

# Public Document Pack

## Southend-on-Sea City Council

### Strategy, Change & Governance

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17 October 2022

## EDUCATION BOARD - TUESDAY, 18TH OCTOBER, 2022 SUPPLEMENTARY REPORTS PACK: ITEM 6 (SEND STRATEGY) AND ITEM 7 (INCLUSION)

Please find enclosed, for consideration at the next meeting of the Education Board taking place on Tuesday, 18th October, 2022, at 8.15am the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

### Agenda No Item

**6 SEND Strategy (Pages 1 - 32)**

Report for noting/discussion attached

**7 Update from Inclusion Task and Finish Group (Pages 33 - 38)**

Report for noting/discussion attached

Robert Harris  
Principal Democratic Services Officer



# Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda  
Item No.

6

Executive Director of Children and Public Health  
to

Education Board

On

18<sup>th</sup> October 22

Report prepared by:

Gary Bloom, Head of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

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## SEND Strategy 2022-25

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### 1 Purpose of Report

To gain Education Board approval to publish the Southend SEND Strategy 2022-25 in a range of accessible media including print, electronic and video.

### 2 Recommendations

Education Board are asked to:

- Agree the content and format of the Southend SEND Strategy 2022-25; and
- Agree that the strategy is produced in an accessible document, which can be shared in a variety of formats in order to engage a range of audiences.

### 3 Background

3.1 The previous SEND Strategy “Success for All” covered the period 2016-19 which spanned the Joint Area SEND Inspection undertaken by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission in October 2018. As a result of the Inspection the Council and the then named Clinical Commissioning Group (now Integrated Care System) were required to prepare a joint Written Statement of Action determining how the SEND Partnership were going to address and measure the impact of four areas of weakness. This Written Statement of Action outlined the Three Year Journey for SEND that would lead to an improvement journey and resolve those four areas of weakness.

3.2 The revisit by Ofsted and CQC in May 2021 recognised sufficient improvement in three of the four areas of weakness. One of the actions undertaken to improve previous weaknesses was to strengthen the governance arrangements around SEND and to develop a new partnership strategy.

3.3 Developing a new SEND Strategy began at a SEND Summit in April 2021 but work on it was delayed following agreement at a Special Council meeting for an

independent LGA peer review of the Council’s SEND and CWD service which took place in October 2021 and reported its findings and recommendation to Cabinet in January 2022.

3.4 The LGA peer review included a recommendation on the new SEND strategy to ensure that it was co-produced and had children and their families at the centre of the strategy.

3.5 As a result of that recommendation the Southend SEND Strategic Partnership has ensured that coproduction is at the heart of the Strategy involving children and young people with SEND and their families at every stage. This has included checking back frequently to ensure agreement with the way the Strategy was developing. The five identified priorities in the strategy are what children and young people with SEND and their families told us was important to them and this helped determine what our core commitments are.

Transitions	Children and young people are prepared and supported to thrive at each change in their lives, helping them to feel secure and confident
Early Intervention	Identification, assessment and effective support are provided at the earliest opportunity.
Plans	EHCPs and other plans for children and their families have the young person at the centre, are well co-ordinated, co-produced, timely, and lead to well informed and effective support, which is regularly monitored and reviewed
The Local Offer	Southend’s Local Offer website is a widely and easily accessible resource that signposts to a range of universal, targeted and specialist support services and high quality provisions for Children and Young People with SEND and their families.
Good Mental Health and wellbeing	Children and young people are provided with the best chance to achieve positive mental health, be happy and thrive within their family, education and social lives, develop their potential, build strong relationships and contribute to their community.

3.6 The new Strategy identifies the key actions required to deliver these priorities and these will be expanded upon with a more detailed success measures document in an accompanying action plan.

3.7 Children and young people with SEND and their families told us they wanted to access the Strategy in a variety of ways and once the content is approved work will be undertaken to make this possible.

#### 4 Proposal

It is recommended and widely acknowledged that SEND is a joint area responsibility encompassing partners from Education, Health and Care and the children, young people and families they support and therefore a specific

coproduced SEND Strategy outlining priorities for the next 3 years is recommended. The intention would be to deliver the Strategy from within existing revenue and capital resources, however work undertaken as part of the SEND Strategy may highlight the need for e.g. Provision development or service redesign. Any areas of additional expenditure that are identified which cannot be funded from existing available resources will be sought through identified governance routes.

## 5 Appendices



SEND Strategy v20  
FINAL DRAFT Sept 22

Draft SEND Strategy 22-25

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# Southend Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2022–2025



**Helping children and young people with  
SEND in Southend.**

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# 1. Introduction

Welcome to the 2022 to 2025 Southend Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Partnership Strategy for children and young people aged 0 to 25.

This SEND partnership strategy outlines our five key priorities and our aims and ambitions, all of which focus on improving the lived experiences of children and young people with SEND and their families.

Much has been done to improve services for children and young people with SEND since October 2018, when the Care & Quality Commission (CQC) and Ofsted carried out a Local Area joint inspection of the SEND offer in Southend. Four areas of weakness were identified, and the Southend SEND Partnership was formed to oversee the journey of improvement, so that children and young people with SEND in Southend and their families have better experiences.

In 2021 the progress and the difference made was recognised, but the need to keep improving remains.

This strategy has been informed by public consultation and was co-produced by the SEND Strategic Partnership. It builds on existing work and shows what will be done to ensure the SEND offer continues to improve.

Feedback from families tell us that the priorities set out here are important to them. We expect that children and young people with SEND and their families will feel the impact of the work of the Southend SEND Partnership.

## 2. What are special educational needs and disabilities?

*A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.*

This is a combined definition from the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010. These Acts guide the responsibilities and statutory duties of the Southend SEND Partnership to ensure that children and young people have the support they need.

We asked some local children and young people **“What does having SEND actually mean for you?”**

They told us:

“I am comfortable and happy at home or at school but outside in the community it is more difficult.”

“Having special needs affects your confidence quite a lot.”

“You feel the need to prove yourself.”

“People judge before getting to know you.”

“Having SEND is helpful in school as people understand and I have support to get involved.”

