

Meeting date: 9th December 2021

Report to: Full Cabinet

Subject/report title: Support for Children & Young People (aged 0-25 years) with Additional Needs, including Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)

Report from: Cabinet Portfolio Holder, Children , Education and Skills

Report author/lead contact officer: Charlotte Jones, Head of SEND

Wards affected:

- ☒ All Wards | ☐ Bickenhill | ☐ Blythe | ☐ Castle Bromwich | ☐ Chelmsley Wood |
☐ Dorridge/Hockley Heath | ☐ Elmdon | ☐ Kingshurst/Fordbridge | ☐ Knowle |
☐ Lyndon | ☐ Meriden | ☐ Olton | ☐ Shirley East | ☐ Shirley South |
☐ Shirley West | ☐ Silhill | ☐ Smith's Wood | ☐ St Alphege
-

Public/private report: Public

Exempt by virtue of paragraph: N/A

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the strategic developments across the council's Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) services.

2. Decision(s) recommended

- 2.1 To approve the Additional Needs Strategy (2022-2025) and the Accessibility Strategy (2022-2025) aimed at improving outcomes for all children and young people (aged 0-25 years) with SEND or additional needs within Solihull.
- 2.2 To delegate responsibility for approving the final version of the Early Years Strategy (2022-2025) to the Lead Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Skills following public consultation.
- 2.3 To approve the development of a Strategy for Inclusive Education during 2022.

3. Background

- 3.1 Part 3 of the [Children and Families Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/section/1) requires councils to publish a local offer which details how it co-operates with its local partners (i.e. Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) as health partners and education settings) to provide the necessary education, care and health services children and young people with SEND require within that local area.
- 3.2 A local area's SEND strategic plans are scrutinised as part of the Ofsted & CQC (Care Quality Commission) [Local area SEND inspection: framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-area-send-inspection-framework). Whilst a new framework is expected to be implemented by the end of 2022, it is not expected that the rigour of this process, nor the requirement for clear local area direction and leadership, will diminish.
- 3.3 There is a requirement within the Children and Families Act for local areas to co-produce strategic, operational and individual plans with the parent carers, and children and young people, in that area.
- 3.4 Whilst the statutory requirement focuses on those children and young people who have, or may have SEND, there are clear benefits for expanding any strategic direction and leadership to consider any child or young person that may have any 'additional need' as a result of their personal circumstances, family situation, environmental factors or other needs. This provides the framework for the council, and other partner agencies, to consider the holistic needs of a child or young person and provide support when and how they need it – rather than require escalation to statutory SEND or safeguarding levels before support can be provided.
- 3.5 To avoid duplication, revised governance arrangements which ensure strong oversight and accountability at, and between, operational and strategic levels are outlined in the Cabinet Report also on this agenda entitled "Special Educational Needs & Disability Improvement Journey Update".
- 3.6 Officers within the key Boards will be responsible for representing the Solihull SEND system during any future local area inspection, and operationally during the annual conversations with the Department for Education (DfE) and National Health Service England and Improvement (NHSE/I) Advisors.

4. SEND Assessment

- 4.1 With the recruitment of permanent, experienced leadership for education and SEND in the Council during 2021, there has been a renewed focus on assessing and developing SEND services across Solihull.
- 4.2 Officers have met with many parent carers, young people, schools and education settings, health providers, social care services, community providers and commissioners across the borough to understand the experiences of children and young people with SEND, and those who support them.
- 4.3 Officers, in co-production with schools, parent carers and professionals across education, care and health, have undertaken a full assessment of SEND performance across the council using the [Council for Disabled Children's LA Audit Tool](#). The Council for Disabled Children also provide a parallel audit for health with the CCG also undertaking this work – enabling the outcomes of both to be combined to generate a clear overview of current SEND performance across the whole local area.

- 4.4 Following the audit outcomes, officers from the Council and the CCG have met with stakeholders to explore the areas identified for development and have RAG rated these in order of priority according to statutory expectations, children and young people's experiences and impact on their outcomes. The main areas of focus are contained within the following themes:
- Strategic leadership and governance;
 - Joint commissioning;
 - Transition pathways and timely decision making;
 - Sufficiency, quality and value for money of specialist placements;
 - Early help offer to support inclusive practice;
 - Co-production with children, young people and parent carers;
 - Monitoring outcome data and using to inform practice
- 4.5 This work has identified the absence of some key strategies setting out the direction of travel for education within Solihull to ensure cohesion across the system. A number of these strategies are under development but the approval of the key strategies set out within this report will provide the right environment for further strategic work to be successful. Further detail on these strategies can be found within the Cabinet Report entitled "Special Educational Needs & Disability Improvement Journey Update" which is also on the agenda for this meeting.

5. Additional Needs Strategy (2022 – 2025)

- 5.1 The Additional Needs Strategy fulfils the council's requirement to publish its SEND offer, but broadens the scope of this work to ensure any child or young person who has an additional need is identified, and supported, in a timely way. It sets out the strategic direction of support in the borough and will underpin all other development work affecting children and young people with additional needs.
- 5.2 The strategy is a result of all partner and stakeholder feedback received during this year, the high priority areas arising from the Council for Disabled Children's audit tool and feedback from children, young people and their parent carers. As requested by children, young people and their parent carers, they have written an accessible strategy with us which is easy to understand, apply and hold professionals to account for delivering.
- 5.3 The strategy has been co-constructed by all partners within Solihull and developed through the Joint Additional Needs & Disabilities Delivery Board, with representatives from: the council's education, children's social care, adult's social care, employment and skills, commissioning and stronger community's services, the CCG, schools, Solihull Parent Carer Voice, Our Voice's Heard (children and young people), SENDIASS (SEND Information, Advice and Support Service) and the Voluntary & Community Sector.
- 5.4 Following initial feedback from stakeholders, a more detailed engagement exercise took place during July and August to test the emerging key themes for improvement. To ensure children and young people, and their parent carers had a greater voice in this work, a specific survey was designed for their completion during this time to increase the reach of those involved. The summary of results can be found [here](#).
- 5.5 The feedback received suggested a number of areas for improvements to SEND services within Solihull, but also some key ways of working which were important to

children and young people, and their families. All of the feedback received has either informed the strategy itself (our vision, promised ways of working and future plans for improvement) or will sit as more operational aspects for development as part of the multi-agency improvement journey. We have been clear to children and young people and their parent carers that both the strategic and operational responses to their feedback and experience are essential to improve outcomes across the borough.

- 5.6 The draft strategy was subject to further consultation between 22nd October – 10th November 2021. Given the breadth of engagement which had already taken place, this consultation acted as a checking mechanism to ensure the content effectively responded to those issues raised by children, young people, parent carers and other partners.
- 5.7 There have been 217 responses to the consultation and a full analysis of this can be found at [Appendix 1](#). There was a high level of support for the strategy design, content and plans – with over 83% of respondents agreeing these were right. A number of parents requested more detail on the specific actions and timescales of activity referred to in the strategy and a high level action plan will be shared when the strategy is published. Other questions regarding the content of the strategy have led to some amendments to the final version.
- 5.8 The final strategy is being designed with children and young people in mind and will be available online and in hard copy once design work is complete. A more user friendly easy read version will also be provided so those with more complex needs can also access the important elements of the document and other media will also be considered (animated video for example).
- 5.9 The strategy content Cabinet are asked to approve can be found at [Appendix 2](#).

6. Accessibility Strategy (2022 – 2025)

- 6.1 Under Schedule 10 of the [Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) the council is required to have an Accessibility Strategy in which it promotes better access in school for pupils with disabilities.
- 6.2 Whilst the accessibility strategy relates only to maintained schools, many of the support arrangements made by the council will also benefit disabled pupils attending academies and free schools within Solihull. However, all schools, including academies and free schools, must have an Accessibility plan which is based on the same principles set out in the council's Accessibility Strategy.
- 6.3 All schools must publish their Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility plan and link to their statutory SEND Information Report. These plans together should show how, over time, access to education for pupils with SEND will be improved.
- 6.4 In line with the Additional Needs Strategy, the scope of the Accessibility Strategy has been broadened to include children and young people with a range of characteristics and needs to reduce the risk of inequalities and discrimination across the borough and to meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 6.5 The strategy is a combination of legal requirements, expectations placed upon the council and schools, and areas for further development. These areas have been identified following engagement with a wide range of stakeholders – including staff and governors within schools, Solihull Parent Carer Voice and colleagues across the council and the CCG. It has also been developed with a focus of increasing inclusion

within schools to complement the work of the Strategy for Inclusive Education and to take account of relevant feedback from the Additional Needs strategy consultation.

6.6 As with all activity committed to through strategies, the actions arising from the Accessibility Strategy will form part of the high level education SEND Improvement Plan to ensure ongoing oversight and monitoring of delivery and impact.

6.7 The strategy Cabinet are asked to approve can be found at [Appendix 3](#).

7. Early Years Strategy (2022 – 2025)

7.1 In Solihull we recognise the importance of the child's earliest years pre-birth to five. The council has a duty under the [Childcare Act 2006](#) to improve the outcomes of all children under 5, to reduce inequalities and ensure sufficient high-quality early education and care for parents.

7.2 Solihull is among the local authorities where fewer children from low income families reach the expected level of development. 72.6% of all children in the borough reach a good level of development, which whilst above the national, it is lower than our statistical neighbours. In 2019 the percentage of children eligible for free school meals who achieved a good level of development at the end of their reception year was 56% - a decline of 6% on the previous year. Further, the inequality gap for Solihull is 35.5 and ranks us 108th nationally, with fewer settings rated outstanding in the most deprived areas.

7.3 National data shows that those children who have needed a social worker do not achieve in line with their peers in the early years. Only 50% of children achieved a good level of development compared to 72% of children who did not need a social worker, between 2012 and 2017.

7.4 Evidence is clear that the early years are critical to brain development with a profound impact on children's' cognitive, social and emotional development. If we want to close the attainment gap that persists through school, we must start early.

7.5 This strategy and resulting actions demonstrate our determination to improve children's long-term life chances and to do this by focussing on giving children the best start in their life.

7.6 We will strengthen a multi-agency, integrated approach to early years and childcare to meet the changing needs of families with babies and young children.

7.7 We need to ensure there is sufficient quality early childhood education and care to enable access to good and outstanding early education provision (Ofsted quality judgements). To mitigate the effects of inequality, poverty and disadvantage through the provision of fully accessible and inclusive high-quality early education and childcare to reduce the attainment gap for all vulnerable children.

7.8 We want to assure local authority resources are well targeted to population need, avoid duplication and gaps in service delivery, giving parents and carers confidence and assurance that services are working to provide support where it is most needed in Solihull.

7.9 Six priorities have been identified in the strategy, with a delivery plan for each area:

- **Data** – for population led needs assessment, action planning and evaluation of impact

- **Communication** – to ensure families and LA services can signpost those in need to services that are available
- **Workforce** – to build a local authority field force and education-based workforce that have the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes to collectively support young children and families
- **Transition and life course** – to provide seamless services and support for families and young children
- **Early Years SEND** – to ensure we have high aspirations for all children and a clear vision for the education of children with SEND
- **Speech, language and communication** – to support all children to develop effective communication and interaction skills

7.10 The strategy Cabinet are asked to approve can be found at [Appendix 4](#).

8. Strategy for Inclusive Education

- 8.1 A consistent theme arising through the engagement with stakeholders was the ability of schools, academies and other settings to be more inclusive to children and young people with additional needs – including those who may be more likely to face barriers to their learning linked to their adverse childhood and adolescent experiences, gender, protected characteristics, SEND, social class and English being an additional language.
- 8.2 The concept of creating a Solihull inclusion standard for all services, community buildings, spaces, groups and organisations has been committed to in the Additional Needs Strategy (item 4 under Our Plans) – this is because enabling children and young people to feel they “*belong*” and be “*part of the things [they] want to be part of*” were clear messages coming from them through the engagement work. This work is essential to creating the right environment across the borough for every child and young person to be able to thrive, have a happy and healthy life and grow into successful adults.
- 8.3 In 2019 the council worked with schools and other partners to agree a [Code for Inclusion](#) which set out 15 key principles how schools, and other education settings, would work to support the inclusion of all children. The full implementation of this Code was affected by the pandemic, but it also stopped short of being prescriptive around the expectations to be placed on schools, and partners, in terms of its impact on their working practices and approaches.
- 8.4 Feedback from children and young people, parent carers and schools has been clear that much more work is needed in this area. In addition, children and young people and parent carers have told us that education remains their highest priority in the borough – which is understandable given it is the provision everyone in this cohort engages with, regardless of their level of need. As such, the initial focus for the council has been on creating a Strategy for Inclusive Education, beginning with schools due to their reach, which enables children and young people in Solihull to thrive and supports our wider work to close the educational attainment gap for disadvantaged children that exists in the borough.
- 8.5 The council is currently working with schools, parent carers and the CCG to co-produce the Strategy for Inclusive Education. This work will be further developed in January 2022 when Solihull School’s Strategic Accountability Board (SSSAB) has

arranged for the two-day Head Teacher's Conference to focus on education inclusion and identify further actions schools, and the wider system, need to take in support of this.

- 8.6 Whilst the strategy itself will be approved and owned by education settings through SSSAB, the council will have a role in supporting its implementation and the monitoring of impact across the education system in the borough so children and young people feel more accepted and included in school life – increasing the number of children and young people accessing education in school and within the Solihull system, preventing the escalation of any unmet need.
- 8.7 Once developed, the Strategy for Inclusive Education will be subject to public consultation prior to approval and implementation.

9. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

- 9.1 The council is required to have SEND and Accessibility strategies. Whilst there is no similar duty around the Early Years or Inclusive Education strategies, these are priority areas identified within Solihull and meet the commitments made in the Additional Needs strategy.
- 9.2 Changes could be made to the proposed strategies but all comply with the relevant legislative requirements and have been co-produced with all stakeholders following extensive engagement.

10. Reasons for recommending preferred option

- 10.1 The approval of these four key strategies will ensure cohesion and strategic leadership across the local area. They will provide the strategic framework for further delivery of the SEND improvement plan.
- 10.2 The strategies will improve the outcomes for children and young people and support the council, and its partners, in meeting the expectations of any future local area SEND inspection.

