

# Briefing Note

**Title:** Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Strategy 2024-27

**Date:** 31 January 2024

**Prepared by:** Helen Bakewell

**Job Title:** Head of SEND and Inclusion

**Scrutiny Panel:** Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

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## Recommendation for action or decision

### The Scrutiny Panel is recommended to

1. Endorse the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Inclusion Strategy 2024-27 (appendix 2) and recommendations detailed in cabinet report (appendix 1).

### Questions for Scrutiny to consider

1. Are Scrutiny Panel satisfied that the SEND and Inclusion strategy will meet the needs of the correct target audience?
2. Do Scrutiny Panel agree with the agreed priorities as defined within the strategy?
3. Delivering the strategy will require some changes to how the high need block budget is spent. Is Scrutiny Panel in agreement with the revised approach in order to deliver the priorities?

## Purpose

This report presents the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2027. It sets out the vision and priorities of the SEND & Inclusion Partnership Board's offer to children, young people and their families. It also recognises and builds on our strengths and what works well for families.

## Background

The strategy enables the Local Authority to fulfil its statutory duties for SEND in the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice to secure a continuum of provision and support with partners for pupils aged 0-25 with SEND.

During the period of the Strategy there may be further changes in order to reflect the context of the Governments SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan which underpins the new national standards within legislation once they have been rolled out, which is planned to begin in 2025.

Public consultation was undertaken on the strategy between October and November 2023. The full results of the online public consultation and our response are available in appendix 3. Results of the consultation were very positive from both parent, carers and professionals that work with children and young people with SEND. Over 85% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the 5 priorities set out in the strategy and over 80% agreed or strongly agreed with how it would be delivered.

The strategy will be delivered through the SEND and Inclusion Improvement Plan, which will detail the actions and workstreams required to achieve the outcomes for each of the priority areas across the local area partnership, including Health, Education and Social Care. This will be co-ordinated by using a work-stream approach involving all key partners. Each workstream will have named co-leads from Education, Social Care and Health and Voice 4 Parents (Wolverhampton's Parent Carer Forum). The workstreams will report directly to the SEND and Inclusion Partnership Board on a half-termly basis.

Plans to respond to comments received during the consultation will be included within the Local Areas SEND and Inclusion Improvement Plan.

## **Progress**

Within the West Midlands many local authorities are in the process of refreshing their SEND strategies to reflect the HM Government SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan.

Dependent on the needs of individual authorities, areas of focus may be slightly different but will still take into account the key aims of the SEND and Alternative Provision Plan:

1. A national system underpinned by national standards
2. Successful transitions and preparation for adulthood
3. A skilled workforce and excellent leadership
4. Strengthened accountabilities and clear routes of redress
5. A financially sustainable system delivering improved outcomes

Within Wolverhampton the strategy focuses on children, young people and young adults with SEND and those with potential unmet SEND or social educational needs. This is based on the shared understanding that supporting the needs of children, young people and young adults regarding SEND and inclusion is 'everybody's business'.

As such, the wider focus around inclusion has been incorporated into the strategy so that there is a focus on early support and intervention as well as those that have a higher level of need. This is to enable young people to have their needs met at the earliest point and in most cases, within local settings.

The strategy has been based on the 5 priorities from the SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan however the Local Area SEND and Inclusion Improvement Plan will consider the needs in Wolverhampton against these priorities. These have been agreed with all partners within the SEND and Inclusion Partnership Board.

We will provide regular monitoring reports to scrutiny on delivery of the SEND and Inclusion Improvement Plan, and this will also be made publicly available through regular updates on the local offer.

We have also purposefully considered our outcomes against the SEND Inspection Framework. This framework ensures that all sectors can evidence positive outcomes for children, young people and young adults. It also enables strong overarching governance through the Partnership Board that creates effective monitoring and accountability across all agencies.

There are continued pressures locally and nationally on high needs block funding. Priority 5 of the strategy (a financially sustainable system delivering improved outcomes) aims to deliver a financially sustainable system for delivering improved outcomes. The workstream that will be delivered around this priority will be supported initially with advice from the EFSA and DfE to ensure that this is firmly embedded within our strategic outcomes.

Key financial, legal and equalities implications are detailed in the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2027 Cabinet Report (appendix 1)

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2027  
Cabinet Report 21 February 2024

Appendix 2: Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2027

Appendix 3: Full results of the online public consultation and our response