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1. Introduction and Scope

Introduction

This Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Strategy outlines the values, principles and key priorities that will guide the Royal Borough of Greenwich and partners in its decision-making process over the next three years in supporting children and young people from 0-25 with special educational needs and disabilities and their families or carers.

One of the key challenges facing the borough in the coming years is a projected increase in the 0-25 population by around 10% between 2018 and 2021. This is projected to lead to approximately 150 more children and young people having an EHC plan by 2021 and a consequent need to expand the number of places available in designated special provision (DSP) and special schools, particularly for children and young people with ASD who, it is estimated, will account for 60 of the 150 additional EHC Plans.

This will have a significant impact on place planning for both special and mainstream schools.

This is a partnership strategy that will be delivered across early years providers, schools, colleges, the health providers, voluntary sector, social care and adult services in Greenwich.

The strategy sets out:

- The strategic direction of all partners for meeting the needs of children and young people with special educational needs & disabilities
- Our leadership and governance structure to enable us to achieve the aims of the strategy
- Our aspirations for children and young people with special educational needs & disabilities
- How we work with parents, carers, children and young people to inform how we commission and deliver services
- Priority areas for action over the next 3 years

This document is intended for everyone with responsibilities for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities including:

- Head Teachers
- Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs)
- School Governors – particularly Chairs and Governors with responsibility for SEND – outreach services, social workers and partner agencies in health and the voluntary sectors
- Parents and carers
- Community and leisure services
- Housing
**Context**

In 2011 the government recognized the need to reform the way services to children and young people with Special Educational Needs based on conversations with parents and carers. Greenwich became a pathfinder to develop and trial new ways of working.


**National policy and local guidance**

In developing the Strategy, we looked at national and local policy, research and evidence from across the country and what we know about children and young people with SEND in Greenwich. An overview of the main policy, population and financial information are set out below.

**National policy**

The Department for Education (DfE) leads the SEND system for England and defines the legislative, policy and funding arrangements.

The DfE’s vision is of “children and young people with SEND achieving well in their early years, at school and in college; finding employment; leading happy and fulfilled lives; and having choice and control over their support.” (DfE 2015b).

The current arrangements for the education and care of children and young people with SEND are largely governed by the Children and Families Act (2014). Part 3 of this requires local authorities, schools and academies, early years providers and NHS bodies to pay regard to the regulations and to the statutory SEND Code of Practice (DfE 2015a). Direct payments and supporting transitions to adult care services.

The Care Act (2014) sets out duties local authorities and CCGs must fulfil for children and young people with disabilities and their families, including direct payments and supporting transitions to adult care services.

The Government holds the local SEND system to account through Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) who have been tasked to carry out evaluations of local areas in England and their support for children and young people with SEND. Inspection teams assess the effectiveness of the local organisations in identifying and meeting the needs of all children and young people with SEND from ages 0 to 25 (Ofsted 2016).

The Greenwich local area SEND inspection took place in July 2017 and a copy of the outcome letter is available here.

**Local Strategies and Policies**

The key local strategy informing the SEND strategy is Greenwich Children and Young People’s Plan 2017-2020 which has made children and young people with SEND as one of the 4 key priorities.

A list of local strategies and policies are available on the Greenwich SEND Local Offer (see back of document).

Greenwich has had a multi-agency steering group to lead on the reforms since 2011 including representatives from the Greenwich Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Children’s services, Adult and Health Services, Oxleas Community Health, voluntary sector, short breaks providers, and Greenwich Parent Voice.

This multi-agency partnership continues and the governance structure is available in section 10.

**Scope of the SEND Strategy**

This strategy is for children and young people aged 0 to 25 years with special educational needs & disabilities, including those whose needs are met through intervention and support in mainstream schools (SEN Support) and those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) and their families or carers. It is also for children and young people with disabilities who may not have special educational needs but who may be disadvantaged in achieving their aspirations and participating fully in education and the wider society as a consequence of their disabilities.

Through this strategy, the Royal Borough of Greenwich is working to demonstrate it is effectively building on the strengths, meeting the needs and promoting high aspirations in planning for the future to improve outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
2. Our Vision

At the heart of establishing this shared direction and ambition is our joint vision:

All children and young people with special needs and disabilities in Greenwich, regardless of their background or circumstances, should have a happy and fulfilled childhood where they belong, grow and succeed so that they enter adulthood ready, willing and able to achieve their highest potential.