They told us they want:

“To be in control and choose what I want to do, feeling welcome”

“Look forward to each day as it comes!”

“A feeling of belonging and inclusion in the school and local community

The Southend SEND Partnership is committed to working together to make things better for children and young people with SEND

## 3. Local context

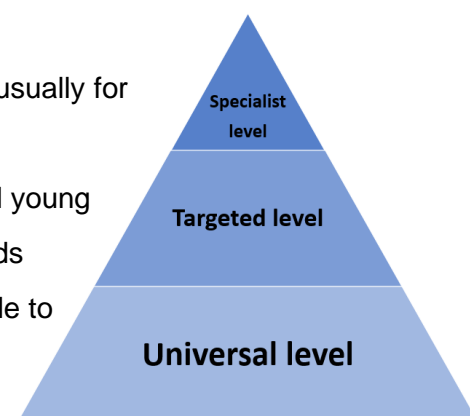
Southend City Council (SCC); the Mid and South Essex Integrated Care System (ICS) and Essex Partnership University Trust (EPUT) work alongside a range of schools and settings, providers, partners, voluntary organisations and other stakeholders to provide high quality provision for all children and young people with SEND.

To understand the prevalence of special educational need across Southend this section provides data about the numbers of children and young people with SEND and their needs\* and some context on the range of provision available across education, health, social care and local services at a universal, targeted and specialist level.

**Specialist level** – services or provision that is highly specialist and usually for children or young people with significant and complex needs

**Targeted level** – services or provision that is offered to children and young people who need targeted support for a specific type or level of needs

**Universal level** – services or provision that is offered and is available to all children and young people.



### SEN Support

Pupils who have an identified SEN need and require additional (targeted) provision in school are categorised as receiving SEN Support.

Data from the January 2022 schools census shows us those pupils who are recorded as receiving SEN Support in Southend:

- There were 2,966 children at SEN support in our local schools; this equates to 9.25% of the school population.
- This is 3.30% lower than the national average of 12.55%.
- 63% of those pupils at SEN support are male, which is consistent with the national picture.
- The largest cohort of pupils at SEN Support are in year 5 (10.9%).
- Pupils at SEN Support eligible for free school meals is 40.8%, above the national average of 36.4%.

## Education Health and Care Plans

Education, Health and Care Plans (sometimes called an EHC Plan or EHCP) are for children and young people up to the age of 25 who require special educational provision (*over and above that which is provided at universal and targeted level*), to meet their special educational needs.

Data from the January 2022 schools census shows those pupils who have an EHC Plan in Southend schools:

- The largest cohort of pupils with an EHC plan are in year 6 (10.1%)
- Pupils with an EHC plan that are eligible for free school meals is 43.3%, compared to 39.7% nationally
- 75% of pupils with an EHC plan are male which is consistent with the national picture.
- The percentage of pupils who have an Education Health and Care plan attending Southend schools is 3.71%
- This is similar to the national average of 3.95%
- Approximately 180 pupils with a Southend maintained EHC plan attend out of area schools
- Approximately 10 pupils with an EHCP are Electively Home Educated
- Of all pupils in Southend special schools, 86% have a Southend maintained EHC plan.

As of September 2022 Southend maintained 1,545 EHC plans.

When looking at the combined picture of all pupils at SEN Support and with EHC plan we know that prevalence of SEND in Southend is highest amongst primary age pupils and drops off in older years groups. This has been consistent over the past 3 years. The percentage of all SEND pupils in Southend schools categorised as having a Social, Emotional and Mental Health primary need is 21.6% (2022) and is the most prevalent need in Southend.

*\*Different time points for data collection and reporting periods mean that there is not a consistent time point at which data is reported, for example a mixture of calendar, academic and financial years. The schools Census and the DfE SEN2 return, provides the major source of data collected on children and young people with SEND and is published here. This data has been used alongside with Southend's internal reporting dashboard. Some figures have been rounded to the nearest 10 to comply with suppression rules.*

## Education Provision

In Southend there is a wide range of educational provision to meet pupil need at a universal, targeted or specialist level:

- 45 mainstream schools spanning infant to secondary age,
- 3 independent schools,
- 5 special schools,
- A special free school, colleges and a university.

As of August 2022 100% of LA Maintained schools (all primary phase) were judged Good or Outstanding in addition to 94% of Primary phase, 83% of Secondary phase and 80% of Special schools (*published on the Ofsted website*)

Southend's Special Schools cater for a range of needs and age groups:

Kingsdown School	Type of need - Physical Difficulties, Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulties, Severe Learning Difficulties	Age range 3-14 years
Lancaster School	Type of need - Physical Difficulties, Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulties, Severe Learning Difficulties	Age range 14-19 years
St Nicholas School	Type of need - Autism, Moderate Learning Difficulties	Age range 11-16 years
Sutton House	Type of need – Social Emotional and Mental Health	Age range 5-16 years
St Christopher School	Type of need - Autism Spectrum Disorder, Moderate Learning Difficulties, Social Emotional and Mental Health	Age range 3-19 years

Alternative Education Provision in Southend is made by the 2 following registered settings

Victory Park Academy	Type of need – Social Emotional and Mental Health	Age range 5-16 years
Southend YMCA Community School ( <i>free school</i> )	Type of need: pupils who have, by reason of illness, disability, social, emotional or mental health issues, require alternative educational arrangements	Age range 14-16 years

In addition to mainstream and specialist settings Southend Local Authority commission a number of resource bases (sometimes called Enhanced Provision) that provide targeted support for pupils with:

- Autism
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs
- Learning Difficulties

Hamstel Infant School	Autism Resource Base	Key Stage 1
Temple Sutton Primary School	Autism Resource Base	Key Stage 1 & 2
Blenheim Primary School	Autism Resource Base	Key Stage 1 & 2
Greenways Primary School	Autism Resource Base	Key Stage 1 & 2
Southend High School for Boys	Autism Resource Base	Key Stage 3 & 4
Fairways Primary School	Speech, Language and Communication Resource base	Key Stage 1 & 2
Chase High School	Learning Resource Base	Key Stage 3 & 4
Shoeburyness High School	Learning Resource Base	Key Stage 3 & 4

There are a number of pupils that are Electively Home Educated (EHE) in Southend. As of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022 there were 403 pupils recorded as EHE.