11. Implications and Considerations

- 11.1 State how the proposals in this report contribute to the priorities in the [Council Plan](#):

Priority:	Contribution:
<p>Economy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Revitalising our towns and local centres.2. Deliver UK Central (UKC) and maximise the opportunities of HS2.3. Increase the supply, quality and energy efficiency of housing, especially affordable and social housing.	<p>These strategies will ensure children and young people with additional needs are supported into future employment.</p>

Priority:	Contribution:
Environment: 4. Enhance Solihull's natural and physical environment. 5. Improve Solihull's air quality. 6. Reduce Solihull's net carbon emissions.	The strategic elements of increasing inclusion and local provision within Solihull will enable more children and young people to access services within their community, reducing their need to travel further afield
People and Communities: 7. Take action to improve life chances and health outcomes in our most disadvantaged communities. 8. Enable communities to thrive. 9. Sustainable, quality care and support for adults & children with complex needs.	These strategies will ensure children and young people with additional needs are supported throughout their life and receive the support they need to be successful, independent young adults.
10. Promote employee wellbeing	Enter text.

11.2 Consultation and Scrutiny:

- 11.3 Children's Services, Education & Skills Scrutiny Board considered the proposed Additional Needs Strategy and education SEND improvement plan at its meeting on 3rd November 2021. Feedback on the presentation of the strategy and its focus on children and young people was positive. Following feedback from parents, members were keen to see the resultant action plan and performance measures which officers were developing in order to publish alongside the strategy. The Board agreed for a minute extract for this agenda item to be shared with Full Cabinet.
- 11.4 The Joint Additional Needs Delivery Board meets monthly to provide multi-agency operational monitoring and oversight of the SEND Improvement plan and related strategic work – reporting bi-monthly to the strategic Joint Additional Needs & Disabilities Board.
- 11.4.1 The annual conversations between the council and CCG with the DfE & NHSE/I SEND Advisors provides external scrutiny on the local offer for children and young people with additional needs and the impact of any strategy or improvement work being delivered.

11.5 Financial implications:

- 11.5.1 Council costs associated with securing the provision required by children and young people, as committed to within the strategies, already sit with the council's statutory services (children's and adult's social care) and with the High Needs Block element of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

11.6 Legal implications:

- 11.6.1 The strategies comply with legal requirements and expectations contained within the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010.

11.7 Risk implications:

- 11.7.1 Each strategy, and its delivery, reduces the risk of challenge or unsatisfactory outcome of any future external scrutiny or local area inspection.

11.8 Equality implications:

- 11.8.1 The strategies actively seek to actively reduce inequality and improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND, additional needs or any other protected characteristic.

11.9 Partner Organisations

- 11.9.1 Each strategy supports strong leadership and collaboration with education settings, community and voluntary services, the CCG and other health providers to ensure an effective holistic approach to improving outcomes for children and young people.

12. List of appendices referred to

- 12.1 [Appendix 1 – Additional Needs Survey feedback summary](#)
- 12.2 [Appendix 2 – Additional Needs Strategy \(2022-2025\)](#)
- 12.3 [Appendix 3 – Accessibility Strategy \(2022-2025\)](#)
- 12.4 [Appendix 4 – Draft Early Years Strategy \(2022-2025\)](#)

13. Background papers used to compile this report

- 13.1 [Children and Families Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- 13.2 [Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- 13.3 Solihull's previous [SEND Strategy](#) and [Accessibility Strategy](#)

SOLIHULL'S ADDITIONAL NEEDS STRATEGY 2022-2025 SURVEY CONSULTATION FEEDBACK OVERVIEW

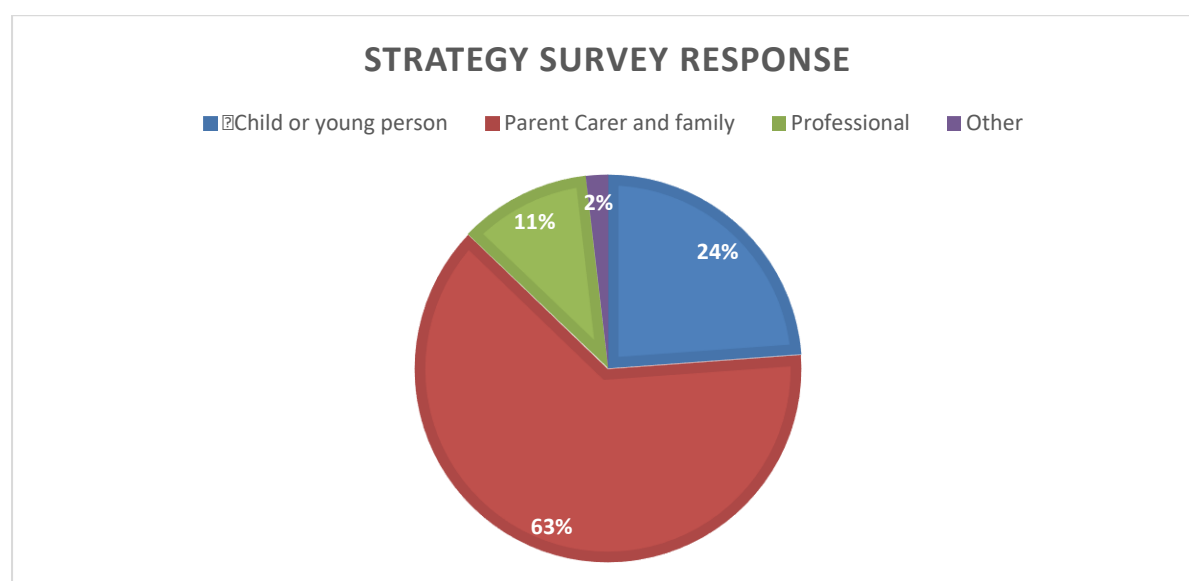
Consultation on the draft strategy document took place between 21st October – 10th November 2021 and included:

- An online meeting with parent carers, arranged through Solihull Parent Carer Voice
- An online and face to face meeting with children and young people through Our Voice's Heard
- Meetings with schools through EdSEND and the Head Teacher Reference Group
- Discussions with colleagues from across the Council, Birmingham & Solihull CCG and the Voluntary Sector
- Feedback directly from parent carers and children and young people – through discussions and email contact
- Feedback from North Solihull Additional Needs Group following discussions with parent carers
- Feedback from the Council's Children's, Education & Skills Scrutiny Board, including their meetings with parent carer representatives
- An online survey for any interested party to complete

This document outlines the results from the online survey. In total there were 217 respondents.

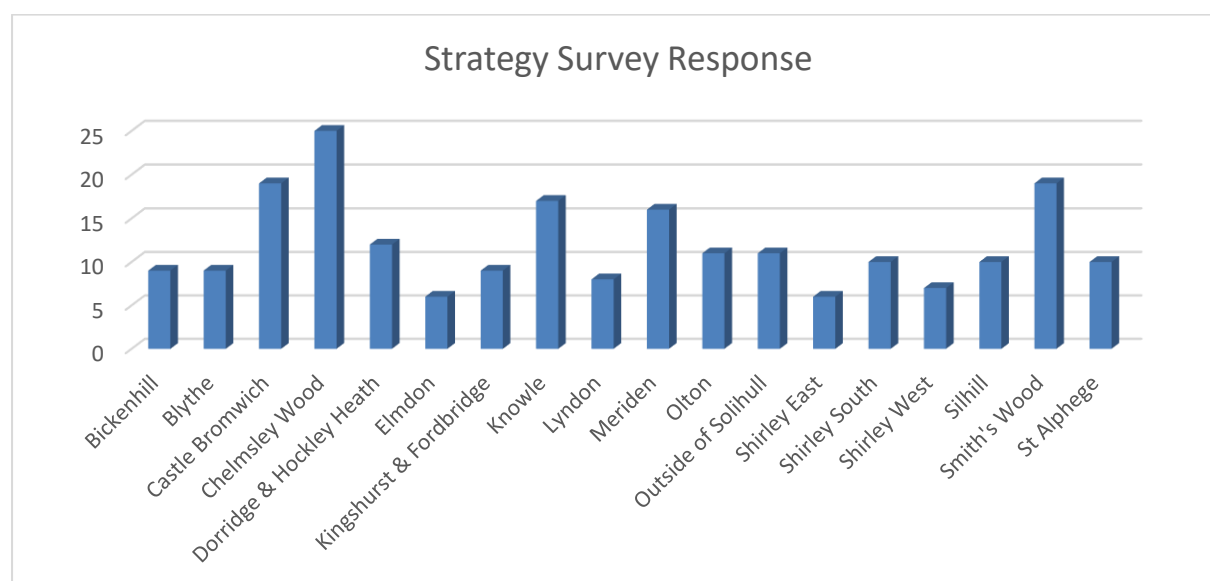
Who responded?

The vast majority of respondents were parent carers and then children and young people. Most professionals engaged with the consultation in other ways.



Where did the respondents live, or work?

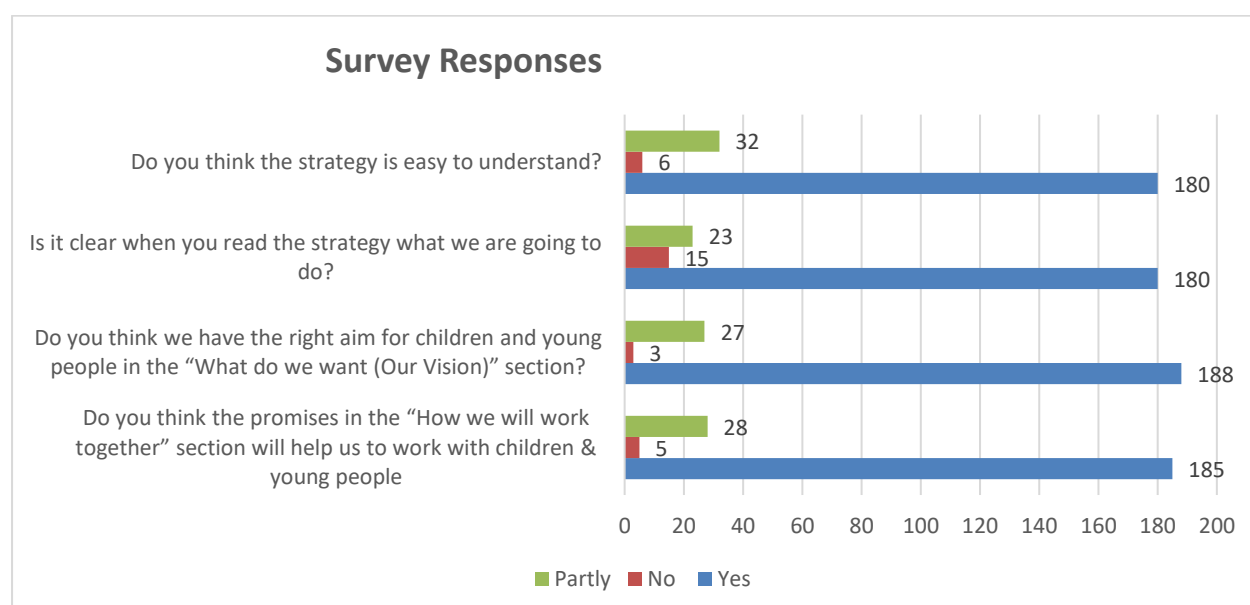
There was a good response rate from across the borough; will all areas represented.



What did they say about the strategy in general?

83% of respondents felt the strategy was clear and easy to understand. Only 7% felt the strategy wasn't clear about what we were going to do.

87% felt the vision was right and 85% felt the promises would help our work with children and young people. Only 1% felt the vision wasn't right.



Specific questions asked and responses are also included at the end of this document.

General comments included:

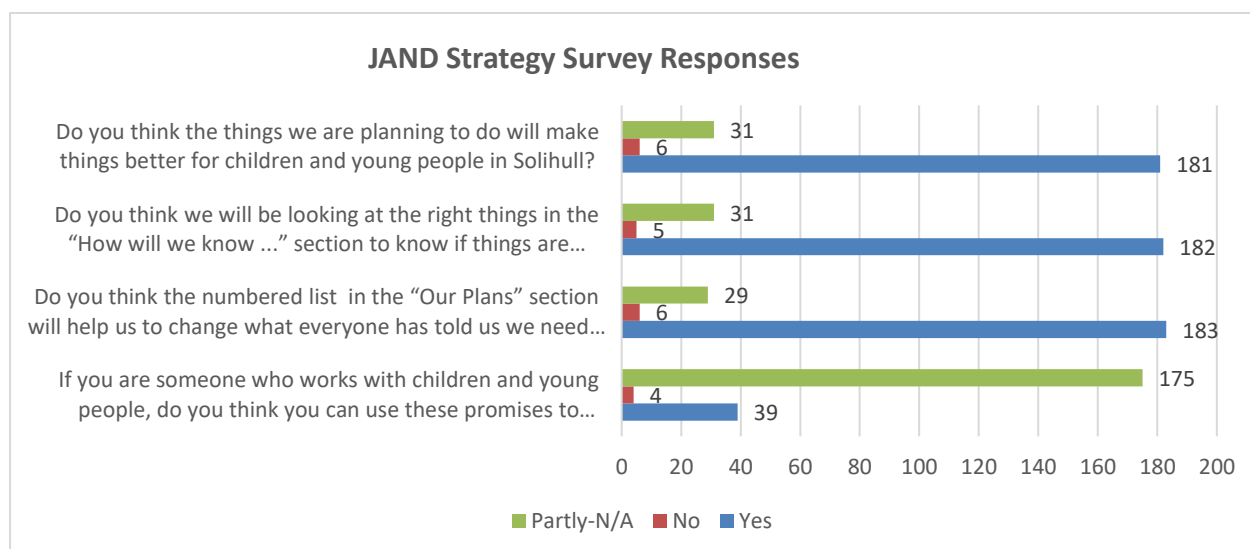
- The need for smart objectives with explanations on how things will be delivered, and by when;
- Other documents or strategies referred to need to be easier to understand;

- Parents would like to know who is accountable for different elements;
- A hope that the strategy provides equal opportunity for all children and young people (not just those with specific needs);
- The need for plans to be reviewed regularly as things change;
- The need for greater accessibility for younger children and those with more complex needs

What did they say about the strategy in general?

83-84% of respondents felt that the strategy would make things better for children and young people, had the right actions and would be measuring the right things. Only 3% of respondents disagreed with this.

All professional respondents agreed that they could use, or already used, the proposed promises in their work. Only those working to support children and young people were asked to complete this question (with parent carers and children and young people asked to respond as N/A; not applicable) but some parent carers chose to - the 4 disagreeing to these stating challenges with professional staff capacity and resources as being a barrier.



Specific questions asked and responses are also included at the end of this document.

