



Involve • Listen • Respond

Leicester's strategy for supporting children
and young people with Special Educational
Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

2017 – 2022

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Foreword

Leicester City is committed to providing the best support for our children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. This means that we strive to develop the most accurate and timely identification of need as we realise that identifying need at the earliest opportunity allows for better outcomes in the longer term. We will also deliver the best interventions for our children and young people. These will be evidence based interventions which can be shown to be most effective and efficient in supporting the development of children and young people so they can become independent adults achieving their goals in life.

At the heart of the strategy for SEND in Leicester is our commitment to listen to the voices of children, young people and their families. We firmly believe that it is through cooperation and hearing the views of those most involved that real progress towards achieving our joint goals will be made.

Cllr Sarah Russell, Deputy City Mayor

Summary

- ❖ We have agreed the core values to which all organisations and services working with children and young people with SEND across Leicester will work.
- ❖ We want to prepare children and young people with SEND to grow into adults who achieve the best possible outcomes and life experience for their unique circumstance.
- ❖ The strategy contains information about the needs of local children and young people with SEND and how we currently organise and deliver services to meet these needs.
- ❖ We have set ourselves some clear aims that we will work towards that will enable needs to be met and the best possible outcomes to be achieved.
- ❖ The agreed aims helped us to develop an action plan that will support this strategy to be implemented. This work will be overseen by the SEND strategic partnership board that is accountable to Leicester's Children's Trust Board.

Introduction

The purpose of this strategy is to present what we know about the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and how we will listen and respond to those needs in order to improve the lives of children and families. The strategy should be read in conjunction with the SEND Self-Evaluation Framework (SEF) which sets out in detail where the Leicester Local Area thinks it is in bringing about the vision laid out in this strategy.

The strategy is important as it demonstrates how the local authority and its partners are taking a joint and integrated approach to meeting statutory requirements as set out in legislation. It also demonstrates how these requirements relate to the local context of Leicester city and how we plan and deliver services across the city and beyond. Most importantly, having a clear strategy enables us to identify strengths and weaknesses, see the whole picture of service provision and plan actions to be taken to improve the identified priorities.

The strategy is jointly produced and owned by all relevant services in partnership through the SEND Strategic Partnership Board and Leicester's Children's Trust. It sets out our ambitions for children and young people with SEND and their families and what action will be taken to make progress and improve the quality of support that is provided in Leicester.

The Vision

In Leicester City, we aim to ensure all children and young people succeed in learning, achieve their goals and realise their aspirations.

Our vision is for children and young people with SEND to have:

- ❖ a positive family life leading to as independent an adult life in the community as possible;
- ❖ a broad, balanced and relevant range of learning opportunities delivered by appropriately qualified staff to maximise achievement and attainment;
- ❖ improved life chances to pursue their goals;
- ❖ social and leisure pursuits in the community in order to promote healthier lifestyles; access to, and use of, community facilities;
- ❖ family, friends and key people in the community to support their independence and participation;
- ❖ swift and easy access to resources and support services, enabling early intervention;
- ❖ education as close to their own homes and communities as possible.

Partnership Values

The vision of all partner organisations working with children and families in Leicester is **to improve children's lives by working in partnership to raise aspirations, build achievement and protect the most vulnerable.**

In order for children and young people with SEND living in Leicester city to achieve the best possible outcomes we aim to provide high quality, integrated support and services.

The SEND Strategic Partnership Board has developed and agreed the following multi-agency **partnership values** which will guide and support all services delivered in Leicester:

We will:

Independence

- ❖ Provide a personalised approach by always acting in line with the child or young person's best interests
- ❖ Listen, hear and respond to children, young people and their families

Equality

- ❖ Support and value diversity
- ❖ Maximise children and young people's learning and participation within their local communities
- ❖ Observe professional standards and ethics, including standards in relation to professional independence, impartiality, expertise and qualifications
- ❖ Ensure equality of access within a setting or community based on need, with priority given to the most vulnerable

Collaborative Working

- ❖ Ensure all parties work as a partnership towards a common goal
- ❖ Promote a culture of information sharing
- ❖ Always strive for equal engagement from partners

Ambition

- ❖ Promote the creative and innovative use of resources to support children and young people
- ❖ Ensure early identification and intervention