In Southend there are many post-16 options offering AS/A-levels, vocational qualifications at all levels, apprenticeships, traineeships, supported internships and bespoke packages of learning. There are also 16 to 19 academies, and vocational learning and training providers

The local area encompasses:

- School sixth forms (both mainstream and special schools)
- South Essex College - a further education college offering a variety of courses, apprenticeships and supported internships.
- Southend Adult Community College offers apprenticeships and SEND provision in addition to their specialist Westcliff Centre for 19-21 year olds.

### **Social Care and Early Help**

There is a range of support available for families requiring Social Care input.

- At a universal level 0-19 Early Help Family Support (EHFS) Service provide for children, young people and their families with a range of needs including parenting, family support and youth work. All children and young people are assessed and supported according to their individual specific needs, whether that is SEND, diagnosed or not.
- At a targeted level all new referrals to children's social care are received via MASH+ (the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) and assessed against statutory thresholds and duties for social care intervention and eligibility criteria. The eligibility criteria must be met to receive paid services, including personal budgets which are agreed at a resource allocation panel that makes the decision on financial care packages.

- Teams and services across statutory Children’s Social Care operate at a specialist level. One of the teams within the department is the Children with Disabilities Team which provides assessment, support and intervention for children and young people with SEND from the ages of 0 – 18 that are severely disabled and meet the eligibility criteria for the team. The team works with children, young people, and their families to ensure that they are supported to have every chance of achieving success through to adulthood. The team is based at the Lighthouse Development Centre and is one of a several providers based at the Centre supporting children with disabilities meaning that children, young people, and their families are provided with a fully inclusive service.

The Children with Disabilities Team support children with various care packages that may consist of direct payments for Personal Assistance support, care or activities at home, care or activities away from home such as after school or holiday clubs; or overnight (short term) breaks away from home.

The Children with Disabilities Team will link closely with all professionals involved in the young person’s life from Health, Education and Adult Services and facilitate a transition for a child/young person into adult services beginning preparation from the age of 14 years to the transfer to adult services.

### **Health provision**

Health services for children and young people including those with SEND are delivered at a universal, targeted and specialist level and include the following services:

- Universal care is provided by Primary Care Networks and GP practices
- Children, Young People and Families 0-19 Public Health Services (Southend City Council) offers a universal service for all families, children, and young people that including Health Visiting and School Nursing. They also offer targeted services for the following:
  - The Health Visitor targeted pathways for those children that have specific needs.
  - A Specialist Public Health Nurse (SCPHN) for children with Special Educational Needs in mainstream school.
  - Specialist Public Health Nurse (SCPHN- EHE) for children who are Home Educated.

- Targeted provision from GP practices for Learning Disability Health Checks (from 14 years of age)
- A Better Start Southend (ABSS) offer targeted Speech and Language Therapy through the Let's Talk programme provided in 6 ABSS ward areas of Southend.
- The Family Nurse Partnership provides a targeted offer for those under 20 expecting their first baby. A family nurse offers pregnancy support, after the birth advice and guidance for up to 2 years.
- The multi-disciplinary team at Lighthouse Child Development Centre provided by Essex Partnership University Foundation Trust (EPUT) offer targeted and specialist services for:
  - Specialised outpatient care for children and young people up to the age of 19 years of age with significant delay or concern and have, or are likely to require, the support from more than one service or discipline.
  - Targeted and specialist support from Community Paediatricians, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy
  - An integrated pathway for neurodevelopmental assessment for children and young people with suspected Autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) pathways or other neurodevelopmental needs.
- The core mental health service for children and young people up to 19 years of age (up to 25 if they young person has an EHCP) is Southend Essex and Thurrock (SET) Child and Adolescence Mental Health Service (CAMHS). SET CAMHS offer targeted and specialist community-based assessment and treatment. The service is provided by North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT) and includes a central single point of access (SPA) for referrals providing clinical triage leading to; advice and guidance, onward referral to specialist teams (i.e. Eating Disorder, Learning Disability etc.), locality teams and signposting to other services.
- NELFT also provide targeted support in Southend through Mental Health in Schools Teams (MHST). Targeted support is currently offered across 8 mainstream school settings and one further education setting as part of a national pilot.
- Southend University Hospital Foundation Trust (SUHFT) as part of Mid and South Essex Partnership Foundation Trust (MSEFT) offer targeted and specialist services from urgent and emergency treatment, acute paediatric care, outpatient and audiology services
- Specialist referral routes with regional condition specific tertiary centres such as Great Ormond Street, South London & Maudsley, Evelina and Addenbrookes NHS Foundation Trusts.



- Essex Partnership University Trust (EPUT) offer a range of targeted and specialist community paediatric services to support the needs of children and families in Southend:
  - The Paediatric Community Nursing Team provides clinical nursing care for children with complex and on-going health needs.
  - An integrated Diabetes Service (in partnership with MSEFT).
  - Continence Service.
  - Paediatric Asthma & Allergy Service plus dedicated asthma, eczema and allergies training for patients and families.
  - Epilepsy Nursing provision.
  - Service provision is also in place for Specialist School Nursing and Specialist Health Visitors.
  - Community Learning Disability Services.
- The Play and Parenting service (Jigsaws) provides specialist support to families from maternity to age 5, offering support to families with complex and life-limiting conditions.

### **Support Services and the voluntary sector**

The SENDIASS service (Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice Support Service) is jointly commissioned by Education, Health and Social Care is well established and well used by families who require advice and support on SEND issues.

The Department for Education funded parent carer forum; Southend SEND Independent Forum (SSIF) were established at the end of 2020 and provides a great deal of community support and advice to SEND parent carers.

Voluntary sector organisations based in or local to Southend provide a range of universal, targeted and specialist services to support children and young people with SEND and their families. The Local Offer website provides information, advice and guidance on local services and details of organisations and groups in the local area

[www.southend.gov.uk/sendlocaloffer](http://www.southend.gov.uk/sendlocaloffer)

## 4. The Southend SEND Partnership

The Southend SEND Partnership works together to drive high standards and continuous improvement and is committed to improving the experience of our children and young people with SEND by providing the right help and support at the right time.

