Offer



What do we need to improve?

- Improve co-production of strategic planning with parents and carers
- Improve monitoring and challenge of SEND support in schools
- Improve timescales for finalising Education, Health and Care Plans
- Review our Specialist Provision to meet future need
- Increase the involvement of children, young people, parents and carers in planning, commissioning and reviewing services
- Transition from children's services to adults
- Increase personalisation by offering opportunities for young people and parents/carers to access personal budget
- Improve access to early identification and help



What we will do by 2020

We will work with children, young people, families and professionals to ensure we improve outcomes for all children and young people with SEND.

To support children, young people and young adults we will:

- ❖ monitor outcomes identified in Education, Health and Care plans for children and young people to ensure progress is made with effective use of resources
- ❖ ensure resources are available to support professionals and parents to gather children and young people's voice, and to actively report back to demonstrate how their voice has made a difference
- ❖ review the resources, places and provision available to support children and young people with special educational needs
- ❖ ensure children and young people are able to access personal budgets, including education, social care and health budgets where eligible, to support improved outcomes
- ❖ offer personalised creative programmes when children and young people are not able to access mainstream provision
- ❖ develop more opportunities for sustainable employment/supported employment
- ❖ outline clearer pathways for young people to move into independent/supported living
- ❖ refocus the work of the SEND Service to build capacity in schools at SEND support through training, advice and challenge
- ❖ further develop pathways which support young people in the transition from children's services to adult services
- ❖ explore opportunities with health and other partners to jointly commission provision
- ❖ provide children and young people with information they can access



To support families we will:

- ❖ work with Halton's Parent/Carer Forum and parent groups to enable shaping of service priorities
- ❖ ensure the Local Offer is accessible and up to date, providing information for children, young people and their families
- ❖ share good news stories with families
- ❖ involve families in planning, commissioning and reviewing services



Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

An action plan has been developed that identifies priority areas, key actions, milestones, key performance indicators and targets, including responsible services and officers.

The Strategy will be regularly monitored by the SEND Strategic Group, comprised of the Lead Member for Children and Families, early years providers, schools, parent representatives, health, education, post-16, children and adult social care.

The Strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis with a yearly report produced detailing progress made towards the key activities.

The evaluation of the Strategy will also be informed by regular consultation and engagement with children, young people and families, inspection feedback, feedback from key processes such as annual reviews and annual SEND data collection.