Key Principles

Our key principles are:

- We are child and family centred with a focus on supporting children and young people within their family contexts and in their local communities
- Children and young people should be encouraged to have high aspirations and achieve to the best of their ability
- The voices of children, young people and their families should help ‘shape’ our services so they are responsive and based on ‘real’ rather than perceived need
- All children and young people should have the opportunity to attend a good local school
- All children and young people should have the opportunity to participate to the fullest extent in their local community
- Children, young people and their families should be able to access local services that are as inclusive as possible to meet the diversity of their needs and help to develop and strengthen resilience
- Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities should have appropriate intervention at the earliest opportunity
- Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and their families should experience a holistic approach, with services working together, to achieve their aspirations
- Children and young people should be supported to become as independent as possible into adult life

How we will achieve our vision

- We will encourage children, young people and their families to aim for high but realistic aspirations
- We will focus on intervening effectively at the earliest opportunity
- We will ensure that, wherever possible, children and young people are able to attend a good local school or setting
- We will ensure that children and young people and their families have access to services that meet their needs
- We will ensure that children and young people can participate to the fullest extent in their local community
- We will focus on developing the skills and expertise of all staff supporting disabled children
- We will prepare children for adulthood at the earliest opportunity
3. What we do well?

A SEND area inspection took place in 2017 – a joint inspection by the CQC and Ofsted - which identified many strengths and some areas for development.

Senior leaders in the local area have interpreted the reforms skilfully when planning improvements in the provision for children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. High aspirations are at the heart of leaders’ work. As a result, outcomes are improving.

We are proud of:

- our schools, 94% of which are good or outstanding
- our outcomes for EYFS children with SEND who achieve a good level of development well above national
- our outcomes for pupils with SEND, who attain well above national across the primary phase and perform well at KS4
- increasing the numbers of children and young people with disabilities who are part of the ACE young disabled people’s participation group informing all of our commissioning
- being able to keep so many of our children in local schools

We have:

- grown and developed the SEN team to meet increasing demands
- transferred all statements of SEN to EHC plans with all children and young people having appropriate reassessments
- improved co-production with parents through our working alongside Greenwich Parent Voice
- increased designated specialist provision in mainstream schools, and developed other specialist provision to support children to remain in local schools using information on needs
- continued to develop and reform our outreach services
- continued to develop and improve our Local Offer
- developed the SENCo network tp keep SENCos up to date with changes and to gain their views on elements of the service
- developed early intervention speech and language service

We have commissioned:

- integrated therapy service for children with a focus on early identification and treatment
- CAMHS services that can support schools, with additional services for children and young people with SEND
- 0-19 public health services including health visiting and school nursing
- Short breaks services in line with feedback from parents and young people

ASD outreach made my son visual aids as he told them he felt he needed them.... He now uses these and is much more relaxed knowing and being able to see what he is doing and when.
4. Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in Greenwich

In January 2018 there were 43,725 children and young people attending a Greenwich school (including some from other boroughs).

- **15-16%** of the population of children and young people attending a Greenwich school were identified as having SEND (6,643 in total).
- Of those with Greenwich EHC plans, **602** attended special schools and **139** were attending DSPs.
- **85%** of those with EHC plans attended schools or colleges in Greenwich.
- **15-16%** of the population of children and young people attending a Greenwich school were identified as having SEND (6,643 in total).

Of those with Greenwich EHC plans:
- **602** attended special schools.
- **139** were attending DSPs.

In terms of how this compares to England and London rates of SEND for 2018:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>% with SEND</th>
<th>% at SEN support</th>
<th>% EHCP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Royal Greenwich | 15.4%       | 12.7%            | 2.7%   *

Source: RBG Jan 2018 school census data; DfE SEN_2018 SFR

Our proportion of children with SEN – in both EHCPs (previously statements of special educational need) and SEN support has stayed the same over the past years.