Inclusion

- ❖ Support children and young people to feel comfortable and access the same resources as others
- ❖ Provide children and young people with the same opportunities to express themselves as others

Outcomes and Aims

The SEND Strategic Partnership Board commits to preparing children and young people with SEND to grow into adults who are:

- ❖ Healthy, enjoying good physical and mental health
- ❖ Employed, in education or training
- ❖ Involved in decisions that affect them
- ❖ Living as independently as possible, freeing them to make the choices they wish for an independent adult life in the community
- ❖ Connected with their communities and playing a full part in them
- ❖ Pursuing their goals through improved life chances

To achieve these outcomes the following aims have been agreed, which guide our action planning and performance management and monitoring of the effectiveness of SEND support work in Leicester.

Through improving the support provided to children and young people to help them to pursue their goals we aim to:

Aim 1 – Ensure the best health outcomes for children, young people and adults with SEND

Aim 2 – Improve educational outcomes and numbers of children and young people who enter employment, training or continuing education at 18 or are involved in meaningful activities

Aim 3 – Ensure the participation of children, young people and their families in all decisions that affect them

Aim 4 – Improve the number of young adults who live independent lives

Aim 5 – Develop young peoples' connection with their communities

Involve, Listen, Respond...

A fundamental driver of this strategy is to ensure that the voice of the child or young person and their family is central to the planning and delivery of services for them. The strapline 'Involve – Listen – Respond' was developed to recognise that this theme is threaded throughout SEND service provision in Leicester. It moves us forward from simply having mechanisms in place to enable involvement, to actually hearing and responding to the views and wishes of the child or young person.

Inclusion

- ❖ Inclusion is an entitlement for all children and young people whatever their ability, race, social or cultural background, faith or sexual orientation.
- ❖ Inclusion is about much more than the type of school that children attend. It is about the quality of their experience; how they are helped to learn, achieve and participate fully in the life of the school involving all members of the community, taking account of individual characteristics and needs.
- ❖ Identifying and removing barriers involves planning improvements in provision, policy and practice following evaluation. This may include adapting the curriculum, developing welcoming attitudes and targeting resources enabling early identification and rapid response to SEND.
- ❖ Outcomes from inclusion will be subject to high expectations for all children and young people with regard to progress and attainment, whatever the type of provision the young person attends.
- ❖ The Local Authority will fulfil its duty to ensure that parents and young people are consulted and that all schools deliver their obligations under the SEND Code of Practice and the Disability Equality Duty with regard to inclusive practice.

We will work to ensure the best quality inclusive practice is seen in all Leicester's education providers.

The SEND Code of Practice (1:24) requires local authorities to consider their position on inclusion of children with SEND in schools and childcare settings and state what can be reasonably expected of mainstream schools and settings in meeting the needs of children and young people with a range of SEND.

Leicester's Inclusion Statement provides a set of expectations for high quality teaching and SEND provision. It sets out what schools/settings are expected to provide from their delegated funds (i.e., Element 1 and 2 funding) for children and young people with SEND. It also provides baseline criteria against which to determine applications for top-up funding (i.e. through either Element 3 funding or an EHC plan).

Strategic Context – National and Local

Definition of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

- ❖ A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.
- ❖ A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:
 - has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
 - has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions xv. For children aged two or more, special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools, mainstream post-16 institutions or by relevant early years providers. For a child under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.
- ❖ A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if he or she is likely to fall within the definition in paragraph xiv. above when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014).
- ❖ Post-16 institutions often use the term learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD). The term SEN is used in the new Code across the 0-25 age range but includes LDD.

Disabled children and young people

Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘...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’. This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: ‘long-term’ is defined as ‘a year or more’ and ‘substantial’ is defined as ‘more than minor or trivial’. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

Statutory framework – LA and multi-agency responsibilities

Primary legislation

Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

Children and Families Act 2014 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>

Care Act <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

Advice and Guidance

SEND Code of Practice May 2015

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

DfE Guidance on Equality Act for Schools May 2014

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

'**Working Together**' (2015) (vi) requires local agencies to have effective ways of identifying emerging problems and potential unmet needs for individual children and their families. It also requires local agencies to work together to put processes in place for the effective assessment of needs of individual children who may benefit from early help services. 'Working Together' is clear that it is the responsibility of all partners to adhere to the guidance, not just local authorities.