General comments included:

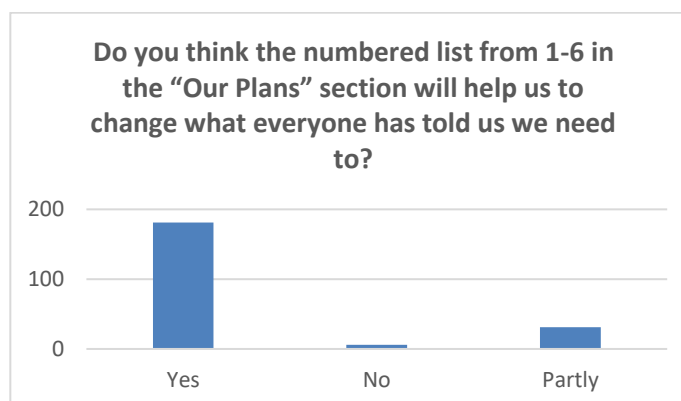
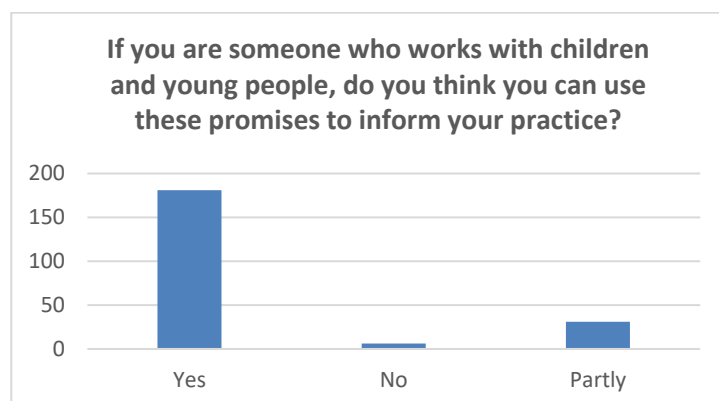
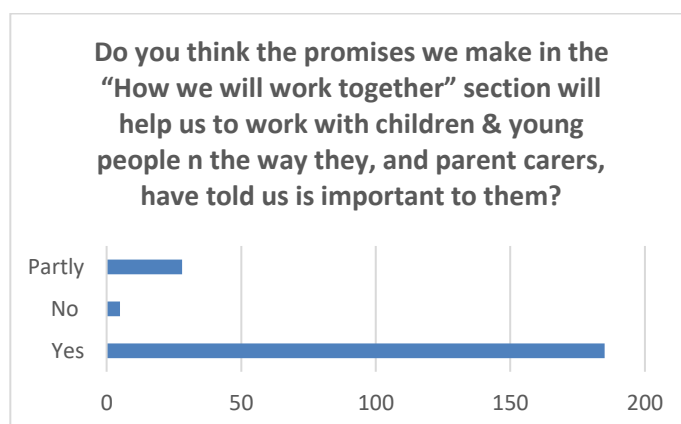
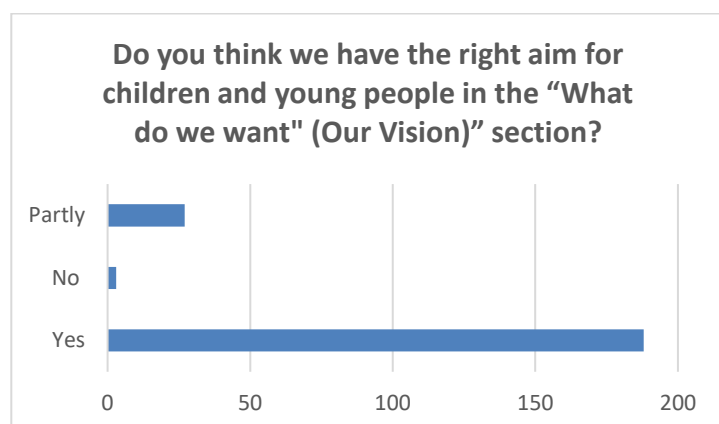
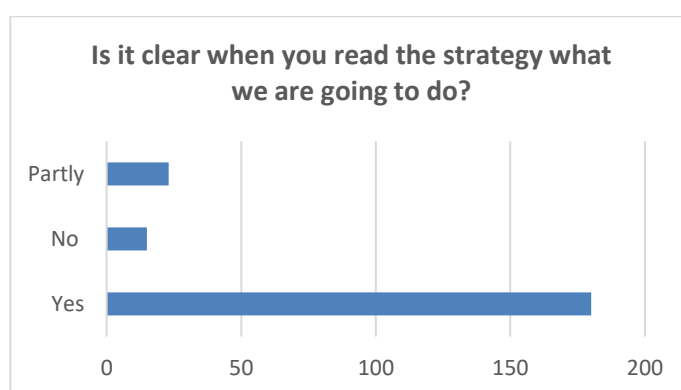
- The importance of understanding current position against measurable outcomes and finding ways to ensure the experiences of all children, young people and families helps to assess this – including a regular feedback mechanism for families;
- Agreement that services do need to be more joined up and focused on early help and intervention;
- Recognition that waiting times (especially for diagnosis) needs improvement and better provision and information is needed
- Importance of communication with everyone (including directly with children and young people to hear their own voice)
- The need for more specialist support in mainstream schools and for the law to be consistently and fairly applied by all involved with SEND
- Addressing the gap around Post 16 transition support for young people not in school (electively home educated for example) and greater support for adults accessing services

Considerations for the strategy

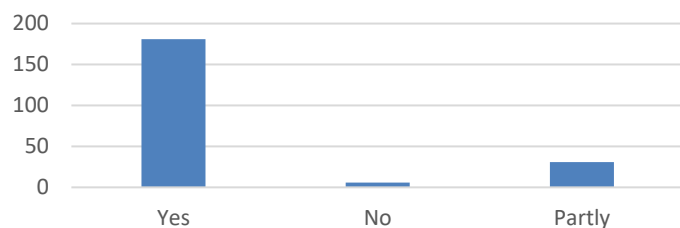
In response to the feedback, we have:

- Made some amendments to the content of the strategy – for example, reference to the law and explanations of terms used;
- Published an overview of relevant strategies referred to on the Local Offer;
- Used some of the detailed feedback to inform the action plan being developed under the strategy;
- Continued with our plans to develop an easy read version of the strategy and a video;
- Used some of the feedback to help us decide how to measure our current position and progress against the outcomes identified in the strategy

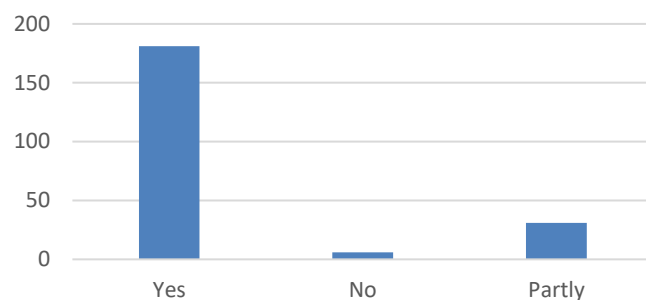
Data per question:



Do you think we will be looking at the right things in the “How will we know if this is making a difference” section to know if things are getting better for children and young people, and their families?



Do you think the things we are planning to do will make things better for children and young people in Solihull?





“EVERY CHILD & YOUNG PERSON MATTERS, AND MATTERS EQUALLY”

SOLIHULL’S ADDITIONAL NEEDS STRATEGY 2022-2025

for children and young people with special educational needs or additional needs (aged 0-25 years)

It takes a community to raise a child.

We are proud of all our children and young people in Solihull. Most children and young people do well but we know that some need more support than others or may need help to get ready for their future life. For these children and young people, services in Solihull are committed to working in a way which helps them have the best life possible - so we have been talking to them about how we can help.

When we use the word ‘we’ in this strategy it means:

- Solihull Council (for education, social care and communities)
- Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group [CCG] (for health) – this will be replaced by the [Integrated Care System](#) in April 2022
- Solihull Parent Carer Voice (parent carer forum)
- Our Voice’s Heard (children and young people’s forum)

We will ask everyone else working with children and young people to support this work.

We have listened to the views of children, young people, parent carers and those who work with these families. They have also worked with us to decide what we need to change and how to do this so we could write this strategy together. Young people and their parent carers have helped us write something that is easier for everyone to read and understand – written with them and for them.

What are special educational needs or additional needs?

We know things can happen in a child’s or young person’s life which makes it harder for them to be happy, healthy, stay safe or learn.

Children or young people who have a special education need or a disability may need support throughout their life. Others may need support at any time in their life, and for any length of time, for lots of other reasons. This could be because of their family, what is happening at home, health concerns, being a young carer, or a death of friend or family member.

The most important thing is that we quickly see when a child or young person might need extra support and that the right help is provided. This means that people working with children and young people see them first, and not the needs they have. We also know Covid has affected us differently.

Who is this for?

This strategy is for any child or young person, up to the age of 25 years' old who lives in Solihull and has a special educational need (SEND) or additional need. It is also for their parent carers and others who support them.

We have to follow the [law](#) but want to do much more than that. This will tell you how people should work with you and what you should see happen. We want you to know what we are doing in Solihull – and for you to be able to question us if you don't see this happening.

If this is you, please carry on reading....

What do we want? (our Vision)

You have told us that you want to **enjoy life** in Solihull. For us all to know that everyone is **different**. For you to **feel welcome** and have **the same chances** of living your best life.

So we want children and young people to have the best life they can by holding them **at the heart** of everything we do.

How we will work together:

You have told us that you want to be able to **trust** people around you. To be **asked** what you want and then **listened to**. To know that people will **change** what they do or how they act by **understanding** how things make you feel. You want to know you can get **help when you need it**, and how to get it. Have a **choice** about what happens to you and be able to do the **same things as other children** - even if you need more support so this can happen.

Your parent carers told us they want **better communication**. To know **who to contact, what is happening and why** and **how** changes will make things better for

you all. They want to be **listened** to and **trust** that services care about what is happening in your life and will **do what they say they will**.

Putting you at the heart of everything we do means that everyone needs to work better together. We can only do this if we have more trust.

So we will make these promises to you and your parent carers:

- a) When we tell you we will do something, we will do it. If we can't do something, we will explain why and let you know what we are going to do about it;
- b) We will be honest with you, listen to what you have said and show you what we are changing;
- c) We will communicate so you can understand us. We will let you know what changes we are making, how it will make things better and when you should see that;
- d) We will help you enjoy living in Solihull. To feel welcome wherever you go and whatever you do. We will find out what you are good at and what you want to do - now and in the future

Changing how we work in Solihull means everyone who supports you must think about what they do and how they do it. We want them to use these promises in their work and to check that you can see this happening.

Our plans:

We will keep working towards a future where you can say:

1) I can see that everyone is working together to help me make my life better...

What we have done so far:

- People from education, care and health services meet every month in our Joint Additional Needs Management and Delivery Boards. We include parent carers, voluntary groups and other people in these meetings so we can all work together to make your life better – you can find out who is involved [online](#);
- We have talked to people to find out what we are doing well and what we need to change so we can offer you the best support Lots of things are happening and you can find out more [online](#)

What else you want us to do:

- Make sure **everyone** in Solihull thinks about how their work can help make things better for you. This includes sharing information and finding ways to check we are making things better;
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- Help people know what support is available for you in Solihull. We will make sure this is easy to find and get support. That you can move easily between services and get advice on what is possible as you get older;
- Look for ways that staff supporting you work better together. So they include other people who can help and learn from each other. We will set out how we want those staff to behave and what they need to know. For example, staff will work together to improve what is written in your Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCPs) if you have one.

2) I can see that Solihull has the services and support I need...

What we have done so far:

- You and your parent carers have worked with the Council and the CCG to design the children's and young people mental health service in Solihull. The CCG and Council both pay for Solar so we can work together to keep improving support;
- Built on our work with schools and families to include how we work with independent schools so you can have a good experience of learning, wherever you do that;
- Developed our [Local Offer](#) for support and services available to you. Looked at who plans and pays for this between the Council and the CCG so we can find better ways of joining up and seeing gaps. For example, supporting young people with learning difficulties and autism through our Key Worker Pilot;
- Worked with your parent carers and therapy services to write our [Cross Border Principles](#) so you can get support more easily and quickly. With less confusion whether you live, or go to school, in Solihull or Birmingham. We will be asking you, and your parent carers, if this has made a difference so we can look at other changes we could make

What else you want us to do:

- Agree what we want to do with families and how we will work together in the future (with the new Integrated Care System) to change things for you across Solihull and the area you live in. We will help other people supporting you to know how to get the help you need;
- Look at how we can do more joined up work between the Council and CCG to give you better support. Learning from what has worked well in the past or where we have seen problems;
- Look at how we can better plan and pay for support for you if you need help from education, social care and health at the same time

3) My voice is heard, and it makes a difference...

What we have done so far:

- Solihull Council, Birmingham and Solihull CCG and Solihull Parent Carer Voice have agreed to work together as equals. Helping us make a difference to your life and to your family. You can read more [online](#);
- Started a children and young people's group called *Our Voice's Heard* (through Solihull Parent Carer Voice) so your views can help us make changes - and see what is, and isn't, working. You can read more [online](#);
- Produced a co-production newsletter to share what we are doing and to help families understand how they can get involved. You can read more [online](#).

What else you want us to do:

- We will make sure that all the work we do, the plans we make and the services we review includes you and your parent carers from the start;
- We will write an Engagement Plan so that everyone knows what we will be doing and when. This is so you, and your parent carers, can be involved as much, or as little, as you want to. Helping us plan what we need to do and seeing if this has made a difference. We will find different ways to listen to the voices of all children and young people so we can hear what you have to say;
- We will make sure there are chances for you to be involved in the way you want to be. About the things that matter to you and at a time and place that works for you

4) I feel welcome, understood, valued, appreciated and included wherever I go...

What we have done so far:

- Heard what you, your parent carers, community services and groups have to say by making chances to ask for views, ideas and feedback. This includes a group focusing on parks and public open spaces;
- Improved how services across the Council work together, and with the voluntary sector, to encourage people to think about how they can make more chances for you to do things where you live. This includes more options for "Children In Need";
- Changed how the [Solihull Holiday Activity & Food \(HAF\) programme](#) is paid for and planned so if you have special educational needs and disabilities you can be included in activities over summer;
- Provided specialist support to schools to help staff improve how they work with you – so you feel understood, welcomed and supported

What else you want us to do:

- Understand how inclusive Solihull is - the places you go and the help you get. This includes community buildings, spaces, services, groups and organisations. We will increase trust and confidence in what they offer by setting a local inclusion standard. We will agree the Accessibility Strategy and Strategy for Inclusive Education for schools and have a dedicated inclusion youth champion within the Solihull Youth Opportunities Board (YOBS);
- Have more training, learning and development options for all people working with you (staff or volunteers). This will include voluntary, community, social enterprise, public sector and schools. This is so they can provide better support and always value what you, and your parent carers can do, and are interested in;
- Develop a Solihull promise for help, support and activities to always be available for you. This includes better support for the Short Breaks offer and Holiday Activity & Food programme so more children and young people can be included.

