



# Doncaster Council

## Agenda

---

To all Members of the

# CABINET

Notice is given that a Meeting of the Cabinet is to be held as follows:

**Venue:** Council Chamber, Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster DN1 3BU

**Date:** Wednesday, 16th November, 2022

**Time:** 10.00 am

---

### BROADCASTING NOTICE

This meeting is being recorded for subsequent broadcast via the Council's web site. The Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act and images collected during this recording will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy.

Please be aware that by entering the meeting, you accept that you may be recorded and the recording used for the purpose set out above.

**Damian Allen**  
Chief Executive

---

Issued on: Tuesday, 8 November 2022

**Governance Services Officer for this meeting:** Andrea Hedges  
01302 736716

**Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council**

[www.doncaster.gov.uk](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk)

## Item

1. Apologies for Absence
2. To consider the extent, if any, to which the public and press are to be excluded from the meeting
3. Public Questions and Statements

**(A period not exceeding 20 minutes for questions and statements from members of the public and Elected Members to the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones. Questions/Statements should relate specifically to an item of business on the agenda and be limited to a maximum of 100 words. As stated within Executive Procedure Rule 3.3 each person will be allowed to submit one question/statement per meeting. A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by e-mail to the Governance Team no later than 5.00 p.m. on Friday 11th November, 2022. Each question or statement must give the name and address of the person submitting it. Questions/Statements should be sent to the Governance Team, Floor 2, Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster, DN1 3BU, or by email to [Democratic.Services@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic.Services@doncaster.gov.uk))**

4. Declarations of Interest, if any.
  5. Decision Record Forms from the meeting held on 2nd November, 2022 for noting (previously circulated)
- A. Reports where the public and press may not be excluded**

### **Key Decisions**

6. Special Educational Needs Strategy 2022-2025

## **Cabinet Members**

### **Cabinet Responsibility For:**

**Chair – Ros Jones, Mayor of  
Doncaster**

Budget and Policy Framework

**Vice-Chair – Deputy Mayor  
Councillor Glyn Jones**

Housing and Business

Councillor Lani-Mae Ball

Portfolio Holder for Education, Skills and  
Young People

Councillor Nigel Ball

Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Leisure,  
Culture and Planning

Councillor Joe Blackham

Portfolio Holder for Highways, Infrastructure  
and Enforcement

Councillor Rachael Blake

Portfolio Holder for Children’s Social Care,  
Communities and Equalities

Councillor Phil Cole

Portfolio Holder for Finance and Trading  
Services

Councillor Mark Houlbrook

Portfolio Holder for Sustainability and Waste

Councillor Jane Nightingale

Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources

Councillor Andrea Robinson

Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care

This page is intentionally left blank



## Doncaster Council

### Report: Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy

---

16th November, 2022

To the Chair and Members of Cabinet

**REPORT TITLE: Special Educational Needs Strategy 2022-2025**

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Councillor Lani-Mae Ball Councillor Rachael Blake	All	Yes

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is to outline the refreshed Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy. It sets out the vision, principles, and priorities for the next 3 years, with the aim to improve outcomes for children, young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families.
2. The SEND Strategy was originally signed off in late 2019 by the then Inclusion Board and has been consulted on in 2020. The strategy was then refreshed during the Covid period and consulted on during 2022. It was developed within both local and national policy context, including the 2014 Children and Families Act and the new Special Needs 'Green Paper' (March 2022)
3. The refreshed SEND Strategy has also been aligned to our local policy and strategies around Localities and Education and Skills 2030.
4. Since the start of the pandemic Doncaster has seen a significant rise in the overall number of young people identified as having special educational needs or disabilities. This increase has particularly affected the number of young people with Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs). This sudden rise in the number of assessments and plans has placed council teams under significant pressure, which has slowed the timeliness of the production of plans within statutory timeframes. The rise in demand, alongside increasing financial pressures, has also placed challenges upon the wider workforce connected to those with special educational

needs including those in the health, care, and school sectors. The pandemic has impacted upon the number of young people who are identified as having autistic spectrum related needs and those with social and emotional needs. These increases have placed strain upon local systems, which has resulted in an increasing number of young people being educated out of borough, as local specialist provision is unable to cater for the increase in need.

5. A new SEND Board and supporting work streams aligned to the priorities has been established to oversee the delivery and governance of the strategy.
6. It is crucial that the work to deliver the strategy is now progressed at pace as the demand for requests for Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs) has increased significantly, affecting the timeliness of the delivery of new plans. This has also increased demand on special school places and high numbers of out of area placements, all of which impact greatly on the Dedicated School Grant High Needs Budgets.
7. To ensure the success of the SEND Strategy, consultation, engagement, and co-production has been undertaken with children, families, young people, schools, settings, other education providers and wider partners. The vision of the Doncaster SEND Strategy is to ensure that children who have SEND, will have the best possible start in life, and as they grow up, they will have prompt access to reliable local, high-quality education, health, and care services.
8. To realise the vision of the SEND Strategy, six key priorities have been identified and will be delivered over the next 3 years. All the priorities are centred on an early intervention model and one of joint accountability, ownership and co-production across the partnership. These priorities will support the strengthening of our co-production work with parents, children and young people whilst also ensuring that core services are improved and that arrangements for funding and workforce development support high quality intervention at the earliest point.
9. Doncaster is in receipt of an allocation of £7,076,009.23 of High Needs Capital Grant which will support this project. Given the established need to increase our capacity around in- borough specialist provision, we will use £1million of this to deliver 30 places for young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs by summer 2023, supported by £662,182 of funding. As of October 2022, the council are undertaking diagnostic work with the DfE through the 'Delivering Better Value in SEND' project during October and November 2022.
10. Whilst we are confident that the priorities within the strategy are the right ones, we will ensure that we review these alongside key emerging documents; further announcements around the SEND Green Paper during the Autumn, the findings from the Better Value Programme, the new SEND inspection framework and on-going consultation and engagements with families.
11. The key priorities are:
  - **Priority 1:** To ensure that the graduated response to meeting special educational and disability needs is delivered coherently and consistently.