Regulations

SEN and Disability Regulations 2014

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/1530/pdfs/ukxi_20141530_en.pdf

Transitions Guidance (Statements to EHCs) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-managing-changes-to-legislation-from-september-2014--3>

National policy drivers

Statutory duties on local areas regarding the provision for children and young people with SEND are contained in the **Children and Families Act 2014** and more detail provided in regulations and in the **Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years**. The code of practice is statutory guidance published by the Department for Education and the Department of Health. The duties came into force in September 2014 and Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission have been tasked with inspecting local areas on their effectiveness in fulfilling the new duties.

Local context

With a population of more than 300,000, Leicester is the largest city in the East Midlands and the tenth largest city in the country. It is a unitary authority and has had an elected mayor since 2011.

The city has a younger and more diverse population, with higher levels of deprivation and significantly worse life expectancy, compared to England. The information from the Census 2011 shows that Leicester has a faster rate of growth and a larger proportion of children and young people in the population than in England and Wales generally.

The city is seeing major increases in the number of children and young people living here and is now home to 130,726 children and young people aged up to 24 years, an increase of 12.5% since 2011, which is more than double the increase seen in England as a whole. This growth

includes a big increase in the number of young children aged 0-4 years which rose by nearly 25% from 20,726 in 2005 to 25,884 in 2015.

The figures are:

- ❖ A population of 329,900 (an increase of 16.7% since 2001) and is projected to grow to 371000 by 2025
- ❖ Leicester has a much younger population than England, with 38% under 25 years.
- ❖ There is a large student population at two universities.
- ❖ Around 50% of the population is from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups - most of these are from South Asian backgrounds. The proportion of people from BME groups will continue to increase.
- ❖ Leicester is a deprived city – the 20th most deprived local authority in the UK (IMD 2015). Due to high levels of deprivation, people in Leicester have poorer health and life expectancy that are below the average in England.
- ❖ There are higher than average rates of cardiovascular disease, respiratory diseases, cancers and diabetes.
- ❖ 29% of adults have no qualifications.
- ❖ 15.7% of working age adults are unemployed (23,800 people).
- ❖ Over a third of Leicester's children are living in poverty.

In addition:

- ❖ There is significant inward migration from abroad – of the 34% of city residents who were born outside of the UK, just under half (35,000) arrived between 2001 and 2011.
- ❖ There has been a constant increase in total school aged population from 2010-2017.

Children and Young People

The most recent Children and Young People's JSNA can be found at <http://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-strategies/health-and-social-care/data-reports-information/jsna/cyp-jsna/> . This document summarises the context for Children and Young People in Leicester City.

In January 2017 there were approximately 57,500 children on roll in city schools, of whom just over 1000 were in special provision (1.7% of the total). In addition there were 1824 EHCP's/statements as of January 2017.

Early Years

In 2016/2017 Leicester City Council's Early Years Support Team (EYST) worked with 890 children with SEND aged 0 to 5 across homes, schools and settings. In the same year the team supported 58 requests for statutory assessment and were part of 95 Education, Health and Care Plans for the 0-5 aged children.

The EYST support the transition arrangements for approximately 300 SEND children per year.

School age children

Just over 7000 children were identified as having SEND and requiring School Support - 12.6% of the total in maintained schools. There are approximately 1500 children and young people with EHCP (and existing statements) in city schools. The proportion of the school population with a statutory plan is slightly less than the national average at 2.6%.

More than the national average of children in Leicester go to specialist provision (maintained special school, special academy or designated Specialist provision).

Services for Children and Young People with SEND

❖ Education

All schools in the city provide education for children and young people with SEND. Of the 110 maintained schools in the city there are 21 academies and 2 free schools. Of the academies 1 is a special school. There are 63 LA maintained schools for primary age pupils and 15 for secondary age pupils. In addition there are 6 special schools (one of which has primary age pupils only), 2 Pupil Referral Units and a hospital school.

The majority of schools admit children to nursery classes in the term after the child's third birthday, in addition to places that are offered through the private, voluntary and independent sector. There are 121 Early Years providers of whom 110 offer places for vulnerable 2 year olds.