The strategic partnership consists of:

- Southend City Council teams responsible for SEND services across Education, Early Years, Children's and Adult Social Care and Public Health.
- Health partners from Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Board (ICB), including The Lighthouse Child Development Centre as part of Essex Partnership University Trust (EPUT) and Southend University Hospital Foundation Trust (SUHFT).
- Southend SEND Independent Forum (SSIF), the Department for Education funded Parent Carer Forum for Southend.
- Representatives from mainstream and special schools, early years and further education settings.
- The voluntary sector and representatives from a range of community initiatives including A Better Start Southend (ABSS) and Healthwatch.

The Southend SEND Partnership commits to listening to the child and young person's voice and hear about their lived experiences. Everything we do will be shaped by better understanding of the individual needs of all children and young people with SEND and their families, no matter their circumstances or need.

Our ambition is for all children and young people to thrive and be happy in communities where families and services work together to help them achieve their potential and fulfil their dreams.

We will achieve this ambition as a whole system partnership, with shared aims and values. Working together we will focus on improving the lived experiences of children and young people with SEND and their families.

## 5. Our aims

We know that children and young people with SEND, and their families need additional support, and a strong local partnership is essential to achieve our shared ambition.

Our aim is to:

- raise aspirations.
- improve outcomes and opportunities.
- have high quality, accessible, local services.
- support a successful transition into adulthood, enabling independence and resilience.
- ensure children's wishes, dreams and aspirations are at the heart of decision making.
- have an easy to navigate, open and transparent SEND system.
- make a real and measurable impact on the lives of children and young people with SEND and their families.

We want Southend to be a place where all children and young people with SEND and their families:

- 1) Feel welcomed, are listened to and are equal, respected and valued partners in decision-making.
- 2) Have high aspirations, choice and control over their future and can make a positive contribution to the wider community.
- 3) Are communicated with sensitively and compassionately.
- 4) Feel safe, and are supported by skilled education, health and care practitioners who understand individuals needs and how these can be best met.
- 5) Have access to consistent high quality childcare, health care, education and training opportunities and employment.
- 6) Benefit from evidence-based practice.

- 7) Benefit from a system where practitioners support children and young people to be the best version of themselves and have inclusive and equal access to services and opportunities alongside their peers.
- 8) Can access services that are responsive and preventative.
- 9) Receive support that is personal and encourages self-help and resilience to enable individuals to become the best version of themselves.
- 10) Are supported and encouraged to provide feedback which helps the SEND Partnership to continually improve.

## 6. Developing the priorities

A programme of engagement with parents, carers, young people, education settings and colleagues who support children and young people with SEND was undertaken to identify the priorities that mattered to them. Various methods of engagement were used including online surveys, group meetings and one to one conversation.

### Children and Young People told us:

“Staff need more training to help me and understand what support I need.”

“Share information using videos and animations; they are easier than reading lots of writing.”

“We want our own spaces where we can meet other young people and socialise and know that we have a refuge if we feel unsafe.”

“We feel we have to live up to older people’s expectations and want to be valued for ourselves.”

### Parents and Carers told us:

“We need joined up services with a strong parental input.”

“Better and quicker access to services for families.”

“Putting the right people in the important, supportive roles.”

“Help should be timely, not taking years, and appointments should be given in an effective time span.”

“Early mental health intervention.”

“Ensure that what is in the Education Health and Care Plan is delivered. Hold schools accountable so parent doesn't have to fight school alone for provision to be made.”

## **Members of the Southend SEND Partnership told us:**

“We need better systems in place to identify SEND.”

“Ensure health services have capacity to undertake assessment.”

“Smooth transition to adult services.”

“The voice of the child and their family should be central to all decisions made in relation to the young person’s life and future.”

“Ensure our education workforce is fully trained and upskilled in supporting children and young people with SEND and their families.”

“More investment in early intervention and prevention.”

Listening to what matters to families and children and young people has helped to shape our priorities.

## 7. Agreeing the priorities

The feedback gained from children, young people, their families and members of the Southend SEND Partnership, together with feedback from the SEND inspection re-visit and the SEND improvement programme has identified 5 priorities for action over the next 3 years. These form the basis of this strategy.

### Our 5 key priorities

**Transitions**

**Early intervention**

**Good mental health and wellbeing**

**Plans**

**The Local Offer**

**Transitions: Children and young people are prepared and supported to thrive at each change in their lives, helping them to feel secure and confident**

**This is important because:**

Change is part of everyday life so it is important to help children and families learn how to successfully adapt.

Children and young people with SEND and their families will go through lots of changes. This could be a different school or setting, a different service provider or worker, moving into employment or a change in personal circumstances and needs.

Without effective planning and the right support for children and young people with SEND, transitions can be unmanageable for the child, which can have a lasting impact.

One young person told us a good transition means “Feeling prepared and ready!”

**Early Intervention: Identification, assessment and effective support are provided at the earliest opportunity.**

**This is important because:**

Children and young people who have their needs recognised earlier have better outcomes.

Children and young people may find it easier to manage day to day life and access the world around them.

Families feel supported and better able to cope.

The right support can be provided at the right time, in the right place, which may reduce needs or prevent them from increasing.

One young person told us “Good support means being empowered to do things on my own.”

**Good mental health and wellbeing: Children and young people are provided with the best chance to achieve positive mental health, be happy and thrive within their family, education and social lives, develop their potential, build strong relationships and contribute to their community.**

**This is important because:**

It helps children and young people cope better with day-to-day life.

It helps children and young people to engage with others and maintain positive relationships.

It helps to build self-esteem and confidence.

It helps children and young people to effectively understand and communicate their own needs.

It helps children and young people to make positive choices.

One young person told us “I see a counsellor and my music has helped me through my thoughts and feelings.”

**Plans: EHCPs and other plans for children and their families have the young person at the centre, are well co-ordinated, co-produced, timely, and lead to well informed and effective support, which is regularly monitored and reviewed.**

**This is important because:**

Effective plans show the child or young person’s needs, ensure the correct support is in place and lead to better outcomes.