Children and families and will be supported by earlier intervention, collaboration and capacity building across local areas. We will prioritise improvements in the quality and timeliness of EHCPs. This will be supported by a workforce plan, which will demonstrate how all agencies can be supported to deliver these changes.

- **Priority 2:** To ensure there is a clear and partnership wide response to young people's mental health needs
- **Priority 3:** To ensure children and young people on the Autism, Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and other neurodevelopmental pathways have their needs identified and met in a consistently timely manner.
- **Priority 4:** To ensure Doncaster schools provide teaching that effectively meet the needs of students with SEND so that they make good progress and are well prepared for their next stage in education and future employment.
- **Priority 5:** Improve positive transitions for young people with SEND so transitions are planned, young people are prepared for adulthood and they are able to independently access suitable sustainable employment or supported employment.
- **Priority 6:** Improving the use of data and information to inform strategic planning and joint commissioning.

## **EXEMPT REPORT**

12. There is no exempt information detailed within this report.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

13. To agree to new financial arrangements including support for capital and revenue projects which will increase the effectiveness of provision within the borough. This includes accepting the allocation of £7,076,009.23 of High Needs Capital Grant subject to the terms and conditions of the grant and agreeing an overall amount of £662,182 from the high needs block to create new SEMH places.
14. Agree to delegate decisions around how to allocate the balance of capital funding within the terms and conditions of the grant, alongside other associated revenue decisions to the Director Children, Young People and Families and the Director of Corporate Resources in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Education, Skills and Young People.
15. To approve the SEND Strategy attached at Appendix 1, and to agree to receive an annual update report on progress against the strategy. The strategy will be a 'live' document that will be amended following the diagnostic work detailed below and in response to expected national direction.

## **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?**

16. The SEND Code of Practice, under part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 sets out the legal requirements and duties placed on local authorities, health bodies, school and colleges to provide for children and young people with special educational needs. The SEND Strategy sets out how we as a partnership will deliver this duty under an early intervention model and revised governance

arrangements.

17. The strategy will deliver a stronger range of provisions and interventions to ensure that children and young people with special needs and disabilities are happy and successful in their lives. It will also aim to ensure a much stronger landscape of training and employment activities.
18. An underpinning principle of the draft SEND Strategy is co-production both with our partners but importantly with children, young people and their families, ensuring lived experience and local intelligence influences the decisions we make. The strategy is supported by a cycle of co-production activity with children, young people, parents and carers.
19. A key principle is to ensure that children and young people are educated as close to home as possible, supporting not only their educational outcomes but also providing a sense of community and belonging in the area they live and go to school.
20. By moving the resource and decision making closer to schools and settings, alongside ensuring quality assurance of its impact, will support an early intervention approach, making sure special educational needs are identified and met in a timely fashion.
21. Alignment and reference to other key strategies is crucial in the delivery of the strategy, in particular Education and Skills 2030 and the All Age Learning disabilities and Autism Strategy.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **National Context**

22. In 2018/19 councils faced a High Needs funding gap of almost £500 million, by 2019/20 this was £806million and £1.2 billion by 2020/21, with a forecast for this to be £3 billion by the end of 2022/23 (Local Government Association). In Doncaster, we are anticipating a cumulative overspend position of £18.5m in 2022-23.
23. Between 2013/14 and 2018/19, the number of children and young people with an Education Health and Care Plans increased by 27 per cent. That compares to a rise of just 4 per cent in the previous five years (starting 2008/09).
24. The Government SEND Review which was launched in 2019, concluded in March 2022, with the publication of the SEND 'Green Paper'. This paper acknowledged the current pressures around SEND nationally. The paper concluded that:
  - Outcomes for children and young people with SEND or in alternative provision are poor.
  - Navigating the SEND system and alternative provision is not a positive experience for children, young people and their families
  - The system is not delivering value for money for children, young people and families.



25. The paper then sets out a programme of measures, which will create a new SEND system. In summary, this includes:
- Establish a national SEND and Alternative Provision system setting nationally consistent standards for every stage of a child's journey across education, health and care.
  - Establish new local SEND partnerships, bringing together education, health, and care partners with local government
  - Invest an additional £1bn in 2022-23 alone for children and young people with complex needs as part of a £7 billion increase in our total investment in schools' budgets by 2024-25, compared to 2021-22
  - Improve mainstream provision, building on the ambitious Schools White Paper, through teacher training and a 'what works' evidence programme
  - Set out a clear timeline that, by 2030, all children will benefit from being taught in a family of schools, with their school, including special and alternative provision, in a strong multi-academy trust (MAT), or with plans to join or form one.
  - Deliver clarity in roles and responsibilities with every partner having a clear role to play, and being equipped with the levers to fulfil their responsibilities.
  - Introduce a standardised and digitised Education Health and Care Plan process and template to minimise bureaucracy and deliver consistency.
  - Introduce a national framework of banding and price tariffs for funding, matched to levels of need and types of provision set out in the national standards
  - Establish a new National SEND Delivery Board to bring together relevant government departments with national delivery partners including parents, carers and representatives of local government, education, health and care to hold partners to account for the timely implementation of proposals
26. In July 2021, the Department for Education (DfE) published a set of documents around their 'High Needs Safety Valve' project. Local Authorities with the greatest deficits in their high needs funding took part in a project to reduce deficits and build sustainable local systems. They set out 2 goals of a sustainable system:
- Appropriately managing demand for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), including assessment processes that are fit for purpose
  - Use of appropriate and cost-effective provision. This includes ensuring mainstream schools are equipped and encouraged to meet needs where possible, whilst maintaining high standards for all pupils.
27. Whilst Doncaster has not been involved in this project, it has volunteered to participate in a further project, 'Delivering Better Value in SEND', along with 55 other authorities. This project team will support us in our analysis of our current needs profile and financial data and work with us to ensure that our SEND strategy is delivered effectively and quickly. The key themes of this work are very much in line with our strategic intent, notably to intervene earlier in children's lives, strengthen local provision and developing stronger stakeholder leadership. Participating in this project will bring us £1million in funding to support us in the delivery of the strategy. We are already working with DfE and their chosen partners in order to complete an initial 'diagnostic' phase. The consequent report from this work will support our more detailed planning around future provisions and strategic aims.