Post-16 education is offered through 4 colleges and 4 school sixth forms, in addition to five of the special schools, with the majority of young people who have been educated in the mainstream sector transferring to the incorporated sector.

There are 14 independent schools. Some parents choose to send their children to schools outside the city and where they are in the maintained sector their special educational needs are supported by their provision. There are 69 pupils (as of September 2017) maintained by the city in the independent sector due to their SEND.

The city council maintains a wide range of services for children and young people with SEND:

1. Hearing Support Team
2. Visual Support Team
3. Early Years Support Team (incorporating a specialist Early Years Nursery and Early Years Teachers)
4. Learning, Communication Interaction team (including ASD support)
5. Social Emotional Mental Health Team (de-delegated funding)
6. City Psychology Service
7. Disabled Children's Service
8. Special Education Service (managing the statutory processes)

All these services are managed through the Director of Learning Services (through a Head of Service for SEND Services).

There is also a Transitions Team within the Adult Social Care department. A review of practice and support for transitions is currently underway to improve the process by which young people with health or social care needs move from children's services to adult services.

❖ Health

Leicester City Clinical Commissioning Group, Leicester City Council Public Health and NHS England commission a range of health care services who deliver universal, targeted and specialist provision that maintains and improve outcomes for children and young people, including those with SEND.

Health care is delivered through a number of pathways that involve a range of partners working together to ensure productivity, while maintaining the Local Transformation and Sustainability Plan:

“Helping children and parents so they have the very best start in life, helping you stay well in mind and body caring for the most vulnerable and frail and when life comes to an end.”

Children's Health Services are delivered through a number of providers including:

- ❖ The Acute Care Trust – University Hospital of Leicester NHS Trust
- ❖ Community Health Services - Leicestershire Partnership Trust
- ❖ Private providers
- ❖ Voluntary Sector contracts

The organisations are all child and family centred with knowledgeable and experienced staff that provide children and their families with the best possible care and health opportunities within their local area.

Examples of current provision:

Universal Services including:

- Public Health services; the local 0-19 Healthy Child Programme is called ‘Healthy Together’. It is an integrated programme that aims to address High Impact Areas through the universal and targeted provision of health visiting, school nursing, oral health and injury minimisation. The services work with families where there is a need around SEND offering additional support and advice where appropriate (including transition to adult services) and onward referral to other specialist services. In addition, the service delivers Personal Social and Health education support to special schools.
- Primary Care services; including general practice, community dental, ophthalmic and pharmacy services.

Targeted and Specialist Services including :

- Community Provision; including Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech and Language Therapy, CAMHS and Community Paediatric Medicine. Within these disciplines skilled staff support children and young people who are diagnosed with a conditions such as Cerebral Palsy, Autism, Eating and Drinking and Communication difficulties. A range of services are also offered to children who are Looked after Children, Travelling Families, children with Complex Care Needs and Audiology.
- Hospital services; including maternity, medical, and surgical and sub-set specialities such as paediatrics and Cardiac services. Provision is offered on an emergency, outpatient and inpatient basis.

Children are seen in local settings: either in community based clinics, in their homes, schools, children, young people and family centres (Children’s Centres) or other local venues.

❖ **Care**

The Children's Social Care and Early Help division provides statutory social care services for children, young people and families including for those with SEND. Ensuring that all children including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are safeguarded is the responsibility of all those working with these children.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are managed within a variety of teams, including the Single Assessment Team, the Children in Need service, the Looked After Children's service and the Disabled Children's Service.

Any contact for support is referred into the Duty and Advice Service and consideration will be given to the need for a Single Assessment. This will be used to determine if the child is deemed a Child in Need (under section 17 The Children Act 1989).