5) In planning for my future, I know what will happen, when it will happen and who I can communicate with about this...

What we have done so far:

- Improved how we work with schools and colleges and introduced a yearly Transitions Event for you and your family;
- Improved how staff across the Council work together to support you as you get older, and put better systems in place to make sure this works;
- Reviewed our Adults project plan which looks at what we want to improve over the next year if you are between 14-25 years old. This included focus groups and workshops with young people and parent carers to understand your views and experience. The action plan will help us work together better.

What else you want us to do:

- Join up more of our processes and communication across education, health, care and the community so we work better to support you in being the best you can be. For example, we will look at our Youth Offer;
 - Provide information so people supporting you (including in schools and colleges and your family) can start to talk to you about your future and what could be possible. We will do this in different ways;
 - Understand Solihull's Post 16 offer and improve this. For it to be more welcoming to all young people, provide different options and help them into employment. For example, our Supported Employment Programme will help you get into a supported internship, unpaid work experience and paid work
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6) I can get the right support I need at the right time for me...

What we have done so far:

- Made it easier for families to find support through our Family Information Service and the [Local Offer](#). This includes working with everyone who supports you to see how we can work better together – starting with how Health Visitors can work with families and early years' settings from when children are 2 years old;
- Put things in place so we can write better Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCPs), complete them more quickly and within the timescales we have to meet;
- Provided more special school and Additional Resource Provision (ARPs) places through our [SEND School Place Commissioning Strategy 2021](#) and Alternative Provision Strategy. Put extra specialist support in place for you if you have struggled in school through COVID or found it hard to go to school because of your additional needs;
- We have worked with our therapy services to understand how long you have to wait for support and are looking for ways to speed this up;
- We have put a clear process in place in children's social care for screening and assessment as part of the EHCP request. This helps with writing the plan and makes sure that any possible safeguarding concerns can be referred into the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for further consideration

What else you want us to do:

- Review our way of supporting you as soon as it is needed through our Early Years Strategy and Graduated Approach. Develop how we work across services in the Council (with Reshaping Education giving us a new Inclusion Team) so schools better understand how to support you and can get extra help as soon as they need it;
 - Improve the information in our Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCPs) so people working with a you clearly know what you can do well, what you need help with and how best to support you;
 - We will work with our therapy services to find ways to speed up the waiting time. We will give you more information and advice whilst you are waiting and make sure you, and your parent carers, know where to find this;
 - We will improve the information within our social care assessments for EHCPs to ensure services which can support you and your family are clearly identified and signposted to;
 - If we have agreed that you need social care support, we will review this every year. This information will support the annual review of your EHCP if you have one.
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We know it will take us a long time to finish all of this work. But we hope that 3 years' time you, and your family, will say we are doing better in all of these areas.

How will we know if this is making a difference:

It is important we know if the changes we are making are working. You should see things getting better for you, and your family, so we will need to keep talking to you to check this is happening. We should also be able to see things changing by looking at what is happening in our services across Solihull.

We will be looking for....

- A strategy which everyone can understand; where you, and your parent carers, can see how your voice has been used and can see that the changes are making difference to you. We will hear this when we talk to you and your parent carers;
 - People working together to help you. Helping you move between services and finding the best support that you say you want. We will hear this when services talk to you and your parent carers;
 - You, and your parent carers, saying you feel more supported, involved and starting to have a better life. We will hear this when services talk to you and your parent carers;
 - Less time for you to wait for assessments and services. We will look at the waiting times for health and social care assessments and completing or updating Education, Health & Care plans (EHCPs);
 - More decisions made at the right time so you can get ready for your next steps. We will look at how transitions are made at the right time, how successful those transitions are and the number of complaints we get;
 - More children and young people feeling able to take part in learning in Solihull or work. We will look at how many of you engage with learning regularly and who go on to work afterwards. We will hear your views when services talk to you;
 - More places, groups, organisations and settings having, or working towards, a local standard of inclusion. We will look at the number of people involved in this and if they have supported more children and young people because of the work they have done. They will share the views they have received from you and your parent carers in their work;
 - More volunteers and staff being able to recognise, and meet, any additional needs you may have. We will look at the number of volunteers and staff being trained. Groups, organisations and settings will share the views they have received from you and your parent carers in their work;
 - More children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) feeling included in your community. We will look at the number of you
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who use the Short Break community activities. We will also look at the number of you who go to clubs and activities as part of Solihull's Holiday Activity & Food programme to make sure that if you can take up this offer, you do (30% of those attending). We will hear your, and your parent carer's views, when we talk to you.

At the start of 2022 we will look through the information we have and talk to you, and your parent carers, to understand where we are now in all of these areas. We will share this once completed.

We will also share the things we will be working on in 2022 through an action plan so you can see what should be changing.

We will look at your views and the progress we are making and share it every year in December. We will report to the Joint Additional Needs Management Board, which includes Solihull Parent Carer Voice and Our Voice's Heard, so they can help us check that this strategy is making a difference.

Accessibility Strategy

2021 - 2024

1. Introduction

We want every school to be accessible and inclusive. Early years settings, post 16 provision and the wider community should also follow this example. The local authority must have an Accessibility Strategy and all school providers must have an Accessibility Plan.

- The vision for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (“the Local Authority”) is for every child to attend a great school and be the best version of themselves. For schools to be great, they need to be accessible and inclusive.
- This also applies to other educational settings including Early Years and Post 16 provision.
- Improving access to education for pupils with disabilities is essential to ensuring this can happen, and that our wider priorities are fulfilled.
- It is also important to consider the wider scope of education, including access to holiday and childcare provision, short breaks, and buildings such as leisure centres, libraries, and community groups.
- The Local Authority has a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to prepare, and keep under review, a written Accessibility Strategy for schools and settings, for which it is ‘The responsible body’ (i.e. maintained schools, maintained nursery schools and Pupil Referral Units within the Council’s area).
- The purpose of an Accessibility Strategy is to increase disabled pupils’ access to the school curriculum, improve the physical environment for such pupils, and improve the provision of information to these pupils and their parents.
- All schools, including academies, free schools, and fee-paying independent schools are required to have a written Accessibility Plan that is based on the same principles as the Local Authority’s Accessibility Strategy.
- Whilst the duty to prepare an Accessibility Plan does not apply to Early Years and Post-16 settings (unless they are constituted as a ‘school’), it is good practice for these settings to also follow these guidelines.
- This accessibility strategy sets out the approach that Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council will take to ensure all children, including those with disabilities, can access quality educational provision, no matter which area they live in.

2. Definitions

Under the Equality Act (2010), a person has a disability if they have a 'physical or mental impairment' that has a 'long term' 'adverse effect' on their ability to carry out 'normal day-to-day activities'. The Children and Families Act (2014) states that "A child or young person has SEN (Special Educational Needs) if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her".

- A child under compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if they are likely to meet the definition above when of compulsory school age (or would be likely to if no special educational provision were made).
- It is important to note that the fact that a pupil has a disability does not necessarily mean that they have special educational needs.

3. Inclusion

All stakeholders have agreed that Inclusion and Accessibility are interlinked. When schools, settings, and colleges value everyone equally, they welcome all children within their surrounding community.

- The Strategy for Inclusive Education should be read in conjunction with this document, as the guidance supports accessibility for all pupils. For the reader, the Solihull agreed definition for Inclusion is as follows:
 - Inclusion is a never-ending process concerned with the involvement of individuals, the creation of participatory systems and settings, and the promotion of inclusive values. (Booth and Ainscow 2017)
 - The aim of inclusion is to reduce exclusion and discriminatory attitudes, including those in relation to age, social class, ethnicity, religion, gender, and attainment (Ainscow et.al 2006).

4. Area Context:

Solihull is made up of 59 primary schools (21 of which are academies), 15 secondary schools (14 of which are academies), 5 special schools (1 of which is an academy, 2 pupil referral units and 1 alternative provision academy).

- Out of the 63000 children and young people aged between 0 and 25 in the borough, 42238 were on role in a Solihull school, including both special and mainstream provision - spring 2021 School Census.
 - 3.4% of children have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and 12.9% of children were registered as SEN Support, as of spring 2021 School Census.
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- Approximately 45% of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) were attending a mainstream setting, as of the statutory SEN2 return in 2021.
 - As of the Summer Early Years Headcount 2021, there were 217 Early Years settings within the borough.
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5. Important considerations

This document has been created by the Local Authority in partnership with a variety of stakeholders, including schools and parents of pupils attending schools in Solihull. We have given due regard to a range of characteristics and needs to reduce inequalities and discrimination. There are several important documents that may be referenced throughout and are linked to the work of the Accessibility Strategy.

- In production of this document, stakeholders across services have been consulted, including:
 - Solihull Parent Carer Voice
 - Headteachers
 - School Governors
 - Specialist Inclusion Support Services (SISS)
 - 0-25 SEND Social Work Team
 - Health
 - Commissioning services for learning and children and young people
 - Resourcing and Planning
 - Legal services
 - Asset Management
 - Facilities Management
- This document should be read in conjunction with the following:
 - Joint Additional Needs Strategy
 - SEND School Place Commissioning Strategy (2021)
 - School Organisation Plan (2020-2021)
 - Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency Plan (due end of 2021)
 - Strategy for Inclusive Education
 - Graduated Approach
 - [Provision of adaptations and equipment \(Jan 2021\)](#)
 - Accessibility Toolkit
 - Early Years Strategy (2021)
 - Alternative Provision Strategy (2021)

6. Legal Framework

The Equality Act 2010 came into force in 2010 and replaced the previous Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The act states that local authorities must have in place a written Accessibility Strategy. For their part, schools (including independent schools) are required to have in place a written Accessibility Plan.

- Section 88 of and Schedule 10 to the Equality Act 2010 require a local authority to prepare, and keep under review, a written Accessibility Strategy which will increase access to the school curriculum for pupils with disabilities, improve the physical environment for such pupils and improve the provision of information to them.
- The strategy applies to schools for which the local authority is the 'responsible body' (i.e. maintained schools, including maintained nursery schools, maintained special schools, and Pupil Referral Units).
- Although this document in itself is not applicable by law to academies and free schools, all schools (including academies, free schools and fee-paying independent schools) are required to prepare, and keep under review, written Accessibility Plans that are based on the same principles as the local authority's Accessibility Strategy. The Local Authority is also keen to work with all types of schools, whether maintained or not, to ensure accessibility is consistent across the borough.
- These duties do NOT apply to Further Education, Higher Education or Early Years settings (unless constituted as a school). For them, the requirement to remove physical barriers is contained within the duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled learners and their responsibilities within the Public Sector Equality Duty. It is good practice for these settings to have due regard to the principles set out within the Local Authority Accessibility Strategy, to ensure consistency of accessibility for all.

The Children and Families Act 2014 places an emphasis on co-production, and ensuring that local authorities work with children, young people, and their families to develop services and packages of support.

- This means working within a multi-agency approach, to identify and assess special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and ensure that those needs are met. In doing so, we aim to improve the outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
 - Local authorities should aim to develop integrated packages of support, working jointly with education, health, and care providers, ensuring that children and young people with disabilities can access the curriculum and make progress towards their desired outcomes.
 - All schools are responsible for providing a broad, balanced, and inclusive curriculum for all pupils, including those with SEND. For Early Years settings, this requirement comes under the Early Years Statutory Framework.
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The Equality Act introduced a single **Public Sector Equality Duty** (or “Equality Duty”) that came into effect in April 2011, this applies to public bodies, including state-funded educational settings (i.e. maintained schools, including maintained nursery schools and maintained special schools, academies and free schools, and Pupil Referral Units). It covers the protected characteristics, race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, and maternity and gender reassignment.

- In summary, the Equality Duty states that, in carrying out their functions, public bodies must have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Throughout the development of our strategy for 2021-2024, we have:
 - Given due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it; and
 - Given regard to the need to reduce inequalities between children and young people in access to, and outcomes from, schools and educational settings and to ensure services are provided in an integrated way to ensure equal opportunities and fair access.
 - The Equality Duty applies in relation to **all** the protected characteristics under the Equality Act (i.e. it does not apply solely in relation to the protected characteristic of disability).
 - It is important to recognise that some children may have medical issues, visual impairments, or other disabilities, but won't have an EHCP. However, they must still have equal access to education, and it is the responsibility of the school to ensure that this happens, with the support from the Local Authority as required.
 - The growing breadth of need within Solihull is for children and young people with Social and Emotional Mental Health needs, and those with an Autistic Spectrum Condition. Therefore, when they are preparing their Accessibility Plans, schools should ensure that they cover these aspects and that have regard to the needs of these children.
 - The Equality Duty is applicable to the needs of all individuals, therefore settings should also give due regard to the needs of the workforce and parents/carers, as well as children and young people. By doing so, they will not only be meeting legal requirements, but will also create a positive and inclusive culture.
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7. Local Authority working

The feedback for each of the key principles outlined below, has been developed in consultation with the Local Authority's EHCP Service, and with colleagues working in both Health and Social Care, with the expectation that all parties will be involved in the implementation of priorities, through the Joint Additional Needs Management Board.

- The Local Authority is responsible for the asset management of maintained schools in its area and are the responsible landlords for academies. For this reason, the Asset Management team will form part of the work needed to ensure the Accessibility Strategy priorities are met.
- To ensure suitability of school places for a range of needs, it is good practice for schools to have an Asset Management Plan, which can be created with the help of the School Asset Support Team:
schoolassetsupport@solihull.gov.uk
- Referrals for changes to a building can be made through the Specialist Inclusion Support Services team (SISS). Agreed changes with SISS, Occupational Therapists (OT) and the Asset Management Team can be funded by the school's capital programme. The local authority will fund 80% of the cost of making the agreed changes and schools must fund the remaining 20% of these costs. All extensions must be compliant with current legislation related to disability access.
- If a school wishes to fund a change themselves, they still need to apply through the Landlord Approval Process.
- Planning, Design and Engagement Services work towards accessibility standards for schools. Key documents include:
 - The School Premises (England) Regulations 2012
 - Building bulletin 104 (non-statutory)
 - Area guidelines for SEND and alternative provision – Including special schools, alternative provision, specially resourced provision and units (December 2015)
 - Building bulletin 103 (non-statutory)
 - Area guidelines for mainstream schools (June 2014)

8. Schools' responsibilities

As mentioned above, the Equality Act 2010 requires all schools to prepare, and to keep under review, a written Accessibility Plan. This plan must be updated at least every three years and must incorporate the same key principles that the Local Authority is required to incorporate within its Accessibility Strategy. The 'Reasonable Adjustments' duty in the Equality Act (section 20), requires schools and local authorities to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not placed at a

substantial disadvantage in comparison with their peers who do not have disabilities.