## Local Context:

28. The content of this strategy has been informed by the new partnership borough Strategy, Doncaster Delivering Together', with its 'Great 8' priorities. This strategy will be critical to ensuring that children and young people with SEND develop the skills to thrive in life and work and will deliver a more child and family friendly approach to delivering provision. It will be key to ensuring greater fairness and inclusivity in education and employment in the future.
29. Doncaster's all-age 'Education & Skills 2030 Strategy' sets out the key priorities, which will deliver against these broader strategic ambitions, with a vision to deliver 'Equitable and inclusive lifelong learning that empowers people to fulfil their potential and thrive in life and work.' Over the next decade, we will focus on five key areas for transformation – four of which cover key learner age stages, with a fifth ('Equitable & Inclusive Learning') providing a crosscutting 'golden thread'. The SEND Strategy will deliver a range of activities which will contribute to the achievement of a number of these priorities and aims; particularly those around support for transitions, mental health, the development of curricula, and pathways to employment
30. The 2019 OFSTED SEND Local Area Inspection recognised many areas of strength across the Borough but also highlighted key areas for development and action (see link below for full report).
31. A new high-level graduated approach to meeting need was consulted on and agreed ready for September 2019. This work was then used in order to produce the detailed Graduated Approach and toolkit, which is an evolving document, published in 2020 on the Local Offer site (<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/graduated-approach>).
32. The Behaviour Transformation Programme (2018-2021) was initiated, following sign off at cabinet in April 2018. This plan involved taking a systems approach in relation to the support provided to schools, meeting specific needs of individuals and creating the necessary provisions for young people who cannot remain in a mainstream setting. This work has taken place with the support of schools and has had an impact upon behaviour outcomes across the system, including significant reductions in exclusions in all phases and has produced efficiencies in high needs spend. The SEND strategy is building on the learning from the behaviour transformation work.

## Key Issues and Challenges

33. The overall rates of identification for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and disabilities has grown sharply over the last two years. Within this number, the increase in young people with Education, Health and Care Plans has grown significantly. This has placed pressure on services and demand has outstripped the supply of local specialist school places. Consequently, council teams have been under increased pressure and has impacted upon previously good rates of timeliness of processing plans. The impacts of the pandemic have increased the level of need for those with young people with social and emotional

needs. As there is limited provision within the borough, an increasing number of those young people have been found places within out of authority provision. This has created a significant pressure on the high needs block, as these places are more costly than in- borough provision. It is clear also, that in many cases, outcomes for children and young people educated away from their local community are often reduced. The fundamental aim of the work of the strategy now will be to reduce the rates of EHCP requests, ensure that more young people are supported earlier within mainstream settings and to reduce the number of those being educated out of borough. These will be the key impact measures for future reports.

34. Between 2017 and 2022 pupils with special educational needs in Doncaster increased by 18.4% from 6264 to 7418. As of the May 2022 census, this amounts to 16% of the school population, which is slightly below the national figure of 17%. This includes those at SEN Support as well as those with Education Health and Care Plans.
35. Based on the current demand in Doncaster, forecast estimate that children and young people with Special Educational Needs will continue to increase and by 2027 the numbers will be around 8500.
36. Demand for statutory assessments for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) has continued to increase. In the year 2016/17 there were 238 referrals for statutory assessment received, by 2020/21 this had increased to 440, an 84% increase. Whilst not all requests progress to an (EHCPs), around 60% do each year. This pressure has, in turn, affected the timeliness of producing EHCPs in line with statutory expectations. This figure has dropped during 2022 and is now well below the national average (22.89% in Doncaster as opposed to 53% nationally).
37. At the end of the 2018/19 financial year, Doncaster maintained a total of 1898 EHCPs, and by the beginning of September 2022 this had increased to 2414, with a further 214 in the assessment process. At the last census (May 2022) the number of EHCPs amounted to 3.1% of the school population, as opposed to 4% nationally. This percentage will be likely to have grown to be at least in line with the national figure by the next census.
38. Currently 169 young people with EHCPs are educated in out of area provision for their Post 16 education. This is 7.05% of the total plans and amounts to £5,292,491 in total cost. A high number of these young people have a primary need of Autistic Spectrum Disorder.
39. Of children and young people pre -16's, 135 children and young people are educated in out of area provision, which is just over 5.63% of the total plans. These placements add up total cost of £6,532,571. Of these; the majority have a primary need of Social, Emotional and Mental Health.

## High Needs Funding

40. 'The High Needs Block funding in Doncaster is overspent in 2021-22 by £4.8m to bring the overall overspend position to £13.6m when added to previous year positions.
41. The Dedicated Schools Grant is currently forecast to be in an a cumulative overspent position of £20.1m in 2025-26 (£18.5m in 2022-23, £20.0m in 2023-24 and £20.6m in 2024-25) as at Quarter 1 2022-23'.
42. The implementation of the SEND Strategy will support in the realisation of the savings against this grant. In particular, the devolving of funding to schools as this will support collaboration and innovation, supporting schools to understand the needs of their local area and invest in whole school and locality wide approaches to meeting the special educational needs of children and young people. Whilst it is difficult to estimate the overall impact of this early intervention approach, we estimate that the establishment of local provision will bring about initial savings of £1.4million in the first year.
43. In addition, Doncaster has also been awarded £7m (covering the period 2022-23 to 2023-24) in High Needs Capital Funding. This will support the delivery of the SEND Strategy and the need to increase capacity across the borough to provide provision for pupils with special educational needs.
44. Whilst some projects receiving the capital funding will support schools and settings to meet the needs of individual pupils, our joint work with DfE as part of our sufficiency study will determine how we will use further capital funds to meet in-borough requirements. Concurrently, we will develop provision, attached to mainstream schools, which will support in meeting the needs of pupils with social emotional and mental health needs. This will support children and young people having their needs met in-borough, which is not always possible currently as there in no in borough provision. These provisions will be vital in ensuring that we reduce spending on out of area specialist provision. Places are planned for 30 children, to open in Summer 2023. A capital budget of £1million has been earmarked to deliver this project. This work, which is the first phase of our sufficiency plan, is projected to create £1.4m of savings in the first year of its delivery. Following our diagnostic work with the DfE we will publish a sufficiency plan which will define how we can best ensure that future places will be planned in order to maximise the range and impact of local provision, whilst also reducing spending on placements and transport.