Children and young people’s hopes and aspirations can be turned into meaningful and achievable outcomes.

Children and young people and families are listened to, understood, and well supported.

Those providing the support within the plan know what they are expected to do and when they need to do it.

Timely planning and reviews provide the right support, in the right place and at the right time.

One young person told us “The support I receive is a really big balancing act as it needs to be at the right time in the right way.”

**The Local Offer: Southend’s Local Offer website is a widely and easily accessible resource that signposts to a range of universal, targeted and specialist support services and high quality provisions for Children and Young People with SEND and their families.**

**This is important because:**

Children and young people, families and professionals know who to go to for consistent advice and support.

It helps children, young people, families and professionals to feel empowered, make informed choices and better engage with the community.

A range of high quality provision will help children and young people and families to access support close to home.

Children and young people, families and professionals have relevant and up to date information that can be found quickly and easily.

One young person told us “We need fully accessible sports clubs that are clued up on SEND specific needs.”

## 8. Developing our actions

Once the priorities had been agreed a draft strategy setting out the proposed actions went out for wider consultation.

Feedback was invited from young people, parents and carers of children and young people with SEND and professionals who work with and support children and young people with SEND.

People were able to provide feedback through face to face or online engagement events and also via a survey.

The Parent and Carer Forum (Southend SEND Independent Forum) worked closely with the SEND Partnership to engage a wide range of stakeholders and supported the review of consultation feedback. This is to ensure that the key priorities and the proposed actions reflect the needs of the SEND community.

Through this consultation families said that actions should focus on:

- Improving mental health service provision and waiting lists
- Increased visibility of professionals in the community to meet SEND families
- Simple pathways that support navigation of the SEND system
- Ensuring plans are concise, simple and child focused
- End of school transition support to college or into the workplace
- A reduction in waiting times for diagnosis
- Strong community connections like clubs and sports
- Better promotion of services and provision in the area
- More opportunities to get young people into work
- Keeping families more informed and part of the process

The wide range of feedback from the consultation has been collated and is available to view on the Local Offer website [www.southend.gov.uk/sendstrategy](http://www.southend.gov.uk/sendstrategy)

## 9. Making it happen – what we will do.

This strategy provides an opportunity to refresh our planned actions so that children, young people and their families feel the impact of better support, services and intervention.

This section sets out each priority and what we will do over the next 3 years.

**Priority - Transitions:** Children and young people are prepared and supported to thrive at each change in their lives, helping them to feel secure and confident

We will:

- Ensure assessments are prioritised for children and young people approaching transitions.
- Produce and embed guidance that sets out agreed expectations for school-based transitions for children and young people with an EHCP, on SEN Support or with complex medical conditions.
- Provide support and training for children and young people parent carers and professionals to ensure all children and young people with SEND are prepared as early as possible for adulthood and the transitions they face.
- Develop an agreed set of skills across the Education, Health and Social Care workforce so that practitioners work to the same preparing for adulthood principles, awareness of what good health, social care and education transitions look like and what provision is in place and at which level.
- Work as a SEND partnership to share (where appropriate) information to ensure children, young people and families, do not have to repeat their story and that risk or vulnerabilities are mitigated.
- Produce and publish a roadmap of what is expected at each stage for key transition points in a child or young person's journey (health, education & social care) so that all professionals are working towards the same goals and pathway.
- Provide clear information to parents, children and young people about options at each transition stage so they can make informed choices.
- Work with employers and Further Education providers to develop a greater range of options, education, training and employment, for young people when they move on from compulsory education.

**Priority - Early Intervention:** identification, assessment and effective support are provided at the earliest opportunity

We will:

- Ensure there is proactive signposting to early support services so that families experience of the SEND system improves and appropriate support is available at the earliest opportunity.
- Continue the review of therapy provision (the balanced system review) and implement the recommendations.
- Continually review and improve the advice and support available to schools and settings.
- Undertake a capacity and demand review to ensure effective use of resources.

- Embed the Graduated Response across education, health and care with a range of supportive materials which set out our expectations of how children and young people's needs should be met within mainstream schools and local services.
- Build resilience in schools to manage challenging behaviours which will improve the life chances of young people and preventing escalation to crisis and entering the criminal justice system.
- Review SEND decision-making systems and ensure that processes are transparent and understood by families.

**Priority - Good mental health and wellbeing:** Children and young people are provided with the best chance to achieve positive mental health, be happy and thrive within their family, education and social lives, develop their potential, build strong relationships and contribute to their community.

We will:

- Support community services to be more inclusive to provide better support, improve mental health and life chances.
- Improve data collection to support effective commissioning.
- Review the provision of Counselling Services for all children and young people and publicise what is available on the Local Offer.
- Offer training updates on early identification of need and appropriate sign posting to all frontline practitioners and those that have contact with children and young people.
- Develop a person-centred behavioural approach which provides the support, tools and training needed to build resilience for parents, carers and families to manage challenging behaviour.
- Develop a set of agreed expectations for education settings to support children and young people around emotional wellbeing.
- Support the development of mental health services that are inclusive of SEND.

**Priority - Plans:** EHCPs and other plans for children and their families have the young person at the centre, are well co-ordinated, co-produced, timely, and lead to well informed and effective support, which is regularly monitored and reviewed.

We will:

- Consistently capture and act upon the voice of the child and young person and their families at the earliest opportunity to influence and shape their plans.
- Get better at reviewing plans so they grow with the child and reflect their current aspirations.
- Provide support and challenge to providers to ensure the support detailed in all plans is delivered effectively.
- Enhance quality assurance processes around EHCPs to ensure a consistent, person centred approach, unique to each child and young person which raises parental confidence in the quality and impact of plans.
- Review the impact and effectiveness of the EHC Hub.
- Improve the timeliness of production of draft EHCPs.
- Produce guidance and information on routes and sources of support for families if they experience difficulties that are not being addressed by settings or if they feel that their child's needs are not being correctly identified or met.

**Priority - The Local Offer:** Southend's Local Offer website is a widely and easily accessible resource that signposts to a range of universal, targeted and specialist support services and high-quality provisions for Children and Young People with SEND and their families.