However, the actual numbers are increasing because:
A. EHCPs can now continue up to the age of 25
B. Greenwich child population is increasing

*It is not always possible to compare Greenwich numbers with those in other boroughs. In Greenwich schools have free access to outreach services and therapies that are not available in some Local Authorities. This means that schools are able to identify needs and put services in place to meet them at an earlier stage without the need for an EHC plan.

**Type of need**

Speech, language and communication needs is the most prevalent primary need within the SEN support cohort of pupils, markedly higher than the England average 43%:23%

At statement / EHCP level, Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is the most prevalent primary need, again much higher than the England average 45%:28%

The ASD proportion has been increasing year on year.
5. How services are funded

The Department of Education provides funding for schools and there is a block of funding called the ‘High Needs Block’ that is sent to the Local Authority to allocate. In 2017-18 the High Needs Block was almost fully allocated. Funding for children with SEN will be an increasing challenge and we will need to continually review how we deliver services to meet this challenge.

In 2017 - 2018

- £40.28 million was received in funding from High needs funding from government
- The Local Authority also funds
- Greenwich CCG also funds

Majority goes directly to school to support:
- Children on SEN support
- Top up to schools and colleges for children who have EHC plans
- Outreach services including ASD, sensory and STEPS, and Early Years inclusion,
- Part funding of the educational psychology service
- Commissioned services – speech and Language therapy, OT and physiotherapy, and CAMHS (are jointly funded from this budget and the Greenwich CCG.)
- Independent school placements including alternative education provision
- SEN assessment and review team

Key staff such as:
- Additional educational psychology
- Health visiting and school nursing

Short breaks including:
- Direct payments and support packages
- Overnight short breaks
- Short breaks activities
- Summer holiday schemes

Home to school travel

Support packages for children with continuing care needs (some jointly funded with RBG)

Children’s community health services including:
- Children’s community nurses
- Audiology
- Dieticians
- Incontinence service
- Community paediatricians

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Projection of need going forward

Greenwich has seen unprecedented population growth in recent years and the 0-18 population is projected to continue to grow in the short to medium term, the greatest growth being in the secondary school age range which is predicted to rise by nearly 15% over the five years to 2022/23. Assuming that the proportion of children with special educational needs or disabilities in the population remains the same (overall around 2 to 3%), we estimate there will be around 215 more children with an EHCP in 2022, compared with 2017. We expect to continue to see ASD at the greatest prevalence within that.

Note: ‘2017 (re-based)’ includes adjustments to 2017 data to better reflect the pressure for high need specialist places.
6. Voices of Children and Young People
We believe it is important that children and young people have their voices heard and have the opportunity to make a significant impact on service development.

How do we do this?

Consulting with young people attending leisure services such as short breaks or youth clubs to ask their opinion
Visiting mainstream and special schools - both primary and secondary - to consult with children and young people
Regular meetings with the ACE (Action, Change, Equality) board of children and young people with disabilities
Individual young people being involved in commissioning projects or interview panels
Include disabled young people in participation activities with the Children in Care Council and Greenwich Children and Young Peoples Council
Our staff support young people in participation using a variety of communication techniques tailored to individual modes of communication and/or communication systems

In other groups I wouldn’t get included and my ideas wouldn’t have been used

7. Voices of Parents and Carers
Greenwich works in partnership with our parent carer forum Greenwich Parent Voice to ensure that parent/carers voices are actively sought heard and listened to and successfully inform service development.

How do we do this?

Monthly catch up meetings with GPV, Assistant Director for Inclusion Learning and Achievement, and participation officers - supporting GPV in their priorities whilst responding to issues arising that they raise
Staff support GPV in attending school coffee mornings
Providing materials for information packs
Consult with GPV at early stages of changes
Partnership working on issues eg diversity event with churches
We support and encourage Greenwich Parent Voice to seek the views of parents and carers from the hard to reach areas of the community such as Thamesmead

GPV works in close partnership with RBG to make sure the most ambitious outcomes for children are realised. This works because of the trust built between us over many years of co-working. Goals and projects are aligned so that we can use each other’s capabilities to best effect. Families believe in this relationship because they can see that their voices have a direct impact on how services are delivered.