## SEND Strategy – Principles:

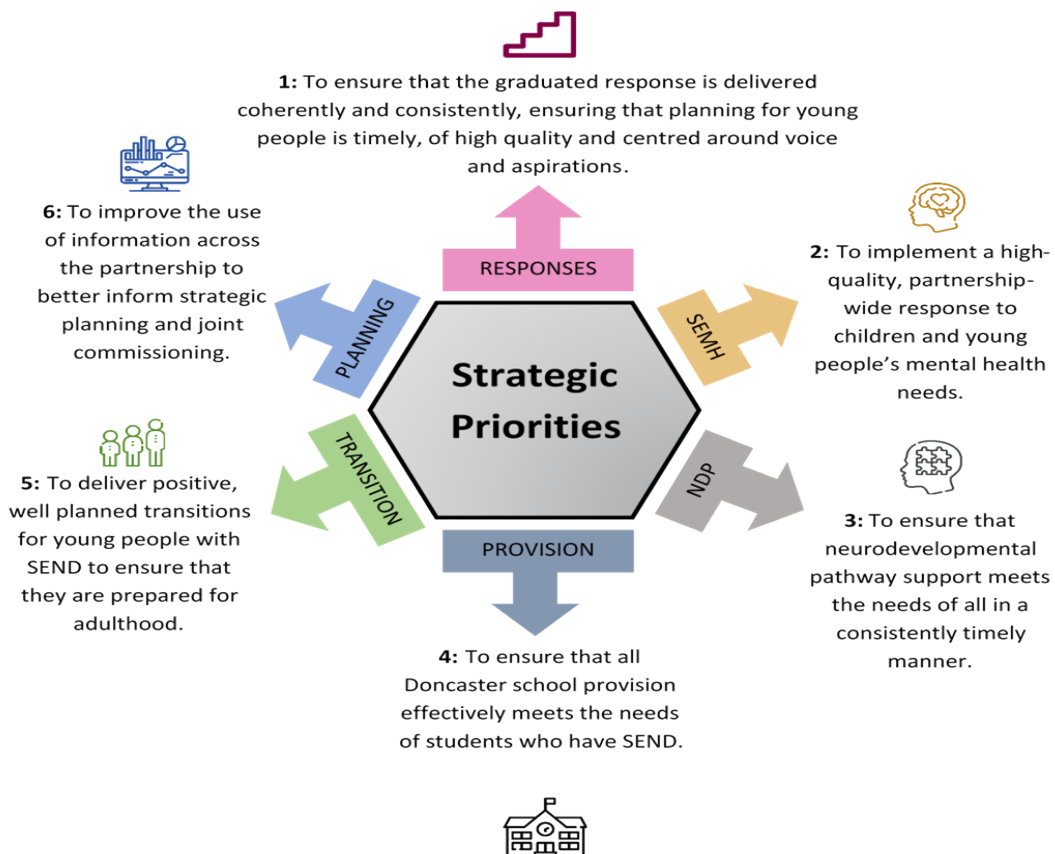
45. The strategy aims to address growing concerns regarding the management of demand within the local system, whilst also anticipating changes indicated by the 'Green Paper', with it's focus on strengthened local leadership, early intervention and co-production and consistency. We have acknowledged the ten recommendations of the most recent DfE research regarding high needs sustainability within this ('High needs budgets: effective management in local authorities' -link below) We have worked across our partnership to develop the

priorities and are collaborating with the Department for Education (DfE), in order to ensure that we can access national good practice.

46. Working with the wider partnership, we established these key principles for our SEND Strategy:



47. The SEND Strategy has these 6 priorities:



48. The strategy document was produced through consultation between key partners, including health agencies, social care and through our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities board. The strategy priorities have been developed also through a sequence of co-production sessions with parents/ carers and children and young people.
49. The first phase of our sufficiency work, outlined in the strategy will be to build locality-based provisions for young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. These provisions will work with young people who would otherwise have been educated out of borough and will deliver 30 places in three different locations. This will significantly reduce our spend on such places and accompanying transportation. £1million of capital finding will be used to develop on-site provision at existing schools, which will be supported by £662,182 of revenue funding to set up and deliver provision. The council are undertaking diagnostic work with the DfE through the 'Delivering Better Value in SEND' project during October and November 2022. This project aims to support Local Authorities to achieve an accurate picture of future demand, following the uncertainties of the pandemic. Whilst we are confident that the priorities within the strategy are the right ones, we will ensure that we review these alongside key emerging documents; further announcements around the SEND Green Paper during the Autumn, the findings from the Better Value Programme. the new SEND inspection framework and on-going consultation and engagements with families.
50. In order to ensure effective monitoring, the Local Area SEND Board will meet every six weeks and report upon the progress of work-streams attached to each of the above priorities. Prior to each board a Parent Co-Production Group, a young people's 'Shadow Board' and a Head Teacher group will meet in order to scrutinise progress and develop key issues. The council are reviewing the delivery of statutory SEND services and are monitoring performance of timeliness and spend through a series of performance clinics led by the Director of Children, Young People and Families.
51. Further detail about these priorities can be found in the strategy document, which is found here: [\(hyperlink\)](#)

## **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**






52. Make no changes to the current SEND system.
53. Move forward with the implementation of the SEND Strategy and accept the SEND Capital funding to ensure we can meet the needs of children and young people with SEND currently and responded proactively to future demand.




## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

54. The recommended option is to implement fully the SEND Strategy at pace to ensure we meet our statutory duty as detailed in the SEND Code of Practice 2014, meet the needs of children and young people with SEND and mitigate further overspend on the high needs budget in line with the medium term financial plan.

## IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

55.

Great 8 Priority	Positive Overall	Mix of Positive & Negative	Trade-offs to consider – Negative overall	Neutral or No implications
 <b>Tackling Climate Change</b>	✓			
<p>Comments:</p> <p>Improving the range of local provision will ensure that less young people will have to travel out of borough for school. This will, in turn, limit the amount of transport that is provided by the council, thereby limiting ecological impacts.</p>				
 <b>Developing the skills to thrive in life and in work</b>	✓			
<p>Comments:</p> <p>This work will ensure that educational provision is more effective in developing the skills of our children and young people. It will also create a new landscape of employment and training for young people when they leave school.</p>				
 <b>Making Doncaster the best place to do business and create good jobs</b>	✓			
<p>Comments:</p> <p>As part of this strategy, we will work with training providers and employers to ensure that young people with special needs or disabilities are able to access meaningful and successful employment in later life.</p>				
 <b>Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all</b>	✓			
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The partnership will improve joint planning and commissioning arrangements in order to ensure that health provision is timely and appropriate for children and young people.</p>				
 <b>Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs</b>				✓

Comments: Not directly relevant				
 <b>Nurturing a child and family-friendly borough</b>	✓			
Comments: This principle is key to our work in supporting schools to deliver improved practices to work with families to meet the needs of young people at an earlier point.				
 <b>Building Transport and digital connections fit for the future</b>				✓
Comments: Not directly relevant				
 <b>Promoting the borough and its cultural, sporting, and heritage opportunities</b>				✓
Comments: Not directly relevant				
<b>Fair &amp; Inclusive</b>	✓			
Comments: Fairness and inclusivity underpin the core principles of this strategy. Young people have a right to a high quality education and to employment, regardless of their needs. This strategy aims to build the skills and awareness across Doncaster that will deliver enhanced inclusion so that young people with special needs or disabilities can access education, close to home, with their peers.				

## RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

56. **Risk:** Key stakeholders such as schools do not engage productively with this strategy.
57. **Mitigation:** We will mitigate this by building relationships with schools and between partners, through consultation and working groups. We will work with a body of head teachers to ensure that the strategy is owned and delivered collaboratively. Also, we have established a cycle of meetings with parents, children and young people to ensure that their experiences are central to all activity. We are also



mitigating this by working with DFE in order to ensure that national perspectives are presented to partners so that partners are able to understand the wider context.

58. **Risk:** If there is insufficient resource attached to the devolution of funding this will mean that needs will remain unmet.
59. **Mitigation:** We will mitigate this by working with other councils who already have devolved funding in order to compare models. We will also create a contingency fund from our planned spend in order to ensure that needs can be met. We are also mitigating this by delivering more funding to schools for earlier intervention and developing more local provision. This will enable us to intervene earlier and more locally to ensure that greater efficiencies are made within the high needs block.
60. **Risk:** here is a risk that there is a limited response to our procurement process for SEMH hubs.
61. **Mitigation:** We are mitigating this by holding engagement events and co-producing models with schools and trusts throughout the procurement timeframe.
62. **Risk:** Actions within this strategy will not be delivered on time and this will exacerbate existing pressures.
63. **Mitigation:** We are working on an implementation with patterns which will set out clear milestones and outcomes. The SEND Board and the DFE will monitor this plan to ensure accountability and timeliness will monitor this plan.

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials HP..... Date 29.9.22..]**

64. The Council has a statutory duty under the Education Act 1996 to ensure the provision of sufficient schools for the provision of primary and secondary education in their area. Under s.14 of the Education Act 1996, a local authority shall secure that sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education are available in their area. In meeting this duty, a local authority must do so with a view to securing diversity in the provision of schools and increasing opportunities for parental choice. The Children and Families Act 2014 made significant changes to the way that educational provision was assessed and provided for to children and young people with SEND. Section 27 of the Act requires a local authority to keep under review its educational, training and social care provision for children and young people who have SEND and to consider the extent to which the provision is sufficient to meet need. In exercising its functions, a local authority must consult prescribed persons, including children and young people with SEND and parents. The 2014 Act is accompanied by statutory guidance for organisations to follow through (The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015).)
65. The High Needs Capital Grant must be spent in accordance with funding terms and conditions and where appropriate, obligations passed down to funding recipients.
66. S149 of the Equality Act 2010 with respect to the Public Sector Equality Duty, details the requirement when taking decisions to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics, foster

good relations between such groups and eliminate unlawful discrimination. It is necessary the impact on those groups is analysed as part of this strategy and its development.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...SB..... Date...06/10/22.....]**

**Revenue**

67. The Dedicated School Grant High Needs Block funding is currently forecast to overspend in 2022-23 by £5.3m to bring the overall overspend position to £18.5m when added to the existing deficit. The overall High Needs Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) currently forecasts an overspend position of £20.1m by 2025-26 (as set out in the table below). During 2025-26 it is predicted that the DSG High Needs Block will make an in year savings of £0.5m to offset existing deficit.

Description	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
DSG High Needs Grant (after deductions)	41,124	43,547	45,073	46,645
Expenditure	46,438	45,120	45,634	46,101
In Year Variance	5,314	1,573	561	-544
<b>Overall DSG Balance</b>	<b>18,475</b>	<b>20,048</b>	<b>20,609</b>	<b>20,065</b>

68. The DfE has set funding allocations for 2022-23 with Doncaster receiving an additional £6.3m compared to 2021-22 levels and based on correspondence from the DfE further increases of 5% for 2023-24 and 3% for 2024-25 and 2025-26 have been used within the MTFP.