We will:

- Develop and implement a communication plan which effectively advertises and promotes the Local Offer as the 'go to' information source for all children and young people with SEND, their families and SEND professionals.
- Work with local groups and holiday support services to ensure there is advice, support and guidance on how to make provision for children and young people with SEND.
- Finalise the evaluation of the Local Offer website and deliver improvements. If necessary, a new codesigned website will be reprocurd to ensure that the website is the best it can be.
- Complete a SEND partnership review of provision available for children and young people to close gaps in provision through effective identification of need and joint commissioning involving all partners.
- Complete the delivery of the Southend SEND Capital Programme.
- Produce a clear map of provision across the city that is easily understood and has clear routes on how to access them.
- Complete an audit in reference to inclusion across the local area and educational settings.
- Identify support and resources across settings to better enable children and young people to be educated and participate in activities alongside their peers.
- Promote awareness and understanding of SEND and SEND support services amongst families, practitioners, education settings and our wider communities by recruiting SEND champions.

The Southend SEND Partnership have 5 core commitments:

1. Increase the voice and engagement of children and young people with SEND and their families.
2. Develop our workforce across the Southend SEND Partnership to ensure they have the right knowledge, skills, confidence and resilience, with opportunities to learn together.
3. Be the best we can be focusing on quality, impact, innovation and improvement supported by evidence of what works well.
4. Improve communications across the SEND Partnership and with children, young people and families, professionals, settings and the voluntary sector.
5. Improve joint working and make the best use of available resources.

## 10. Measuring impact and progress

This strategy is underpinned by a detailed action plan for which the Southend SEND Partnership is accountable. The partnership will drive the delivery of this strategy and the action plan.

Progress against the strategy will be monitored at least termly, with scrutiny and challenge from:

- Southend SEND Strategic Partnership Board.
- Southend City Council Children's Improvement Board.
- Southend Health and Wellbeing Board.
- The Mid and South Essex Integrated Commissioning Board.
- Southend City Council Scrutiny committee.
- The Mid and South Essex Children and Young Peoples Growing Well Board.

Our success will be determined by the lived experience of our children, young people, and families to understand if, and how, they are seeing the difference.

We will monitor impact by:

- Listening to feedback from children and young people, their families and professionals.
- Working with Southend SEND Independent Forum (SSIF) and other groups.
- Working with the SEND Young People's Forum and other youth groups to hear directly from young people.
- Reviewing feedback from regular surveys.
- Designing new and creative ways to capture feedback.
- Reviewing provision arrangements for SEND in Southend schools and settings.

## 11. Keeping you informed

Progress and updates will be published on the SEND Local Offer website:

[www.southend.gov.uk/sendstrategy](http://www.southend.gov.uk/sendstrategy). This will provide key documents and opportunities to feedback, ask questions or make suggestions on the progress of the SEND Partnership.

Our SEND Partnership e-newsletter will also provide regular updates on the work being done and the difference it is making sign up with this link [Southend-on-Sea City Council \(govdelivery.com\)](http://Southend-on-Sea City Council.govdelivery.com)

## 12. Thanks

*With special thanks to everyone who contributed to this strategy, including the children, young people and families who took part in the engagement meetings and online survey, Southend SEND Independent Forum (SSIF) - the Department for Education funded parent carer forum in Southend, schools, youth groups and other organisations in Southend who have been involved, local authority teams, the Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Board and other health organisations, and the elected members of Southend City Council.*

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Mid and South Essex  
Integrated Care  
System

## 13. Legislation and Policy

Legislation driving provision for children and young people with SEND is currently under review by HM Government. We will ensure that this strategy is in line with any changes to legislation, national and local policy and best practice during its lifespan. At present, that legislation and policy is:

### National

- Breaks for carers of disabled children regulations 2011
- National strategy for autistic children, young people and adults: 2021 to 2026
- NHS Long Term plan 2019.
- Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils (2012): Technical guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission.
- SEND and Alternative Provision Green Paper (right support, right place, right time) 2022
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2015
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2014): statutory guidance from the Department for Education.
- The Autism Act 2009
- The Care Act 2014.
- The Children Act 1989/ 2004.
- The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 2 (Care Planning Placement and Case Review) and Volume 3 (Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers).
- The Children and Families Act 2014.
- The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
- The Education Act 1996.
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- The Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice: Protecting the vulnerable (2005).
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (Statutory guidance)



## Appendix 2

<h3>14. Glossary</h3>	
ABSS	A Better Start Southend is a partnership of organisations who operate in six local wards – Westborough, Victoria, Milton, Kursaal, West Shoebury and Shoeburyness.
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is a condition that can affect a person's behaviour, concentration and impulse
ASC	Autistic Spectrum Condition is a lifelong developmental disability which affects how a person communicates, relates to other people and makes sense of the world around them
EHC Plan or EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan is a statutory plan setting out child's special educational needs and the provision set out to meet them
EHE	Electively Home Educated is a term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home - or at home and in some other way which they choose, instead of sending them to school full-time
EPUT	Essex Partnership University Trust – a local health provider
GP	General Practitioner a local health provider
ICB	Integrated Care Board is a partnership of organisations that come together to plan and deliver joined up health and care services, and to improve the lives of people who live and work in their area
LA	Local Authority is responsible for a range of vital services for people in defined areas such as social care, schools
LD	Learning Disability is a term that describes a person with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities
MASH+	Multi agency safeguarding hub a referral point to access children's social care
MHST	Mental Health in Schools Teams are a national pilot offering support for children and young people from trained practitioners in evidence based mental health interventions in schools supervised by NHS staff
MSE ICB	Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Board a new partnership between the organisations that meet health and care needs across mid and south Essex
MSEFT	Mid and South Essex Partnership Foundation Trust – a group of hospitals covering mid and south Essex
NHS	National Health Service – leaders of health care in England
PD	Physical Difficulties a limitation on a person's physical functioning, mobility, dexterity or stamina that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on an individual's ability to do normal daily activities.
PMLD	Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulties is term to describe severe learning disability and other disabilities (such as difficulties with hearing, speaking and moving) that significantly affect a person's ability to communicate and be independent.
RB	Resource base (sometimes called Enhanced Provision) provide targeted support in a setting attached to a mainstream school which enables children to make progress, achieve their identified outcomes and continue to access the mainstream curriculum and school
SCC	Southend City Council is the local government authority providing services for the area