8. Our priority areas for 2018-21

A. Identifying and assessing needs early
- Improve timeliness in issuing new EHC Plans, and improve quality of plans including a greater focus on social care and health in EHC Plans for some children and young people
- Improve consistency between schools in the identification of pupils with SEND
- Improve timeliness of ASD assessments
- Ensure we have workforce development plans in place for all staff including schools, health services and community providers to meet needs of children at the earliest stage
- Strengthen collaborative and person centred approaches to planning and review

B. Meeting identified needs
- Improve access to, and diversity of, local community based short breaks provision
- Continue to develop in borough school places for changing needs, including special schools and DSPs
- Complete the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for children and young people with SEND and use it to inform future joint commissioning with Greenwich CCG
- Develop the ACE groups to include broader range of young people to inform service development
- Develop an SEPH (social, emotional and mental health) strategy for improving services and provision and reducing fixed term exclusions in our schools

C. Improving outcomes
- Improve opportunities for children and young people to develop independence skills from an early age
- Co-ordinate and develop support for children and young people with learning disabilities and/or autism whose behaviour challenges
- Work with schools to improve academic outcomes at Key stage 4

D. Preparing for adulthood
- Work holistically with families to support the transition to adulthood for children and young people with SEND
- Support young people with SEND to remain within their community during the transition to adulthood
- Work in partnership to develop young adult day care services in their community
- Develop the 14+ & 16+ education offer for children and young people with SEND within borough
- Increase the opportunities available for apprenticeships and supported internships for young people with SEND
- Ensure information is available at the right time and in an easy format.

E. Improving services for children with Autistic Spectrum disorders
- Put in place newly commissioned integrated pathways for children with ASD
- Develop ASD pathways from 0-25
- Develop the parent support programmes eg Early Bird
- Increase the numbers of schools meeting Autism Education Trust standards
- Develop programme of interventions for young people in 6th form provision, and develop post 19 offer for students with ASD
9. How will we keep on track and know we are making a difference?

There are a number of ways we will monitor how well we are doing.

Every quarter – data is provided for a Children’s Services monitor to see how well our services are performing against some key indicators e.g., timescales for EHC planning. This information is monitored by the Children’s Services Directorate Management Group, Children’s Services Strategic Partnership (CSSP) and the council’s Children and Young People’s Scrutiny group.

A SEND strategic managers group meets 3 times a year and has responsibility for ‘rag rating’ the actions in the improvement plan which will be revised annually and published on the Local Offer.

This information is provided to the Children’s Services and Health and Adult Services Directorate Management Teams.

The Strategic Managers group is chaired by Children’s Services Assistant Director for Inclusion, Learning and Achievement and membership includes:

- Greenwich SEND services managers (SEN assessment and review service, SEND)
- Partnership Support Service, SEND Outreach Service and Educational Psychology
- Senior manager from Health and Adults services
- Commissioning managers from Children’s Services and Greenwich CCG
- Senior managers from Oxleas including CAMHS and Children’s Community services
- Representatives of community providers
- Greenwich Parent Voice

Members of this group also hold each other to account providing both support and challenge where there appear to be delays and blockages.

10. Governance and accountability structure

[Diagram showing governance and accountability structure]

- Strategic Management Group (SEND)
  - SEND Commissioning group
  - ACE participation Group Network
  - SEND Children’s Services SLT
  - Task and Finish groups (as required)
  - GPV
  - Community Providers Forum

- CPA
- Halley Academy
- Shooter’s Hill
- Willow Dane
- Kings Park
- The John Ream

Preparation for Adulthood
- SEMH
- ASD: Priority
- Travel Assistance
- Local offer
THE LOCAL OFFER
in Royal Greenwich

Website for children and young people
with special needs or disabilities

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
to see what’s available for young people with
disabilities and their families:

- Early Years
- Preparing for Adulthood
- Training and Employment
- Things to do
- Education
- Social Care
- Health
- Money
- Information and Support

WWW.ROYALGREENWICH.GOV.UK/LOCALOFFER

For more details and to let us know what you think, contact the Families Information Service on 020 8921 6921 or email fis@royalgreenwich.gov.uk.

You can also access the Local Offer in all Royal Greenwich Libraries and Children’s Centres.

www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/localoffer