69. The expenditure estimates factor in a number of assumptions regards current and future pupil number and placement growth, delivery of plans and timescales to achieve the overall high needs MTFP position as outlined above. The main assumptions linking to this report are listed below and will need to be delivered on by the service, within the timescales set out, if the overall MTFP position is to be achieved as currently predicted. Any delays to the implementation of plans within the report may further increase the overall deficit balance.

- Special Schools – Assumed inflationary increase of 2% for 22-23 to 24-25. Special school pupil numbers increased in 22-23 by 19 places however numbers to remain static with no growth included for 23-24 and beyond.
- SEND Pupils in Mainstream Schools – The 2022-23 quarter 1 MTFP projection assumed a 3% increase in 2023-24 budget and 0% in 2024-25 however the Service are now estimating a potential 10% growth within these years. This would increase the overall figures within the table above by £1.7m over the period 2023-24 to 2025-26 once confirmed. The budget from Mainstream EHCP Top Up, High Needs and AP / Tuition assumes the move to a locality based approach from Sept 23 where it is anticipated by the service that savings can be made through peer-to-peer review and challenge that will stem the rise in this area.
- Post 16 Placements - Assumption of a 3% growth in expenditure in 23-24

compared to 2022-23 predicted levels and a further 3% increase thereafter. Savings are also included of £250k in relation to the opening of Stone Hill post 16 provision for 12 places from September 22 (saving £20k per place based on average external provider placement costs of £35k versus £15k at Stone Hill). The reduction in growth overall and the redirection of pupils to Stone Hill post 16 from September 22 will need to be carefully managed by the service to avoid costs further increasing in this area.

- SEMH Provision / Out of Authority Placements - The MTFP includes a reduction of SEMH out of Authority (OOA) placements (both on SEN & Trust placements) due to the proposed creation of 30 new SEMH places within mainstream schools from April 23. This is expected to result in a reduction in growth on OOA places next year of 20 places (based on 28 places being made in the last 12 months and 75% of these would not require an OOA placement in the future). Further to that the service are proposing that an existing 10 OOA placements can be brought back to Doncaster throughout the year. These savings are dependent upon both the creation of the provision at mainstream schools in Sept 23 and that the provision is able to accommodate the right type of children in order to reduce OOA placements, as set out, which will required careful management by the service of each placement to ensure this is possible.
- Outreach Teams – The increase of central outreach provision, with outreach element moved from special schools budget, is expected to mitigate the risk of increasing numbers of high needs children remaining within mainstream schools and work with mainstream settings to ensure children remain there and don't require more expensive services.
- Doncaster Council Employed Staff – An inflationary increase of 3% per annum on average has been added to High Needs funded LA budgets including staffing.
- No estimated costs or savings are included for priority 1 to re-shape council services as it is assumed that this is cost neutral.

70. Doncaster Council has been included within the Delivering Better Value programme from the Department for Education. The aim of the this programme is to help local authorities provide effective SEND services, provide affordable SEND provisions and achieve a sustainable in-year deficit. As part of this programme Doncaster Council has received a grant of £45k towards the additional work this programme will create. An Officer Decision Record will be required to set out the work to take place against this grant.

### **Capital**

71. Doncaster Council has been allocated £7,076m in the form of a High Needs capital grant for 2022-23 and 2023-24. An allocation of £1m has been earmarked to enhance or build inclusive specialist provision for young people with social, emotional and mental health needs in 3 sites.

72. The remaining £6,076m will be used against future identified priorities to create specialist provision with Doncaster.
73. In the use of High Needs capital funding, consideration should be given towards the location and volume of placements this creates and any potential impact this may have against the SEN transport budget.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...JC Date...03/10/22.]**

74. There are no direct HR implications associated with this report. Separate authorisations will be required for those affecting the staffing.

#### **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...PW..... Date...04/10/22.....]**

75. There are no anticipated technology implications in relation to this report. Any requirements for new, enhanced or replacement technology to support the delivery of the Strategy, will need to be considered and prioritised by the Technology Governance Board (TGB).

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...JC Date 03/10/22.]**

76. There are no direct HR implications associated with this report. Separate authorisations will be required for those affecting the staffing.

#### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials MO Date 15/9/22]**

77. Children and young people with SEND are currently experiencing inequalities of access and outcomes across the country. This strategy sets out our local plan for addressing these inequalities and ensuring that they are able to receive access to high quality educational provision and outcomes. Each of the key priorities aims to address the inequalities experienced by children, young people and families. The core work, in strengthening mainstream provision will enhance the principles of inclusion and providing nurturing environments for all, regardless of their needs.

#### **CONSULTATION**

78. Initial consultation on this strategy took place with a range of partners through 2020. The strategy has been refreshed in 2022. Consultation events have taken place throughout 2022 with a range of partners and stakeholders. The council are also working closely with DFE advisors in order to ensure that our strategy is in line with the national strategy and makes the best use of experiences in other local areas.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

79. [SEND Review - right support, right place, right time - government consultation on the SEND and alternative provision system in England \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/consultations/send-review-right-support-right-place-right-time)
80. [High needs budgets: effective management in local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/consultations/high-needs-budgets-effective-management-in-local-authorities)

81. Doncaster Local Area OFSTED SEND Report(<https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50094861>)

82. **GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)

Social emotional and mental health (SEMH)

Multi-academy trust (MAT),

Department for Education (DFE)

Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED)

Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

Mental Health Support Teams (MHST)

General Developmental Assessment (GDA)

Further Education (FE)

Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

**REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

Martyn Owen Head of Service SEND Transformation  
[Martyn.owen@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:Martyn.owen@doncaster.gov.uk)