- The school's Accessibility Plan should be published on the school website, and hard copies provided upon request. There should be a link between the school's SEN Information Report and the Accessibility Plan.
- As part of the Accessibility Plan, schools must demonstrate their commitment to the Local Authority's Accessibility Strategy, including:
 - How they aim to improve access to and increase participation in the curriculum.
 - How they will improve access to the physical environment.
 - How they intend to improve access to information.
- In terms of the 'reasonable adjustments' duty, The Equality Act does not say what is 'reasonable'. This allows flexibility for different sets of circumstances so that, for example, what is reasonable in one set of circumstances may not be reasonable in another. While it is not possible to say what will or will not be reasonable in any particular situation, some of the factors that are likely to be taken into account in deciding what is or is not reasonable for a school or a local authority to have to do are listed on page 7 of the Equality and Human Rights Commission's technical guidance on 'Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Pupils' (2015).
- Some children with disabilities will require individualised equipment to enable access to the curriculum: smaller items such as pencil grips and writing slopes, and more specialist equipment such as height adjustable furniture, toilet seats and supportive seating. Such equipment will be provided as part of the reasonable adjustment's duty.
- More information on the purchase and funding of this equipment, alongside examples of reasonable adjustments can be found in the following document:
 - Provision of adaptations and equipment (Jan 2021)
- As equipment is purchased for the use of individual pupils it is the council's expectation that any equipment which has been purchased by a setting, will follow the pupil throughout their school life including such times as when a pupil transitions between school settings. In those instances where a mainstream school has been required to fund

equipment and the pupil for whom the equipment was purchased transitions to another school, it is anticipated that negotiation about payment should be held between the transitioning and receiving schools.

- For Early Years providers and Schools, an Inclusion Fund is available whereby applications can be made for additional funding for children aged 2, 3 and 4 years old who have additional needs and/or disabilities:
 - [Inclusion Fund - Solihull local offer \(socialsolihull.org.uk\)](https://socialsolihull.org.uk)

9. Consultation and Planning

To work towards the vision for Solihull schools and educational provision, the Accessibility Strategy can help us move towards mainstream inclusion, parental confidence, quality specialist provision, clarity of information and identification of targeted support.

- The most important part of our strategy is to keep the voice of children and young people at the centre of all we do. The recent SEND and Additional Needs Children's Survey identified that children would like us to use the following words in our work:
 - Inclusion (everyone welcome)
 - Individual (everyone is different)
 - Equality (everyone has the same chances)
 - Happiness (enjoy life)
 - Children were asked for their thoughts on Education, Health and Social Care. Overall, they found that there were some professionals who were kind and they valued this. Health services were considered helpful in most cases. And in school support was best when it involved pastoral, adult support or small groups, including the additional resource centres.
 - Where children felt there were areas which needed developing, these were mostly around the following areas:
 - Adults not understanding their needs, particularly around communication. They felt a mistrust of those in all professions.
 - Long waiting times in health, and an excess of paperwork, made access to services difficult. More information about certain services and thresholds was also needed.
 - They needed more help for their families at home.
 - Some community facilities were not accessible for complex needs, including changing areas.
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- Many children felt that they didn't have access to clubs after school or during the holidays.

Guiding Principle 1: To increase access to the whole curriculum offered by schools for pupils with disabilities.

What do we already do?

- Specialist Inclusion Support Service (SISS) – offering training and consultancy support to schools and settings.
- Community Educational Psychology Service (CEPS) – professional psychology services for children and young people in educational settings and in the community.
- In school provision – including small group teaching, pastoral support, flexibility in timetables, differentiation, scaffolding, and the use of specialist equipment where needed.
- There are examples of good practice already happening across the authority, with some schools paving the way for inclusive working.
- Most schools acknowledge that accessibility and inclusion is important, and ensure it is part of their development plans.
- There have been recent changes in the Local Authority's leadership, driving forward a shared vision with schools and parents. The development of a new Inclusion Service will enhance this offer moving forward, particularly for those children and young people on SEND support.
- The Specialist Inclusion Support Service (SISS): Sensory and Physical Impairment (SPI) team can advise on specialist equipment available such as low vision aids for pupils with a visual impairment, radio aids for pupils with a hearing impairment and specialist workstation equipment for pupils with physical disabilities. They can also advise further on funding options and reasonable adjustments. See the following document for more information:
Provision of adaptations and equipment (Jan 2021) – available on the Local Offer.
- Personal health budgets are available for parents, and parents report support from mental health services and occupational therapy:
[Personal health budgets - Birmingham and Solihull CCG](#)
- Special School nurses have a good working relationship with schools, and in most instances, can attend settings with the appropriate space needed for their work.
- Birmingham and Solihull have developed cross border and working principles in order to ensure clarity around care and support for those children and young people living near the border of each authority:
[cross-border-working-principles-easy-read_FINAL.pdf](#)
(socialsolihull.org.uk)

- A range of external services and professionals are available to offer advice and loan specialist equipment, including health colleagues at [Specialist health services - Solihull local offer \(socialsolihull.org.uk\)](https://socialsolihull.org.uk) and support for mental health at [Family and Carer Strategy - Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust –](#)
- A Co-production model has been developed between the Local Authority and the Solihull Parent Carer Voice (SPCV). More information can be found here: <https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/home3/co-production/>
- In Solihull, we have a range of specialist provision, including Alternative Resource Centres (ARCs) for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Conditions, physical difficulties, specific learning difficulties, social emotional mental health and speech and language impairments. Information about our specialist provision can be found here: https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/family-information-service-directory/wpbdp_category/special-schools-prus-arcs/

Priority areas for development:

- **Early Intervention:** Parents and school professionals feel there needs to be earlier intervention support for children and young people, to help them stay in school before reaching crisis point or requiring an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP). There is a gap in provision for pre-diagnosis support for schools and families, particularly around Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, Autism and Communication and Interaction. Potential solutions to this were identified as supporting schools in using their funding more effectively when accessing traded services and developing new methods of tackling non-attendance and truancy.
 - **Communication:** Schools and parents have told us that there needs to be clarity in communications between services, this includes the sharing of financial and funding information regarding financial alongside clear policies and protocols in the EHCP Service. Relationships between schools and parents were also identified as an area for improvement, including better co-production opportunities and the sharing of information when choosing a placement.
 - **Placement planning:** Local Authority stakeholders, schools and parents all agreed that there needed to be longer term thinking and strategic vision around place sufficiency for children and young people with additional needs, transition between settings and the processes around school placement.
 - **Sharing of good practice:** Whilst there are pockets of success across the borough, all interested parties felt that there needed to be consistency, and ways of sharing this best practice with others. This
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would include ensuring strong working relationships with schools and ways of sharing practice through the local authority.

- **Accessibility away from the school setting:** Parents, children and colleagues in health and social care all felt that access to extra-curricular activities was limited for those with a range of special needs and disabilities. This includes the quality of accessibility on school trips and visits.
- **Pupil Voice:** All parties agreed that accessibility could be improved with a successful pupil voice group involved, as they felt that pupil voice was considered low across all three of the guiding principles.

Guiding Principle 2: Improve the physical environment of schools to increase access to education and associated services

What do we already do?

- There are examples of good practice across the borough, for example, good wheelchair access, flexible classroom arrangements, or life skills training for older children. Schools often make adaptations to lunchtime arrangements too, to ensure access for all.
 - Further examples of good practice in schools include, but are not limited to, the provision of technology (for example iPads/tablets), adapted furniture, accessible toilets, radio aids, presentation policies, clutter free areas, specific layouts for different needs, and ensuring equipment and materials are accessible and at the right height.
 - Transport to school is provided, which specialist attendants/escorts being provided where required.
 - Multi Academy Trusts report that they have access to professionals who can support them further with building design and improvement.
 - Advice is available from SISS (especially the SPI and Autism teams) to help schools make the adjustments they need. SENDIAS (SEND Information, Advice and Support) are also available to provide advice to schools.
 - There are a range of specialist health services available to give advice or support in school working and therapies: [Specialist health services - Solihull local offer \(socialsolihull.org.uk\)](https://socialsolihull.org.uk)
 - There are protocols in place for all schools to manage health and safety and risk assessments.
 - Some schools carry out environmental audits for pupils who are transitioning to their setting, for example the AET (Autism Education Trust) audit tool.
 - The SEND School Place Commissioning Strategy 2021/24 provides the strategic plan for the provision of specialist provision in Solihull and can
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be found here: <https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/education/school-place-planning/>

- The most recent Asset Management Plan for Solihull, can be found here: [Solihull Schools - Asset Management Plan 2018](#). It includes details on the landlord approval process which applies to both maintained schools and academies.

Priority areas for development:

- **Consistency:** The key to many of the above successes is consistency, all stakeholders involved in consultation felt that there needed to be consistent good practice across the whole authority, where good practice can be found in every school, not just some.
 - **Working in partnership:** Colleagues, particularly those in building and asset management, felt that schools needed the right tools to be able to assess the accessibility of their schools on a frequent basis. Parents, health colleagues and specialist teachers would all like to be involved in accessibility reviews and would all like to be involved in the design of new buildings and extensions for education. All parties felt that using these tools to look at long term provision would be more beneficial than just doing so for individual children. As with principle one, parents also felt that they could have a greater input to improving physical accessibility in schools.
 - **Training:** Local Authority officers and schools agreed that it would be beneficial to provide training on accessibility for providers. This would include their absolute duties regarding the Equality Act, information on mandatory health requirements and support in writing their accessibility plan. It was felt that the training would be useful for early years and post 16 provision.
 - **Communication:** As in Principle 1, all stakeholders agreed that better information sharing, including knowing the best people to contact for different queries, would impact positively on providers' ability to improve physical access.
 - **Provision:** Parents and Local Authority officers felt that there needed to be more thought to sensory needs, as well as the provision of equipment. They also suggested that specialist equipment could also be better shared across settings.
 - **Accessibility away from the school setting:** A wider consideration was raised by social care and health, which was also echoed in the views of children and parents, that access to other areas of education was limited and needed to be improved. This includes, but is not exclusive to, after school provision, school trips, holiday provision, early years settings, libraries, leisure centres etc.
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Guiding Principle 3: Improve the access of written information for children and young people with disabilities

What do we already do?

- Most school websites were accessible, with easy access and a variety of formats for communication. Schools are often using different media platforms and text messaging services to ensure that they reach families.
- There is good training available for staff on dyslexia friendly teaching and communication needs. It is felt that this enables children to better access written information in school.
- SENDIAS is considered by all parties to be accessible and supportive. <https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/education/sendias/>
- The Solihull Parent Carer Voice (SPCV) are independent parent carers who work with organisations and services to improve outcomes for children with special needs and disabilities. It is felt that the Local Authority and health are good at sharing SPCV correspondence with stakeholders and the community. <https://spcv.org.uk/>
- The Family Information Service is accessible and used well to support families in accessing services for children and young people. <https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/family-information-service-directory/10561/solihull-family-information-service/>
- The Clinical Commissioning Group (i.e. health) has established a subgroup of the Parent Carer Forum for health/SEND to look at pathways and support for selective mutism. The SISS team have recently provided training materials to all schools to support them with this area.

Priority areas for development:

- **Communication:** As identified in all three principles, parents and schools felt that there needs to be clarity on who to contact and for what, and easier access to information on aspects such as funding, placements, services, and support. Parents also felt that there was a need for better communication between schools and them. Health colleagues identified that some families were unable to access technology due to their circumstances, and that letters and phone calls should remain as standard to ensure the information was reaching all audiences.
 - **Access to information:** Despite recent work taking place on improving the Local Offer, parents still report difficulties in being able to find and access information. Areas for improvement include, but are not limited to, the search engine, use of different coloured backgrounds, chunking
-

and organisation of text and incorporating a voice reader for those who are not able to read the text in written format.

- **Working in partnership:** Whilst there are services available that provide advice and support (e.g. SISS, CEPs, EHCP Service), there were concerns over the timeliness of sharing this advice with parents. It was suggested that schools would benefit from clear protocols for involving parents and giving feedback.
- **Accessibility away from the school setting:** A gap was identified by parents and professionals, regarding the need for better family support mechanisms outside of school, and outside of term time. It was felt that the SPCV, SENDIAS and the Holiday, Activities and Food programme (HAF) could be used to support this.
- **Consistency:** As with feedback on other key principles, there were general concerns raised about consistency in school practice. In particular, the use of visuals, mixed social grouping to support social interaction and alternatives and flexibility in the use of technology as communication aids.

10. Coordination, Accessibility and Review

This strategy will be made available to schools, parents, and other interested groups through the Local Offer. The priorities identified in the strategy will have a named person and will be monitored by the Joint Additional Needs Management Board to ensure a continued multi-agency approach. This group will be responsible for reviewing the strategy in three years' time.