Schools census	An electronic collection of pupil data from primary, secondary, special schools and pupil referral units, which takes place three times a year
SEMH	Social Emotional Mental Health is a term to describe someone who has a range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways and behaviours.
SENDIASS	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service is a free, impartial and confidential service offering information, advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and to young people.
SEND	Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities is a term referring to a learning difficulty and/or a disability that means a child needs special health and education support.
SEND Capital Programme	Funding provided by the Government, through the Department for Education to help local authorities shape facilities for children with Special Educational Needs
SEN Support	Educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for others of the same age. This means provision that goes beyond the differentiated approaches and learning arrangements normally provided as part of high quality, personalised teaching. It may take the form of additional support from within the school or require the involvement of specialist staff or support services. SEN support is the term used to describe the support that schools provide for pupils who have been identified as having SEN but who do not need an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment. Pupils at SEN Support are given support that is additional to and different from the majority of children and is paid for out of the school's resources. Most pupils with SEN in mainstream schools are provided for at SEN Support.
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulties is a term to describe significant and profound cognitive difficulties.
SET CAMHS	The Child and Adolescence Mental Health Service provides advice and support to children, young people and families who need support with their emotional wellbeing or mental health difficulties. The service covers Southend, Essex and Thurrock.
SSIF	Southend SEND Independent Forum is Southend's local Parent Carer Forum funded by the Department for Education.
SCPHN	Specialist Public Health Nurse provides support for children with Special Educational Needs in mainstream school.
SCPHN - EHE	Specialist Public Health Nurse provides support for children who are Home Educated
SUHFT	Southend University Hospital Foundation Trust.

# Southend-on-Sea City Council

Executive Director of Children and Public Health  
to  
**Education Board**  
On  
**18 October 2022**

Report prepared by:

Catherine Braun, Head of Access and Inclusion  
and  
Sarah Greaves, Head of the Virtual School

Agenda  
Item No.

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## Review of Inclusion across Southend-on-Sea Schools, Settings, and Services

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### **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 **To update the board on the work of the Southend Education Inclusion Task and Finish Advisory Group and emerging themes for the recommended spend of the annual £1M High Needs budget from 2022/23.**
- 1.2 **To update the board on the findings of the commissioned Rapid Review of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP)**

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 To agree the Alternative Provision Base Pilot as outlined in 5.5 onwards

### **3 Background**

- 3.1 In June 2022, following the “Implementing the ambitions of the Green Paper on SEND” paper by the Director of Education and Early Years, Education Board agreed an annual ring-fenced sum of £1M from 2022/23 to increase opportunities for inclusion in the Southend area. The focus of the first years spend is for children of compulsory school age.
- 3.2 The Task and Finish Group has now met on three occasions since its inauguration in June 2022. The group consists of representatives from primary, secondary, special, and alternative provision schools. School representatives were identified from existing Education Board subgroups members. In addition, an Early Years representative, school SENCO and LA officers from Education and Social Care, along with representation from the Southend SEND Independent Forum (Parent/Carer group) and Health.

- 3.3 The purpose of the group is to consider the findings of the rapid review of SEND and alternative provision, and to advise and support the Council on:
- 3.3.1 Best use of the allocated funding to support inclusion and consider proposals contained in the SEND Green paper, with respect of supporting mainstream schools in meeting the needs of the majority of learners with additional needs, alongside their peers
  - 3.3.2 Prepare a costed spend and implementation plan for 2022/23
  - 3.3.3 To determine clear timescales and impact measures for each of the proposals contained in the implementation plan, and then to monitor progress against the plan
  - 3.3.4 To play a lead role in any required recruitment or procurement exercises relating to the proposals
  - 3.3.5 To play a lead advocating role in championing the initiatives within the plan with all education leaders, including rapid consultation with education leaders
  - 3.3.6 Over time, to also advise on potential capital provision in relation to inclusion/SEND agenda
- 3.4 Chow Solutions were commissioned to undertake a four-month rapid review of Inclusion, specifically children and young people accessing Alternative Provision in Southend including Outreach and services to provide provision where children are unable to attend school due to health reasons. The final report outlining its findings and recommendations was shared with the Task and Finish Group at their last meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

#### **4 Current themes and findings**

- 4.1.1 The Task and Finish Group has concentrated its focus on the following themes which were identified and agreed at the initial meeting: Current alternative provision options available locally and potential gaps or needs; The effectiveness of the SEND graduated response in relation to early identification and intervention; How schools, pupils and their families can be better supported by the LA and other external services to enable children and young people with SEND to be educated successfully alongside peers in a mainstream school; To explore practise, service provision and modelling, and training to meet the growing social, emotional, mental health, anxiety and related medical needs of children and young people in Southend.
- 4.2 In addition, the rapid review of Inclusion identified four core elements of improvement: Mapping alternative provision: provision, access, and the movement of pupils; Structural and strategic issues; Improvements to processes and systems; Commissioning of relevance to alternative provision, which also reinforce the initial themes of the group.
- 4.3 **Mapping alternative provision: provision, access, and the movement of pupils**
- 4.3.1 It was identified that the number of Southend pupils moving from mainstream to alternative provision due to permanent exclusion or reaching the point of permanent exclusion (APEX) was high.

- 4.3.2 For the majority of those moved, over 80% were found to have identified special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).
- 4.3.3 There appears to be a rapid escalation for pupils permanently excluded or those reaching APEX with more than half of these children not having SEND identified until accessing alternative provision; and the majority not having had previous external interventions through outreach services prior to exclusion.
- 4.3.4 There is a gap in flexible, part-time, time-limited group interventions either from outreach services within mainstream schools or within alternative provisions.
- 4.3.5 There is a gap in alternative options to transitions into post 16 provisions.

#### 4.4 **Structural and strategic issues**

- 4.4.1 There is limited ownership and collaborative working of a shared set of values and vision for inclusion across local schools, settings, and services.
- 4.4.2 Greater work is needed to ensure an effective graduated response of SEND, particularly earlier identification at SEND support for the right support, in the right place at the right time.