**Riana Nelson, Director of Learning Opportunities, Skills, and Culture**

This page is intentionally left blank



Appendix 1

# Doncaster SEND Strategy

---

2022-2025

DRAFT



FOREWORD.....	2
KEY PARTNERS .....	3
INTRODUCTION .....	4
SETTING THE SCENE.....	5
LOCAL CONTEXT HEADLINES .....	5
SELF-EVALUATION SUMMARY .....	6
AREAS OF STRENGTH.....	6
AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT .....	6
YOUR VOICE.....	8
LOCAL AND NATIONAL CONTEXT .....	9
LOCAL DRIVERS FOR CHANGE.....	9
NATIONAL DRIVERS FOR CHANGE .....	10
NATIONAL STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE .....	11
OUR JOURNEY SO FAR.....	12
OUR VISION .....	13
OUR PRINCIPLES .....	13
OUR PRIORITIES .....	15
PRIORITY ONE: TO ENSURE THAT THE GRADUATED RESPONSE IS DELIVERED COHERENTLY AND CONSISTENTLY.....	16
PRIORITY TWO: TO IMPLEMENT A HIGH-QUALITY, PARTNERSHIP-WIDE RESPONSE TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS.....	17
PRIORITY THREE: TO ENSURE THAT NEURODEVELOPMENTAL PATHWAY SUPPORT MEETS THE NEEDS OF ALL IN A CONSISTENTLY TIMELY MANNER. ....	18
PRIORITY FOUR: TO ENSURE THAT ALL DONCASTER SECONDARY SCHOOL PROVISION EFFECTIVELY MEETS THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE SEND.....	19
PRIORITY FIVE: TO DELIVER POSITIVE, WELL PLANNED TRANSITIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE PREPARED FOR ADULTHOOD.....	20
PRIORITY SIX: TO IMPROVE THE USE OF INFORMATION ACROSS THE PARTNERSHIP TO BETTER INFORM STRATEGIC PLANNING AND JOINT COMMISSIONING. ....	21
SUCCESS CRITERIA .....	22
GOVERNANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION.....	23
FURTHER INFORMATION .....	24
GLOSSARY .....	25



## FOREWORD

Local leaders in Doncaster are committed to improving the life chances of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The Ofsted inspection in May 2019 found that improvements have been made to the quality of health, education and social care provision, which is having a positive impact for children and young people. Since this point, we have experienced, both locally and nationally, significant challenges linked to delivering the right provision at the right time for our children and young people. In this strategy we set out a new vision for our local area and describe how we are responding to these pressures. Ofsted have recognised that our close partnership working puts the needs of children and young people first but we must continue to build on this and work together as partners to ensure that children and families who need our support get it and live happy and fulfilling lives. Our recent experiences have underlined the need for a clear focus on early intervention and ensuring that we are able to meet the needs of our young people as early, and as close to home, as possible. We look forward to working together to create the changes that will maintain the pace of change and deliver the best possible outcomes and lives for our children and young people in Doncaster.

Thank you for your continued commitment.

*Lani-Mae Ball*

*Foreword by Cllr Lani-Mae Ball Portfolio Lead for Education, Skills & Young People*

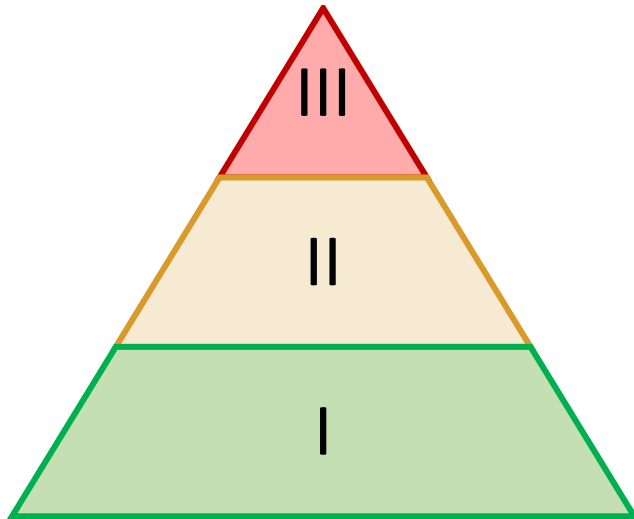
## KEY PARTNERS

 <p><b>Doncaster Council</b></p>	 <p><b>NHS</b> South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board</p>	 <p><b>TD</b> Team Doncaster</p>
 <p><b>Doncaster SENDIAS</b> INFORMATION • ADVICE • SUPPORT</p>	 <p><b>DONCASTER YOUNG ADVISORS</b></p>	 <p><b>NHS</b> Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust</p>
 <p><b>Families Information Service</b></p>	 <p><b>NHS</b> Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust</p>	 <p><b>Doncaster Parents Voice</b></p>

## INTRODUCTION

This strategy, aimed at Doncaster children and young people aged 0-25, their families, and professionals has been developed following a system-wide two-year consultation from 2020 until September 2022. As a partnership, our aim is to encourage all agencies involved in the education of children and young people to 'Think SEND' and to adopt the principles of whole family working. We firmly believe that cultures and practices that provide the best possible experience for children and young people with SEND are likely to be beneficial to all and this mind-set should be at the forefront of all decision making. However, we also recognise that in some cases further specialist support is required. When this is the case it is vital that this support is both accessible and high quality. In this strategy, we will set out our vision and strategic intent and demonstrate how we will create the conditions for a 'world class' experience for our children, young people, and families so that all can feel included and supported to lead successful, happy and healthy lives. Regular co-production activities with parents and carers, children and young people will support the further development of the strategy and implementation plan, supported by six weekly 'check and challenge' sessions with Doncaster Parent Voice and children and young people's voice groups already built into the governance structure.

The profile of need within Doncaster has changed since the start of the pandemic and as a consequence there has been a significant increase in the pressure being placed upon resources locally. There has been a robust joined up response from local agencies to the rise in the number of young people who have been experiencing mental health related challenges but, like many local areas, we anticipate sustained increases in demand for a period of time. In addition to this, the number of EHCPs is rising significantly, and the volume of young people in specialist settings rising sharply, particularly for those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. These pressures have had a direct influence upon the stability of our high needs funding, further underlining the need to ensure an early intervention approach and deliver improvements in provision and support at each tier of intervention.