- The Joint Additional Needs Management Board has representatives from health, social care, education providers, the Local Authority's SEND department and the Inclusion Service. Representatives from building and planning, asset management and communications will also be involved in the actions identified.
 - The strategy has been written in a format whereby a 'shortened and accessible' version is available, which can be expanded to provide more information within each section.
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11. Appendices

I. Action plan

Leadership		
Objective	Action	Success Measures
L1. Ensure there is a culture of sharing good practice between schools, to improve the consistency of provision for children and young people with disabilities.	<p>Partnership work between the SEND Service, Inclusion Service and schools to establish ways of sharing best practice across localities – including the use of welfare rooms, flexible behaviour policies and examples of reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>Establish partnerships between specialist provision and mainstream provision for coaching and mentoring opportunities.</p> <p>Provide a platform for the sharing of good practice, as part of the Engagement and Participation group.</p>	<p>Schools will have methods and procedures in place for sharing practice across localities – evidence will be seen in consistent provision across schools in each area.</p> <p>Each mainstream school will have a contact at a specialist setting for advice and support.</p> <p>Good practice will be shared on platforms accessible to schools and parents.</p>
L2. All schools to be legally compliant and meet their duties under the Equality Duty.	<p>LA to audit accessibility plans published on school websites and inform schools of training available.</p> <p>LA to provide training for providers on the Equality and Accessibility requirements and related health requirements.</p> <p>Schools to attend training and ensure they are legally compliant with regards to their Accessibility duties.</p>	<p>100% of schools will have a current accessibility plan published on their school website.</p> <p>All schools, including academies will have attended training on Equality and Accessibility.</p> <p>Early years providers and Post 16 settings will have access to training appropriate to their needs.</p>
Joint Commissioning		
Objective	Action	Success Measures
JC1. To have improved family support mechanisms for outside of the school, including outside of term time.	<p>Establish a parent led working group, to identify where family support is required and how this can be put into place, with the potential involvement of the Inclusion Service, health, social care, communities, and SEND department.</p> <p>Establish ways in which holiday provision (including the Holiday, Activities and Food programme) can support families, involving schools and their premises where possible.</p>	<p>Family support section added to the Local Offer with a range of options for families to work with.</p> <p>Holiday providers have access to training and support around SEND and Accessibility, so they can support families during this period.</p>

		Increased attendance of SEND children at holiday provision.
Co-production		
Objective	Action	Success Measures
CP1. To seek and receive feedback from children and young people and their families to ascertain their ideas and concerns around accessibility across the borough.	<p>Support the SPCV in establishing a Child's voice to SEND.</p> <p>Schools to develop new ways of receiving feedback from children and their families, and how the feedback impacts on school improvement.</p>	<p>Protocols in place for children's voice, and regular involvement of children in accessibility developments from this action plan.</p> <p>Survey results show improved trust and communications between families and schools, with reports of partnership working to meet needs.</p>
CP2. To improve communications between the local authority, health, social care, schools, and parent/carers.	<p>Working group for Engagement and Participation (as part of the Joint Additional Needs Management Board) to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Local Offer - Funding clarity - Support for school/parent communications and best practice - Pathways of support (including SENDIAS) - Ways of sharing good practice - Parental feedback protocols for advice from LA services - Partnership working across LA services. <p>Schools to evaluate their own Engagement and Participation protocols and use advice from the working group school representatives to improve these.</p>	High level of satisfaction reported in survey to schools and parents about communications across LA, health, social care, and schools.
Inclusive Culture		
Objective	Action	Success Measures
IC1. To ensure earlier intervention for children and young people, enabling them to receive support pre-diagnosis.	<p>LA to work with schools in using the Graduated Approach, to identify opportunities for earlier intervention and support. (Support may include working with SENCOs to identify better and more flexible use of budgets to access services).</p> <p>To establish an Inclusion Service that tackles non-attendance issues, in partnership with parents, and related partners.</p>	<p>The Graduated Approach will be in situ and used by schools to support earlier intervention.</p> <p>Schools will report that they have access to a range of pre-diagnostic options within their scope. (Identified through survey feedback)</p> <p>Parents/carers will report positively around their experiences with the Inclusion service and supporting their child/children back into education settings. (Identified through survey feedback)</p>
IC2. LA to develop a plan to ensure appropriate and effective provision to meet the needs of most	Expectations set with schools on their responsibilities for auditing accessibility within their provision.	Increased percentage of children with Special Needs and Disabilities are educated in the borough.

children with SEND in borough.	<p>Schools to use auditing tools successfully to plan for future needs and offer more places for children with SEND.</p> <p>Asset Management Team to develop their approach to Asset Management Plans alongside schools.</p> <p>Tuition services group to ensure contractual and safeguarding arrangements are in place for children receiving tuition at home, and plans are established for a timely return to the education setting.</p> <p>Alternative Provision Strategy completed and applied across the LA.</p> <p>SISS Accessibility meetings identify the accessibility needs of specific children, but also consider long term and future needs.</p>	<p>A decrease in the number of children who are not on roll in a school and receiving tuition provision or attending out of borough and independent provision.</p> <p>Forward thinking of children's needs will mean schools are better prepared to offer places to a range of SEND children, therefore an increase in the numbers of successful consultations.</p>
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Preparing for Adulthood / Transition

Objective	Action	Success Measures
PfA1. Review and develop information available to parents regarding school placements, provision, and post 16 placements.	<p>Alongside engagement and participation working group and transition pathway, review information provided to parents around school placement and provision, including post 16.</p> <p>Schools to work with post 16 providers to ensure relevant information is shared with families and young people, to help them choose the appropriate next steps in their/their child's education</p>	<p>Schools and parents/carers will report better parental engagement and understanding of school placements during transition periods.</p> <p>The Local Offer will provide information required for parents to make informed choices.</p> <p>Better information will be available to schools, families, and young people from post 16 providers, and shared effectively. (Identified through feedback from schools, young people, and families)</p>

Timely Access

Objective	Action	Success Measures
TA1: Improve relationships between parents/carers, schools, and the local authority by ensuring clarity in procedures and roles of the EHCP service.	<p>Engagement and Participation group to identify the sharing of policies and protocols from the EHCP Service.</p> <p>Workforce development planning within the EHCP Service to ensure all staff have appropriate training in their duties, and guidance/protocols are adhered to.</p>	<p>Local Offer with show clear guidance on processes within the EHCP Service.</p> <p>Schools and parents will provide positive feedback on relationships with the EHCP Service. (Identified through survey feedback)</p> <p>EHCP Service workforce stability, and staff to report good</p>

		understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
TA2: To ensure timescales are adhered to in schools and that parents/carers have timely access to information and advice.	<p>SISS, EP and Health colleagues to ensure family consultation forms a consistent part of their reporting processes.</p> <p>Schools to put processes in place to share advice and guidance with families in the most appropriate, timely and accessible way.</p>	<p>Parents included and aware of all advice/guidance received. Parent consultation recorded as part of process.</p> <p>Positive feedback from parents identified in survey, around the sharing of information.</p>

II. Useful Resources - Pdnet

- A network for those supporting learners with a physical disability
- Resources added by professionals:

<https://pdnet.org.uk/resources/standards/>

The pdnet Standards provide a practical structure for schools and settings to self-evaluate current provision and reflect on the effectiveness of their organisation in meeting the diverse needs of children and young people with physical disability. A set of Standards has been developed for all three educational phases: Early Years, Schools & Post-16. Four key areas identify the knowledge, skills, actions and attitudes needed to successfully support and nurture a learner with a physical disability:

Standard 1: Vision, ambition and expectation

Standard 2: Identifying and assessing need

Standard 3: Meeting diverse need

Standard 4: Enabling individual outcomes

- Training is also available for schools.
 - Level 1: Raising Awareness of Physical Disability
 - Level 2: Supporting Learners with Physical Disability
- Accessibility Planning Toolkit
 - The pdnet Accessibility Planning Toolkit aims to support schools to effectively evaluate the accessibility of their provision, plan how to improve access for people with disabilities and write a robust and dynamic Accessibility Plan.
 - Specialist Teachers in the SISS: Sensory and Physical Impairment team can advise further on auditing and reviewing accessibility needs for pupils.

12.Key References

- The Equality Act 2010
[Equality Act 2010: advice for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010)

- The Children and Families Act 2014
[Children and Families Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents)
 - SEN Code of Practice
[SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/332672/SEND_code_of_practice_0_to_25_years_-_GOV.UK.pdf)
 - The Public Sector Equality Duty (2011)
[Public sector equality duty - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/332672/SEND_code_of_practice_0_to_25_years_-_GOV.UK.pdf)
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Solihull Maternity and Early Years Strategy 2021-2025

If we want to build a happier and mentally healthier society then one of the best investments we can make is in the relationships, environments and experiences that make up our early childhoods.

*HRH The Duchess of Cambridge in [Big Change Starts Small](#)
The Royal Foundation Centre for Early Childhood*

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Introduction

In a year like no other, families have had the added challenge of restrictions, furlough, job loss and the stress of over a year in a pandemic climate which have added to the challenges of bringing up a young family. In Solihull, the vast majority of early years settings have remained open. Services have continued to offer support to families and the community, often virtually, from maternity to age five and beyond. The purpose of this strategy document is to outline our commitment to supporting young families and set out how we will achieve our vision to improving outcomes in early childhood. This will support all children to start strong and stay strong in Solihull.



The first 1001 critical days is the time period from conception to age 2 when the brain undergoes its most rapid growth and relationships with parents and caregivers are incredibly important. What happens during this time lays the foundations for future wellbeing development and persistent difficulties in early relationships can have pervasive effects on child development, with long term costs to individuals, families, communities and [society](#).

Research has shown that from birth to age 18 months, one million connections are created in the brain per second. The earliest experiences shape a baby's brain development and have a lifelong impact on that baby's mental and emotional health and can greatly impact on health inequalities.

“Investing in this period [very early childhood] is one of the most efficient and effective ways to help eliminate extreme poverty and inequality, boost shared prosperity, and create the human capital needed for economies to diversify and grow.”

[Unicef, World Bank and World Health Organisation Nurturing Care Framework]

Why a maternity and early years strategy?

Our ambition: Why an early years strategy?

- In Solihull we recognise the importance of the child's earliest years pre-birth to five. The council has a duty [Childcare Act 2006] to improve the outcomes of all children under 5, to reduce inequalities and ensure sufficient high-quality early education and care for parents.
- Solihull is among the local authorities where fewer children from low-income families reach the expected level of development. 72.6% of all children in the borough reach a good level of development, which whilst above the national, it is lower than our statistical neighbours. In 2019 when EYFSP data was last submitted, the percentage of children eligible for free school meals who achieved a good level of development at the end of their reception year was 56% - a decline of 6% on the previous year. Further, the inequality gap for Solihull is 35.5.
- Data shows that those children who have needed a social worker do not achieve in line with their peers in the early years. Only 50% of children achieved a good level of development compared to 72% of children who did not need a social worker, between 2012 and 2017.
- Evidence is clear that the early years is critical to brain development with a profound impact on children's cognitive, social and emotional development. If we want to close the attainment gap that persists through school, we must start early.
- This strategy and resulting actions demonstrate our determination to improve children's long-term life chances and to do this by focussing on giving children the best start in their life.
- We know that there are many services and people working hard to support children and their families across Solihull.

Strategic aims

- Strengthen a multi-agency, integrated approach to early years and childcare to meet the changing needs of families with babies and young children, increasing retention and training skilled staff.
 - Ensure provision and services needed by families from birth, are clearly mapped. Identification of need and appropriate intervention effectively communicated to enable a clear Start for Life offer to parents.
 - Continuously improve outcomes for all children not pre-determined by their starting points.
 - Increase the numbers of children who are ready for the next stage of their education and successfully transition into school if educated out-of-home.
 - Childhood education in the borough is of high quality, enabling all families to have access to good and outstanding early education provision.
 - A targeted local approach to children under 5 who may be vulnerable or disadvantaged focusing on narrowing early attainment gaps and promoting positive outcomes.
 - To enable greater information sharing across partners to support early identification of families avoiding crisis.
-

- Local resources targeted to meet population need, avoiding duplication and gaps in service delivery.
- Growing confidence for parents and carers offering assurance that services are working well in Solihull.

Parenting and community

- Promoting and enabling a healthy pregnancy – supporting antenatal parenting with a particular focus on vulnerable and/or isolated women.
- Improving breastfeeding initiation.
- Support for vulnerable families – development of family hubs in the community and a robust digital support offer for families.
- Increase reach of parenting education/peer support.
- Healthy brain development for 0 - 2 year olds.

Parent and infant mental health

- Perinatal Mental Health – ensuring effective working with services for parents at risk of mental health issues and the provision specialist parent & infant mental health midwives and health visitors.
- Infant Mental Health - Specialist services for parent-infant interaction.

National maternity and early years context

From pregnancy until the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, children come into contact with a range of different services. With parents, and the child's first educators we need to consider how best we can support children and their families to achieve the five essentials in their earliest years for the best beginnings.

- Loving, nurturing relationships with parents and carers.
- A safe home free from stress and adversity.
- The right help to develop good language and cognitive skills.
- Support to manage behaviour and regulate emotions.
- Good physical and mental health and access to healthcare.

We need to invest in these early years of childhood, because we know that getting these solid foundations in place mean a generation of children who should grow able to learn, play, thrive and participate effectively in society.

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed enormous challenges to the early years sector, which caters for in the region of 2.1 million children under the age of 5 years. The existing economic and health inequalities are likely to worsen as a result of the pandemic and deepen existing vulnerabilities and under achievement for young children and families, particularly those who are disadvantaged.

The early years is a crucial stage for social mobility, the poorest children are already 11 months behind their better-off peers before they start school at age 3 and 4. Attending high quality early years provision is vital to begin to narrow this gap before children start school.

Local context

Local authority statutory requirements should be met these are set out in the '[Early education and childcare: Statutory guidance for local authorities](#)' DfE such as:

- To support the development of new settings as well as existing settings to ensure that sufficient quality places for 2, 3- and 4-year olds are available. (LA sufficiency duty - Childcare Act 2006 sections 6 and 13).
- To fulfil the duty to improve the well-being of children under five and reduce inequalities (Childcare Act section 1 2006).

The strategy supports the Solihull Council Plan 2020-2025

Improvements in early childhood development and school readiness, particularly in disadvantaged communities

https://www.solihull.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-04/Council_Plan_Update_2021-22.pdf

Current local picture

- We have sufficient places for early education in Solihull for 2 year olds and 3 and 4 year olds.
- Solihull is ranked 14th nationally for the percentage of 2 year old children benefiting from funded early education.
- Solihull is ranked 2nd for 3 and 4 year olds.
- In Solihull the largest percentage growth in Education Health and Care Plans (2020-2021) is in the under 5s. (Draft Solihull SEND School Place Commissioning Strategy) We need to ensure that young children with special educational needs have appropriate early education and care provision.
- In Solihull, whilst the local authority early years profile and ages and stages questionnaire figures are positive and we have above national numbers of children achieving expected levels of development, both figures could be improved. Solihull is ranked 59th against all local authorities for the percentage of all children in Solihull achieving a good level of development at EYFSP. At 2-2 ½ years Solihull percentage of children achieving a good level of development was 89.4% with the best authority achieving 94.6% (2020/21 ASQ).
- The inequality gap in Solihull is higher than both the national figure and our statistical neighbours. The latest available EYFS profile inequality gap (2019) shows the Solihull gap at 35.50, statistical neighbour gap as 30.94 and England as 32.40. There are larger disparities between child development between affluent households and those on lower income, particularly in early speech and language development.

Local data

Solihull 5s and under population

In Solihull the March 2021 health profiles showed that in many areas Solihull's youngest residents fair better than national. We continue to need to support children and their families to ensure all have the best start in their lives.