#### 4.5 **Improvements to processes and systems**

- 4.5.1 Greater analysis is needed of the impact and effectiveness of pupils transitioning back to mainstream from alternative provision and increased opportunities for pupils to reintegrate back to mainstream from special schools or resource bases.
- 4.5.2 Greater analysis needed of the impact and effectiveness of all outreach services, including the role of alternative provisions and Autism Resource Bases in providing professional advice, and professional development for other mainstream schools.
- 4.5.3 There is a current gap for pupils transitioning from primary autism resource bases (ARB) into an appropriate secondary ARB.

#### 4.6 **Commissioning of relevance to alternative provision**

- 4.6.1 Further develop a comprehensive suite of tools for children with social, emotional, and mental health needs (SEMH) and ensure consistency in identification, language, and practice.
- 4.6.2 Review commissioned alternative provision pathways to increase the number of places and earlier opportunities for flexible, part-time alternative provision for primary and secondary school pupils.
- 4.7 Review alternative provision pathways in alternative provision where reintegration isn't deemed in the child's best interests to return to mainstream and increase alternative provision options for registered provisions.

## **5 Focus for the next half term**

- 5.1 To identify the commissioned activities and spend, the group needs to understand the wider needs of the local community along with the findings of the rapid review. As such, the following rapid consultations will occur:
- 5.1.1 Consulting the views of all schools (primary, secondary, special, and alternative provision schools). Using the findings from the rapid review, a set of eight questions has been formed to gain schools views on the needs of the local area and required investment from the one-year funding.
- 5.1.2 It asks the views of schools on further investment in the type of services for children, families, and schools; developing existing or new alternative provisions, developing new or existing specialist SEND provisions, and developing specialist training and resources for schools.
- 5.1.3 The survey will go out to schools on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2022 for approximately two weeks (not including the Southend published half term week).
- 5.1.4 Southend SEND Independent (Parent/Carer) Forum (SIF), will also consult with parents on the needs of the local area and where investment is needed to better meet the needs of children with SEND in Southend.
- 5.1.5 This will also be a rapid consultation commencing on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2022 for approximately three weeks. This is due to conclude on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022 (including the Southend published half term week). Following this consultation, results will be collated and analysed by members of SIF. A report on the findings will be available, week commencing 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022.
- 5.1.6 In addition to schools and parents, the views of Southend's statutory children's services such as social care, youth offending and health are asked through the membership representation, to seek the views of services regarding what provisions, resources and services are needed to ensure a more inclusive Southend for children with SEND and improve earlier identification and outcomes for children.
- 5.2 The Task and Finish Group recognised the findings of the rapid review regarding the need for additional alternative provision pathways in the town to respond to needs earlier and allow for a more flexible approach to alternative provision.
- 5.3 SSIF also shared early views of parents where there is a gap for those children and young people where a return to mainstream or special school provision is not deemed to be in the best interest of the child, and limited provision options for those requiring Education other than at School (EOTAS).
- 5.4 The Council has also been approached by two Southend school multi academy trusts (MAT) to make an application for an Alternative Provision Free School.
- 5.5 The Council has declined any such partnership for this round of alternative provision free schools until the work of the Task and Finish Group has been finalised in identifying the provision needs of the local area. The group has

instead supported a proposal to pilot interim provision bases within existing schools and provisions within the town.

- 5.6 The group will write to all registered settings in the area asking for expressions of interest in operating an alternative provision base within their school or setting during the academic year 2023/24 (or earlier if able). Schools or trusts can put in an expression of interest on their own or by joining with another provision or school as part of their interest.
- 5.7 Once initial expressions of interest are received, a subgroup will be formed with partners who do not have a conflict of interest to create the specifications and scope, along with performance indicators and outcomes framework using the rapid review findings and the analysis of the different consultations with schools, parent/carers and partners.
- 5.8 It is aimed that after the shortlisting of business cases and interview rounds by the subgroup; successful schools, trusts and/or provisions will be confirmed in January 2023 and no later than February half term 2023.
- 5.9 The full timeline for the process will be shared at the November 2022 Task and Finish Group and as soon as the subgroup has been formed and specifications and scope identified by the subgroup, those expressing an interest will be shared the details to provide a more informed and comprehensive business case to the group.
- 5.10 The pilot will be funded through the Education Board's allocated and unspent £700,000 additional alternative provision pathways and does not form part of the £1,000,000 budget. The projects will not have allocated capital funding, due to this being a pilot.

## **6 Conclusion**

- 6.1 The Task and Finish Group will be able to report to the Vulnerable Learners and Resource Subgroups on the proposed 2022/23 spend of the Inclusion Review once the consultations have been fully analysed. This should identify the areas and focus of spend and allow the group to commence on any commissioning of services, resources, and training.
- 6.2 The alternative provision pilot will inform the group and Education Board of future long-term commitments for alternative provision within Southend and allow the group to move to a successful pathway/s for the provision of additional alternative provision places within the local area, whether this be through existing alternative provision schools, new alternative provision bases within mainstream or special schools, or support the application for a new alternative provision free school.
- 6.3 Importantly, the areas identified through the themes and initial findings of the Task and Finish Group, rapid review and from the analysis of the surveys from schools, parents/carers and services must also align to the Southend SEND Strategy 2022-2025.

- 6.4 It is, therefore, helpful to note that these early findings already align to three of following priorities within the strategy:
- 6.4.1 Transitions: Children and young people are prepared and supported to thrive at each change in their lives, helping them to feel secure and confident.
  - 6.4.2 Early Intervention: Identification, assessment and effective support are provided at the earliest opportunity.
  - 6.4.3 Good mental health and wellbeing: children and young people are provided with the best chance to achieve positive mental health, be happy and thrive within their family, education, and social lives, develop their potential, build strong relationships, and contribute to their community.
  - 6.4.4 The Task and Finish Group will provide a further report to the Education Board at the December 2022 meeting. This report will outline the areas in which the initial £1M High Needs spend will be allocated. Mapped against impact measures, to evidence effective use of funds.