If a Single Assessment is required, the case will be managed within the Single Assessment Team and the level of need and relevant services will then be identified accordingly. If a child is considered to be a child in need or a child in need of protection, this will be determined at a relevant meeting (Child In Need meeting or Initial Child Protection Conference). The case will then be transferred to the relevant service. This will depend upon the level and assessed disability of the child as determined by the eligibility criteria. The social work team based within the Disabled Children's Service will be responsible for the case management of those cases that meet the criteria. This criteria is stipulated as follows;

- ❖ Severe learning disabilities
- ❖ Severe physical disabilities
- ❖ Severe developmental delay in motor and/or cognitive functioning
- ❖ Profound multiple disabilities
- ❖ Severe sensory impairment (registered blind and profoundly deaf)
- ❖ Complex and severe health problems that arise from the disability, that are life threatening, degenerative illness or organic disorder resulting in severe disability.
- ❖ Safeguarding concerns

Working with families and children and young people

Parent Carer Forum

There is an active Parent Carer Forum (PCF) in Leicester. The PCF meetings are well attended and officers and elected members have attended. The PCF is supported through the Disabled Children's Service. Recently the PCF has had attendance from Cllr Russell (Deputy City Mayor with responsibility for Children, Young People and Schools), Frances Craven (Director of Children's Services) and Joe Dawson (Head of SEND Services).

Big Mouth Forum

The BMF is a forum facilitated by the Disabled Children's Service for young people to express their views about SEND issues and other issues that affect them. The forum has been attended by Directors from Children Services, Elected Members and Heads of Service amongst others. The forum's views are sought on issues that affect children and young people with SEND.

Engagement of students, parents and carers is good.

The use of Integrated Assessment Meetings (IAMs) has been a major development which has met with universal praise.

Peer Review comments on Voice of the Child

"Leicester City Council has clear aspiration to ensure the voices of children and young people with SEND are not only heard, but also drive service development, delivery and improvement. One example is a research project exploring the views of children and young people in relation to preparing for adulthood, called 'I want to be a Dragon!'. It is clear from this work the local area is not afraid to ask children and young people with SEND questions, where answers may be challenging to hear. This helps to drive service improvement.

The 'Big Mouth' [children and young people's] forum is an active group of young people and younger adults who meet monthly to share their views about services within the local area. The forum provides a platform for opportunities for engagement with some children and young people."

Review of SEND Strategy

The SEND strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis. The principles on which the review will be based are:

- ❖ Listening to the views of children, young people and families
- ❖ Ensuring value for money
- ❖ Developing capacity, skills and expertise at all levels
- ❖ Supporting and building on good practice and innovation
- ❖ Ensuring reflective evidence-based practice and learning
- ❖ Promoting partnerships, collaboration and joint commissioning

Governance and Accountability

The governance and oversight of Leicester's SEND Strategy recognises that the delivery of our offer is not the responsibility of a single agency but is owned by all partners that work with children, young people and families.

The local area has established a SEND strategic partnership board which is the responsible board for the governance, organisation and management of the SEND Strategy. The Board is chaired by the Strategic Director of Children's Services (DCS) and includes representatives from partners across Leicester. These include Clinical Commissioning Group, Leicester Partnership Trust, Police, Parents, SENDIAS, Schools (including governors), and local authority officers including representatives from Adult Services.

The SEND Board oversees the developments and the work streams for the SEND Strategic Plan. This is a dynamic plan with elements being completed, developed and changed in response to changes in local authority and national procedures and priorities.

The SEND board reports to Leicester's Children's Trust Board, chaired by the Deputy City Mayor with responsibility for children and young people. Scrutiny and challenge is also provided by the Children's Trust Board which has a broad membership and involves statutory, voluntary and community sector partners.

Appendices

Linked Strategies and Further Information

Local plans, strategies and guidance

- ❖ Leicester's Children and Young People's Plan 2014-17
<http://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/113643/children-and-young-people-plan-2014-17.pdf>
- ❖ Leicester's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-16
http://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/177755/leicester_s_joint_health_and_wellbeing_strategy_2013-2016.pdf
- ❖ Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Children Board – Thresholds guidance
http://lrsrb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/thresholds_access_services.pdf
- ❖ Leicester Safeguarding Children Board – Business plan
<http://www.lcitylscb.org/about-lscb/businessplan/>
- ❖ Leicester's Early Help services <http://www.leicester.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/support-for-children-and-young-people/early-help>

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- ❖ Care Act
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>
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<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- ❖ DfE Guidance on Equality Act for Schools May 2014
http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf
- ❖ SEN and Disability Regulations 2014
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/1530/pdfs/uksi_20141530_en.pdf
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