<https://www.gov.uk/phe> | <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/> Local- Solihull/ Region-West Midlands
Population age profile (Resident population) 2018

Age range	Solihull		West Midlands region	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
0-4	6,340	6,053	184,127	175,269
5-9	7,052	6,643	193,972	183,803

Information from the Joint Area Needs Assessment can be found here

https://www.solihull.gov.uk/sites/default/files/migrated/InfoandIntelligence_Joint-Strategic-Needs-Assessment-Infographic-Summary.pdf

Definition of disadvantage/vulnerability

All children can become vulnerable, or have additional needs, at any time in their lives and may need support for a short or longer period of time. 'Additional needs' refers to any child or young person in need of support – this could be as a result of family circumstances, changes to living situations, cultural differences, health and medical concerns, disability, loss or bereavement. Circumstances such as these can have an impact on children's care, learning, physical development, communication, social and emotional development and behaviour, resulting in the need for additional help and support. Crucially, we want all agencies working with children and young people to see the person first and not the additional need they may have.

Appendix 1 What's it like for a child living in Solihull age 0-5?

Role of the strategy

Early childhood systems are complex and involve many different organisations, stakeholders and services across early education, childcare, health, parents and carers, family support, training and employment, and information and advice. Making this system effective for children and their families depends on joined up arrangements for strategy and planning, leading change, delivering effective support, and learning from progress.

The strategy will be delivered by all partners and services working with our youngest children. The strategy group will govern progress on the six priorities and be the group to develop change and ensure everyone works together as a partnership. This will enable a joined-up approach and avoid services working in isolation.

Priorities

Six priorities have emerged from the Maternity and Early Years self-assessment:

- **Data** – for population led needs assessment, action planning and evaluation of what works.
- **Communication** - to ensure families and LA services can signpost those in need to services that are available.
- **Workforce** – to build a local authority field force and education-based workforce that have the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes to together support young children and families.
- **Transitions and life course** - to provide seamless services and support for families and young children. This strategy is written at a time when Solihull are developing their plans for Family Hubs.
- **Early Years SEND** - to ensure we have high aspirations for all children and a clear vision for the education of children with special educational needs.
- **Speech, language and communication** – to support all children to develop effective communication skills.

Six task and finish groups were identified to begin to plot actions which would support development of the aspects for short, medium- and longer-term priority improvement.

How we will achieve success and what this will look like?

- Develop and embed an integrated approach to service delivery in the statutory sector, particularly relating to the Council, NHS and education providers;
 - Make it the norm for services and programmes to be funded, commissioned and delivered based on evidence, intelligence and co-production with parents;
 - Develop and embed better and more integrated uses of data to inform and continuously develop outcomes, which are specific to the circumstances, needs, and strengths of each child and family;
 - Ensure there are effective and sufficient means of quality assuring and building confidence in services and provision, which prioritises inclusion of and accessibility to all children and families;
 - Develop and embed a cross-sector and community approach to early intervention, which can identify and engage with children and parents at the earliest opportunity and point of potential need;
 - Recognise and invest in the valuable role of communities of place (neighbourhoods) and communities of interest (parents) in promoting contact, help, support and inclusion for all children and parents.
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Methodology

The task and finish groups will lead the six priority areas. A lead for each area has been identified and an action plan has been developed, progress will feed into the early years strategic group.

Our vision: Transforming life chances by holding children and young people at the heart of everything we do. Solihull Council Plan priority: 2020-2025- Improvements in early childhood development and school readiness, particularly in disadvantaged communities.					
Data	Communications	SEND	Speech, Language and Communication	Transitions and life course	Workforce
<i>To put the data to work to best support early years children where it is needed most</i>	<i>Develop, embed and communicate an integrated approach to early years support and service delivery</i>	<i>To develop a community approach to intervention at the earliest opportunity to support potential SEND needs.</i>	<i>In Solihull we believe that if children's speech, language and communication develop well they can communicate their thoughts, feelings and ideas, be understood, build relationships and interact with others. Children learn to talk and talk to live and learn.</i>	<i>Develop and embed a cross-sector and community approach to early intervention, which can identify and engage with children and parents at the earliest opportunity and point of potential need;</i>	<i>To build a local authority field force and education-based workforce that have the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes to together support young children [pre-birth to five y/o] and families at the earliest opportunity and point of potential need</i>
-Develop a shared outcomes framework - tartan rug	-'Big Change Starts Small'- Raising awareness of the extraordinary impact of the early years	-Review access to support and timely intervention for children with emerging SEND and high needs	-Create a shared pathway to show universal, targeted and specialist services supporting SLCN in Solihull.	-Ensure parenting and community support delivers a robust 'Start Strong Stay Strong' offer - child development and responsive parenting.	-Developing more integrated working and a shared understanding of the importance of early years and early support.
-Joint analysis and shared problem-solving actions by stakeholders	-Creating communities of support – ensure accessibility of our communication of the support available to Solihull children and families	-Closer agency working to develop integrated working – promote ASQ [integrated check], shared pathways, joint training, joint commissioning.	-Promote serve and return interactions for healthy development – workforce training through LA and external training.	-Build a mentally healthier and more nurturing society-focus on parent and infant mental health	-Strengthening the early years workforce- ensure a shared understanding of child development in the prime areas
-Targeted evidence-based interventions and joint working for priority needs	-Shared messages across services-combined and consistent communications	-Evidenced based approaches to support need and to evaluate the impact on families/ children	-Make sure that information about early childhood development reaches all to support home learning- DfE and Solihull websites+	-Support transition to parenthood and through into school years- practical and emotional support for those raising our under-fives	-Use mapping overlay of data and support available to promote Solihull intelligence of need and support available for effective signposting
-Information sharing agreements for holistic support for families	-Relational approach to provision of service and celebratory service feedback – partnership working	-Training for settings - Dingley's Promise 5-year Comic Relief funded support and DfE programme (PSE and well-being, speech, language, communication, inclusive settings, etc)	-Use the available data and new data sources [such as ELIM] to identify and address needs across the support field force. Use EYFS reform priorities to reinforce messages for effective interaction.	-Develop transition arrangements between services and settings - Evaluate practice through family engagement	-Parent support pre-birth to 5y and looking at whole families/ whole child... what people can do that makes a difference and what works to deliver better outcomes.
Key steps to reach the next progress level – Early Intervention Foundation [July 2021] 1. PARTNERSHIP Develop terms of reference for the partnership group and establish clear governance procedures, prioritising the involvement of maternity services. 2. STRATEGY Ahead of developing a strategy, ensure that there are strong building blocks in place upon which to develop a good understanding of the needs of Solihull's population, including population needs assessment, mapping existing maternity and early years services; and the experience of the parenting journey. 3. WORKFORCE PLANNING The first step beyond delivering training towards more systemic workforce planning is mapping workforce needs across the early years and maternity workforce and focusing on staff capacity, skills, performance, satisfaction and retention. 4. ENGAGEMENT Further develop engagement by including parents and community members in governance arrangements and decisions about resources, and opportunities for peer support and community involvement in the delivery of services.					

Strategy outcomes

- Social inclusion and belonging - parents will feel connected to the place they live, to the parent community-and to services.
- Parents' confidence in their parenting ability and their child's future.
- Happiness and quality of life for parents and children.
- Voluntary sector services providing appropriate help and support to parents with children aged 5 years and under.
- Community groups, clubs and activities, which provide contact and meeting points for parents with children aged 5 years and under.

Monitoring the impact of the strategy

An Early Years Outcomes Framework was populated with data shared across the maternity to 5 age range which will shape our integrated working and prioritisation. These performance targets will be monitored at the Strategy Steering Group meetings. The baseline score card is in appendix 2.

Next steps

The Strategic Group to monitor the progress from the formed six working groups which have identified key actions and to work with others to act on these actions. This summary plan can be viewed in appendix 4.

Appendix 1: What is it like for a child living in Solihull aged 0 – 5 years?

Vulnerability facts:

Children in families at risk: We know that in [2019/20 in Solihull](#) there were 700 children age 0-1 years in households where any of the 'toxic trio' were likely to be present and 1,800 0-4 year olds. An estimated 4,200 women in Solihull are victims of domestic abuse every year. 1,200 children under 15y are exposed to domestic abuse every year. A projected percentage of children in households with any of the [three risks](#) (alcohol/ substance misuse, domestic abuse, mental health problems) is 16.18% with a likely 7,590. 0-17 year olds affected in Solihull.

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/cco-vulnerability-2019-infographic.pdf>

[Family homelessness](#) was 3.1 per 1000 but was an improving trend. (2017/18) For children 0-4y the [A&E attendance](#) was 537 per 1000 and was increasing along with the number of emergency hospital admissions.

We need to improve the [vaccination coverage](#) of young children under 5y in Solihull. Solihull's MMR [Child Health profile] does not yet meet the recommended coverage.

Early Years Pupil Premium in Solihull in 2021 fell to 554 children (2020 figure was 572 children) whereas nationally and in England as a whole numbers increased.

Early Education and Care: Our Solihull data intelligence tells us that we need to work to narrow the attainment gap at age 5 (EYFSP), support children at age 2 to communicate and develop their personal, social and emotional skills (SE-ASQ) , and reach expected development levels across all [5 ASQ areas of development](#).

Whilst Solihull percentages of children who are at an expected level of development are higher than national we hope to focus on outcomes at two for further parent engagement and for continuously improving outcomes.

% at expected ASQ levels at 2 – 2 ½ years	Solihull 2019-20	West Midlands 2019-20	National 2019-20	Solihull 2020-21
Communication	91.9%	87%	88.9%	92.7%
Personal & Social	95.6%	91.6%	92.9%	95.2%
All 5 domains	90.7%	80.8%	83.3%	89.4%

The Solihull Early Years Foundation Stage Profile attainment at age five [end of the reception year] is in line with the national figure for 2019. Lower numbers of children from low income families achieved a [good level of development](#) (GLD) at age 5 years old in 2019 and also lower numbers of black, Chinese and mixed ethnic groups. The attainment gap at 5 years old [2019] is 35.5 in Solihull and EYFSP levels show that 20% fewer children who are eligible for free school meals attain expected good levels of development (GLD). Boys GLD is lower than girls.

The proportion of children achieving at least expected levels in [communication and language](#) skills at the end of reception is 80.3% whilst national is 82.20%.

GLD 2019	GLD -all	GLD-gender gap	Inequality gap	CLL
Solihull	72.6%	9.9	35.5	74.3%
National	71.8%	12.9	32.4	72.4%

CLL – communication, language and literacy goals combined

<https://foundationyears.org.uk/2019/07/early-years-outcomes-dashboard/>

Quality of provision:

Numbers of high-quality settings as determined by [Ofsted inspection grades](#) at the most recent Ofsted.

At 31.3.21 – Outstanding Solihull early years settings -79% and good quality -16% (95% good+/ England figure is 97% for the same date)

[Sufficiency of provision](#) for 2, 3 and 4 year olds on 2021

	2 year old education entitlement	3 and 4 year olds	trend
Solihull	77%	102%	▼
England	62%	88%	▼

To conclude, Solihull children who are eligible for early education funding can access sufficient high-quality settings. The numbers accessing this early education offer has dropped during the pandemic and it will need to be promoted to parents.

Appendix 2: Outcomes framework/Tartan Rug

	Solihull key performance indicators	Date range	Solihull value	Castle Bromwich	Chelmsley Wood	Kingshurst and Fordbridge	Smiths Wood	Bickenhill	Dorridge and Hockley Heath	Knowle	Meriden	Blythe	Elmdon	Lyndon	Olton	Shirley East	Shirley South	Shirley West	Silhill	St Alphege	England Average	Benchmark
	Number of children aged 0-5	Summer20	12069	511	1121	1032	949	675	514	457	552	879	697	850	608	613	676	796	635	504		
	Number of children aged 2	Mid 2020	2422	99	227	209	211	144	98	82	106	169	125	174	127	130	130	160	120	111		
KPI1	Children in poverty U 5y/o number	2018-9	1765	79	339	295	274	119	14	33	34	37	84	105	63	62	68	87	44	19		England
KPI1	Children in poverty U 5y/o % of population	2018-9	14.6	15.5	30.2	28.6	28.9	17.6	2.7	7.2	6.2	4.2	12.1	12.4	10.4	10.1	10.1	10.9	6.9	3.8	19.9	England
KPI2	Low birth weight of live babies (pooled data 2015-19)	2015-19	7.3	6.7	8.4	9.3	8.6	8.0	6.9	2.9	6.6	6.6	5.1	7.2	6.4	7.1	7.6	7.7	8.9	5.5	6.9	England
KPI4	DWP 2 y who do not take up EEF 15h no	Autumn21		18	69	46	48	28	SUPP	SUPP	SUPP	16	12	25	17	10	9	16	11	7		
KPI3	DWP 2 y who do not take up EEF 15h % of population	Autumn21	14.2	18.2	30.4	22.0	22.7	19.4	2.0	6.1	3.8	9.5	9.6	14.4	13.4	7.7	6.9	10.0	9.2	6.3		Local
KPI4	Proportion of 2 years olds on track with all domains of child development (ASQ)	Oct 2020-Sept 2021	84.2%	Lower than England average				Above England average					Aligned with England average					Above average		n/a	England	
KPI4	Proportion of 2 year olds on track with communication development (ASQ)	Oct 2020-Sept 2021	88.5%	Lower than England average				Above England average					Aligned with England average					Above average		n/a	England	
KPI5	Proportion of 4 year olds on track with child development (ASQ)	2019	78.1%	not measured/reported nationally so comparisons not available																	na/	
KPI6	Good Level of Development % at EYFSP	Summer19	72.7	74.3	64.2	67.9	68.0	70.4	81.8	80.4	77.7	68.7	74.4	66.7	79.5	74.1	76.1	78.1	78.5	80.2	71.8	England
KPI7	EY pupil premium	Autumn21		6	83	84	75	41	SUPP	7	11	28	18	19	7	15	19	15	20	9		Local
KPI7	EY pupil premium % of population	Autumn21	19.0	6.1	36.6	40.2	35.5	28.5	2.0	8.5	10.4	16.6	14.4	10.9	5.5	11.5	14.6	9.4	16.7	8.1		Local
KPI8	EY SEND pupils u5 number	Spring21		7	42	48	33	19	12	14	16	22	28	24	12	16	21	21	20	SUPP		Local
KPI8	EY SEND pupils u5 % of population	Spring21	3.0	1.4	3.7	4.7	3.5	2.8	2.3	3.1	2.9	2.5	4.0	2.8	2.0	2.6	3.1	2.6	3.1	0.4		Local
KPI9	EYFSP Inequality gap at 5 y/o -LA	Summer19	35.5	32.2	44.8	45.2	45.0	32.8	31.7	20.0	23.5	30.1	32.2	41.7	29.4	34.5	29.6	34.8	31.1	18.3	32.4	England
KPI10	% Baby's first feed breastmilk	2018-9	65.8																		67.4	England
KPI11a	% Breastfeeding rate at 6-8 weeks	2020-21	46.8																		48.0	England
KPI11b	% Breastfeeding rate at 6-8 weeks - north Solihull	2020-21	27.8																		48.0	England
KPI12	Infant Mortality Rate	2017-19	4.8																		3.9	England

* SUPP - Suppressed due to small numbers

Appendix 3: Terms of reference for the Strategic Solihull Maternity and Early Years Strategy Group

Solihull Maternity and Early Years Strategy Strategic Group Terms of Reference	
Background	<p>National Initiatives</p> <p><u>Big Change Starts Small</u> -Royal Foundation Centre for Early Childhood</p> <p><u>The best start for life: a vision for the 1001 critical days</u> -Andrea Leadsom</p> <p>Solihull Strategies</p> <p>Start Strong Stay Strong -1001 Critical days and Stronger Families</p>
Purpose of group	<p>The strategy and resulting actions demonstrate our determination to improve children's long-term life chances and to do this by focussing on giving children the best start in their life [0-5y].</p> <p>Council Plan priority: Improve early childhood development and school readiness, particularly in disadvantaged communities.</p>
Scope	<p>This group is focussed on the need to review our Solihull maternity and early years support for children and their families and to improve services to ensure positive outcomes for all Solihull children.</p>
Critical Success Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen a multi-agency, integrated approach to meet the changing needs of families with babies and young children. • Provision and services needed by families from birth, throughout the EYFS. a clear Start for Life offer for parents. • Children are 'ready for the next stage' at the end of the EYFS and through their early years. • Sufficient quality early childhood education and care to enable family access to good and outstanding inclusive early education provision. • Families who require support can be identified at the earliest opportunity. • LA resources well targeted to population need.
Governance and membership	<p>This group reports to Solihull Corporate Senior Leadership / Cabinet – Assistant Director – Inclusion and Additional Needs</p> <p>Chair of group -Education Outcomes and Intervention</p> <p>Children's Improvement and Standards Manager</p> <p>Clinical Team Lead Paediatric Specialist Assessment Service – Autism and Complex medical Needs</p> <p>Clinical Team Lead Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy</p> <p>Early Years Team Manager</p> <p>Education Psychology</p> <p>Head of Stronger Communities</p> <p>Health Visitor and Infant Feeding Team Manager</p> <p>Manager Early Years Support and Assessment Team</p> <p>Parenting Team</p> <p>Public Health specialist for children</p> <p>Safeguarding Head of Service – Family Support Service and Child Protection</p> <p>School Place Planning Team Leader</p> <p>SISS Team Manager [SISS] Specialist Inclusion Support</p> <p>Solihull Family Information Service Manager</p> <p>Solihull Parent Carer Voice</p> <p>Therapy Lead for Paediatric Therapies and Pelvic Health</p> <p>Virtual Headteacher</p> <p><i>Local Government Agency and Early Intervention Foundation associates supported this work.</i></p>
Meetings	<p>In the first instance the group will meet every 2 – 3 months with working groups meeting between the main strategic group meetings.</p>

July 2021

Appendix 4: Solihull Maternity and Early Years Strategy Development Plan - Date 2021-2023+

Key Actions	Activities	Success Criteria & Impact Measures (evidence)	Review date	Responsibility
Data – for population led needs assessment, action planning and evaluation of what works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Populate a baseline 'outcomes framework - Tartan Rug'. Shared LA 'In Phase' area for strategy board to monitor progress and identify population needs to action. Identify Solihull and locality priorities and share targeted support priorities for North/ East/ West localities 0 - 5 years. Clear sharing arrangements across services for population level data and board monitoring. Parental feedback and analysis of engagement and outcomes to measure impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data led prioritisation to best support early years children where it is needed most. A shared outcomes framework - tartan rug. Joint analysis and shared problem-solving actions by stakeholders. Targeted interventions and joint working for priority needs. Improved communication outcomes at age 2½ years and end reception. Narrowing inequality gap, continuously improving take up of early education. Information sharing agreements for holistic support for families- see Family Hub/Strengthening Family's link. 	<p>Autumn 2021</p> <p>Spring 2022</p> <p>Spring > Summer 2022</p> <p>Autumn 2023</p>	<p>Public Health</p> <p>Health Services</p> <p>Children's Services and Skills</p> <p>Inclusion and Additional Needs</p> <p>Safeguarding and child protection, Family Support</p> <p>Community and partnerships</p> <p>Lead facilitator: DM</p>

<p>Communications - to ensure families and LA services can signpost those in need to services that are available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise and share key maternity and early years messages to promote the importance of a child's early years in Solihull and nationally. • Build the Five to Thrive and Solihull.gov.uk websites to signpost to support and on-going promotion of the Strategy priorities/ activities (NB migrate Local Offer to LA website). • Seek views from service users to ensure services are visible and there are clear pathways to support- early education, speech and language, SEND. • Ensure families can access information targeted to their needs - explore effective digital communication for different groups. • Responsibility of services to update information shared with families/LA community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, embed and communicate an integrated approach to early years support and service delivery. • Big Change Starts Small - Raising awareness of the extraordinary impact of the early years. • Creating communities of support ensure accessibility /promotion of the support available to Solihull children and families 'roadmap of services'. • Shared messages across services- combined and consistent communications. 	<p>Autumn 2021</p> <p>Spring 2022</p> <p>Summer 2022 > Autumn 2023</p>	<p>Communication team</p> <p>Inclusion and additional needs</p> <p>Public Health</p> <p>Health Services</p> <p>Children's Services and Skills</p> <p>Parents and families</p> <p>Lead facilitator: RR</p>
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<p>Workforce – to build a local authority field force and education-based workforce that have the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes to together support young children and families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signpost to communications for service users to ensure workforce are aware of the road map of support. • Complete early education and childcare workforce survey. • Building success-professional development (DfE) and Dingley's Promise external training (Communication and Inclusion focus 0 - 5y). • Implement early years foundation stage reform. • Revisit complementary early education and care and new data to inform practice (Summer 2022 EYFSP). • Family Hub- co-location opportunities partner working opportunities (SLCN, Integrated Review at 2 years old, joint training). • Develop shared training, joint meetings and shadowing across the maternity and early years system to facilitate skill sharing and awareness raising of different roles promote joint working and further integration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A local authority partnership field force with the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes to support young children [pre-birth to five y/o] and families at the earliest opportunity and point of potential need. • Integrated working developed and a shared understanding of the importance of early years and early support. • shared understanding of child development in the prime areas. • mapping developed identifying support available to promote effective signposting in Solihull. • Further develop parent support pre-birth to 5 years focusing on whole families/whole child. • Identify activity that makes a difference and delivers better outcomes. 	<p>Autumn – Spring 2021/22</p> <p>Spring 2022</p> <p>Summer 2022-Autumn 2023</p> <p>Autumn 2023 - Spring 2023</p>	<p>Children's Services and Skills</p> <p>Inclusion and additional needs</p> <p>Health teams</p> <p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Early Years and Childcare settings</p> <p>Parents</p> <p>Lead facilitator: LM</p>
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<p>Early Years SEND - to ensure we have high aspirations for all children and a clear vision for the education of children with special educational needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reshaping education – merge teams to create one Early Years Team to empower families and settings. • Review multi-disciplinary assessment and referral processes and documentation for most effective identification and support for young children and their families. This includes an increased Educational Psychology offer in early years. • Consider sufficiency of early education and care placements for young children and promote inclusion across all settings. • Early Years SEND stakeholder group meetings- as part of Dingley's Promise to reflect on and meet need in Solihull. • DfE additional funding for NASEN level 3 SENCo training –review for increased joint training and to address key messages for private and voluntary setting SENCos. • Commissioning of services to support special educational needs - review impact of evidence-based approaches across services and on children and family's journeys through maternity to school years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A community approach to intervention at the earliest opportunity to support potential SEND needs. • Review access to support and timely intervention for children with emerging SEND and high needs. • Closer inter-agency working to develop integrated working – promote ASQ, shared pathways, joint training, joint commissioning. • Evidenced based approaches used to support need and evaluate the impact on families/children. • Training for settings well attended. • Dingley's Promise and DfE programme ensures practitioners have a good understanding of child development and children's needs. 	<p>Autumn 2022</p> <p>Spring 2022</p> <p>Autumn 2023</p>	<p>Schools and Early Education and Care Provision</p> <p>Parents</p> <p>Education Inclusion and additional Needs with 0-25 SEND services</p> <p>Health and Therapy Services</p> <p>Public Health</p> <p>Commissioning</p> <p>Lead facilitator: LM</p>
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<p>Speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) – to support all children to develop effective communication skills.</p> <p>ELIM- Early Language Identification Measure</p> <p>ASQ - Ages and Stages Questionnaire</p> <p>EYFSP- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile end of reception year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the importance of supporting speech, language and communication needs across LA services and the positive impact of sensitive interactions. (Link with I CAN). • Summarise a 0 - 5yr speech language and communication needs pathway to feed into the school years pathway. • Promote early years setting training and Solihull support- DFE Building Success and Dingley's Promise as well as Elklan and Solihull Early Years Speech and Language Team coaching. • Feed ELIM through to complement ASQ- Health Visitor 2 – 2½ year child development checks. • Join up messages, pathway and support for need across Solihull and in locality areas (data availability and analysis) as well as 2022 EYFSP communication data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A shared pathway developed to show universal, targeted and specialist services supporting SLCN in Solihull. • Promotion of serve and return interactions for healthy development. • workforce training through LA and external training well attended. Information about early childhood development reaches all to support home learning- DfE and Solihull websites (Five to Thrive+). • available data and new data sources [such as ELIM] identify and address needs across the support field force. • EYFS reform priorities used to reinforce messages for effective interaction. • Support shows positive impact (ASQ/EYFSP- narrowing the gap/ELIM/SaLT-coaching). 	<p>Autumn 2021</p> <p>Spring 2022</p> <p>Summer 2022 - Autumn 23</p>	<p>Speech and Language Therapy and Health Services</p> <p>Education, Inclusion and Additional Needs/ 0 - 25y SEND</p> <p>Stronger Communities-libraries</p> <p>Lead facilitator: LM</p>
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Appendix 5: Other linked plans in Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Linked plans:

<https://www.solihull.gov.uk/About-the-Council/policies>

This Maternity and Early Years Strategy links with the following strategies

Additional Needs Strategy 2021 –

[Additional Needs Strategy - Solihull local offer \(socialsolihull.org.uk\)](https://socialsolihull.org.uk)

Community Development Strategy -

[https://www.solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk/download/Future Strategic Vision 2017-2022.pdf](https://www.solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk/download/Future_Strategic_Vision_2017-2022.pdf)

Early Help Strategy – 2021 review Start Strong Stay Strong

Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency – under review and due for publication Summer 2022

Health and Well-being Strategy - first 1001 days

<https://www.solihull.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-07/Solihull-Health-and-Wellbeing-Strategy.pdf>

Health Inequality Strategy -

https://eservices.solihull.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s85495/SMBC%20Health%20Inequalities%20Strategy%20Outline_HWBB_10Nov20.pdf

Neglect Strategy – 2021

<https://www.safeguardingsolihull.org.uk/lscp/multi-agency-procedures-and-practice-guidance/neglect-strategy/#>

Parenting Strategy –under review

[https://www.solihull.gov.uk/sites/default/files/migrated/FIS Parenting Strategy.pdf](https://www.solihull.gov.uk/sites/default/files/migrated/FIS_Parenting_Strategy.pdf)

SEND School Place Commissioning Strategy –

<https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/education/school-place-planning/>

- Housing Strategy (pending and to be published in early 2022)
 - Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sectors Strategic Assessment (to be published in early 2022)
 - Volunteering Strategy (pending and to be published during 2022)
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Appendix 6: Solihull teams

Local support field force – including:

Community Development Team - <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/communities-and-safety/Supporting-our-VCS>

The Early Years Team - <https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/education/children-and-young-peoples-send-service/early-years-send-team-2/> and <http://www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc/support/>

Educational Psychology Service - <https://www.solgrid.org.uk/education/support-services/community-educational-psychology-service/>

Family Information Service - <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/familyinfo>

Health Visiting Team - <https://www.swft.nhs.uk/our-services/children-and-young-peoples-services/health-visiting-solihull>

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and Children's Services - <https://www.solgrid.org.uk/education/communications/solihull-multi-agency-safeguarding-hub-mash/>

Parenting Team - <https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/family-information-service-directory/3937/solihull-parenting-team/>

Public Health - <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/About-the-Council/Solihull-Council-Statement/Public-health/Public-health-services>

Speech and Language Therapy and Therapy Services - <https://childrenscommunitytherapies.uhb.nhs.uk/>

Specialist Inclusion Support Service – SISS - <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/Schools-learning/educationalsupport/SISS>

Virtual School - <https://www.solgrid.org.uk/education/support-services/solihull-virtual-school/>

Key dates:

December 2020 – Early Intervention Foundation and Reshaping Education surveys
Spring 2021- Workshops and workbook self-evaluation
Spring – Summer 2021 – priority action plans developed
Autumn 2021- finalisation of strategy and plans

Appendix 7: How the strategy was developed

- Solihull's baseline assessment self-evaluation was completed in 2 stages: 79 stakeholders (from Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust, University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust, Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust, schools, preschools and other settings, and voluntary and community organisations) completed the online survey individually.
- The Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) survey results were then used to inform workshop discussions with parents and stakeholder groups and complete the Maturity Matrix workbook.
- A group of local stakeholders worked through the Matrix to build consensus about progress levels, local challenges and priorities for taking action.
- Following completion of the self-assessment, a panel of EIF staff and associates were convened to review the submission and provide feedback on strengths, areas of good or innovative practice, priority actions and areas for consideration. The workbook was submitted to EIF and reviewed by a panel of EIF staff and associates.
- Solihull was described as having a revived commitment to integrated maternity and early years support since March 2019, led by a partnership group which includes representatives from health, schools, childcare settings, community groups and commissioning agencies.

The summary self-assessment was that **Solihull** was at '**Early Progress level**' across the majority of elements, which is characteristic of local areas that have made a commitment to take action and have started to develop their programme, but are yet to see the benefits of this work.

The EIF panel agreed with the local assessment in the main. Panel members felt that Solihull was well placed to make swift progress by implementing the local actions identified in the self-assessment and the recommendations in this report.