Tier Three: Intensive Individual Intervention

Tier Two: Targeted Group Intervention


Tier One: Universal Intervention

## SETTING THE SCENE


### LOCAL CONTEXT HEADLINES




Overall number of children and young people in Doncaster with an EHC plan (September 2022): **2417**




Percentage of children and young people with an EHC plan (Academic Year 2021/22): **3.1%** [National: 4.0%]




Percentage change in the number of children and young people with an EHC plan (2018-2022): **+27%**



Percentage of children and young people with SEN Support (Academic Year 2021/22): **12.8%** [National: 12.6%]



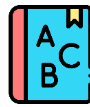
Change in the percentage of children and young people with SEN Support (2019-2022): **+0.5%** [National: +0.5%]



Percentage of children and young people with an EHC plan that are LAC (September 2022): **6.76%**



Overall number of children and young people with an EHC plan that out of borough (September 2022):  
**304**



Percentage of children and young people with an EHC plan in a state-funded primary (Academic Year 2021/22): **1.5%** [National: 2.3%]



Percentage of children and young people with an EHC plan in a state-funded secondary (Academic Year 2021/22): **1.6%** [National: 2.2%]

## SELF-EVALUATION SUMMARY

The capacity to recognise our current strengths and areas for development is testament to the reflective culture built by the partnership following the 2019 Ofsted and Care Quality Commission inspection. The areas outlined below also act as a foundation for the actions outlined in this strategy.

### AREAS OF STRENGTH

- ✓ Partners work closely together and have a strong set of shared principles and priorities. These have led to strong recent initiatives in areas such as short breaks, young people's mental health and community paediatrics. Partners have a genuine commitment to SEND as exemplified by the recent creation of two strategic posts- one in health and the other in the council.
- ✓ Improved partnership working with schools has brought about significant improvements around behaviour. This has included widespread training around trauma and behaviour practice in schools. In turn, this had led to significant reductions in permanent exclusions, particularly for SEND children and young people.
- ✓ A strong early years model which effectively supports early intervention and sustains sector improvement.
- ✓ The importance we place on voice in shaping our strategy and policy.
- ✓ Improving outcomes for cohorts with special needs, as exemplified by recent Key Stage 4 attainment, and improving exclusion and attendance figures for most phases.
- ✓ Our joined up response towards mental health during and in the ongoing aftermath of Covid-19, with strong mental health provision in schools and an innovative strategy, based upon the experiences of our young people. We have strong numbers of young people accessing early intervention services and a reducing number who are requiring emergency support.

### AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- 🎯 Identification and assessment of need in schools can be inconsistent. There is a need to ensure that we have robust local procedures and a stronger impact from our specialist services to ensure that schools feel confident about meeting needs at the earliest point.
- 🎯 Improve the quality, timeliness and impact of EHCPs.

- 🎯 To develop 'whole school' approaches to SEND across the borough and also, the way that our systems support the role of the SENCo in schools so that all schools are confident and capable in meeting the needs of their students.
- 🎯 We need to develop early intervention approaches across the system. This includes the way that we fund schools. We recognise a need to ensure earlier access to funding and stronger accountability around how these funds are used.
- 🎯 Our support for children and young people who are on neurodevelopmental pathways so that pre and post diagnostic support is better. We are also aware of the need to reduce waiting times for diagnosis.
- 🎯 The range of specialist provision beyond our mainstream settings so that our provision is proportionate to need, supports inclusion and ensures that children and young people are educated as close to home as is possible.
- 🎯 The way that we work together as commissioners.
- 🎯 The planning of transitions at all phases, particularly into training and employment and to reduce the incidents of NEET within our SEND population.

## YOUR VOICE

We asked children, young people and parents for their views to support with the development of our strategic priorities. Below are a selection of responses.

“The voice of the child is crucial from the start of the journey.”

“Schools should be supported to identify needs earlier.”

“There should be greater training and awareness about different types of needs in our schools.”

“EHCPs need to be more consistent.”

“I wish I had been given help when I was younger.”

“Communication should be better between services.”

“I don’t want to have to fight for the support my child needs.”

“I want my child to get the support they need without the need for a diagnosis”

“I want my school to do more to support my mental health needs”

“There should be more accountability around how services and support are delivered.”

“I want there to be somebody who knows me well.”



## LOCAL AND NATIONAL CONTEXT

### LOCAL DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

Team Doncaster’s central mission ‘Thriving People, Places & Planet’ is the key driver for the actions of the partnership up to 2030 and is geared towards six wellbeing goals set out in the wellbeing wheel below. To achieve these goals, Team Doncaster has agreed the ‘Great 8’ Priorities. The SEND strategy will have an impact upon the ‘Healthy and Compassionate’ and ‘Safe and Resilient’ wellbeing goals.



The SEND Strategy will also deliver a range of activities around support for transitions, mental health, the development of curricula, and pathways to employment. These will contribute to the delivery of ‘Equitable and inclusive lifelong learning that empowers people to fulfil their potential and thrive in life and work’ as set out in the Doncaster Education and Skills 2030 strategy, alongside broader key areas of transformation covering the four key learner stages.

## NATIONAL DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

The March 2022 government Green Paper on SEND delivered three key findings; outcomes for children and young people with SEND or in AP are poor, navigating the SEND and AP system is not a positive experience for children, young people and their families, and the system is not delivering value for money. In response to this, the review outlined six national priorities that will underpin a renewed future for the delivery of special needs provision across the country and were used to inform the development of this strategy. These are set out below.

Establish new local SEND strategic partnerships.	Improve mainstream capability and provision.	Ensure greater consistency and ownership of EHCPs.
Ensure that funding and local services supports early intervention.	Create an integrated local system of AP and SEND.	Improve the training and delivery for the SENCO role.

In addition to this, the DfE ‘Delivering Better Value’ project is working with 55 local areas in order to create a more sustainable high needs expenditure position, through improved practice and collaboration. The Doncaster partnership will be working in collaboration with this project to ensure that we have a clear evidence base for future action around sufficiency planning and funding decisions. It will also support us in developing deep partnership engagement linked to the wider delivery of this strategy.

## NATIONAL STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE

Our SEND strategy in Doncaster is informed by several national strategic documents. These are accessible via the links or QR codes below.

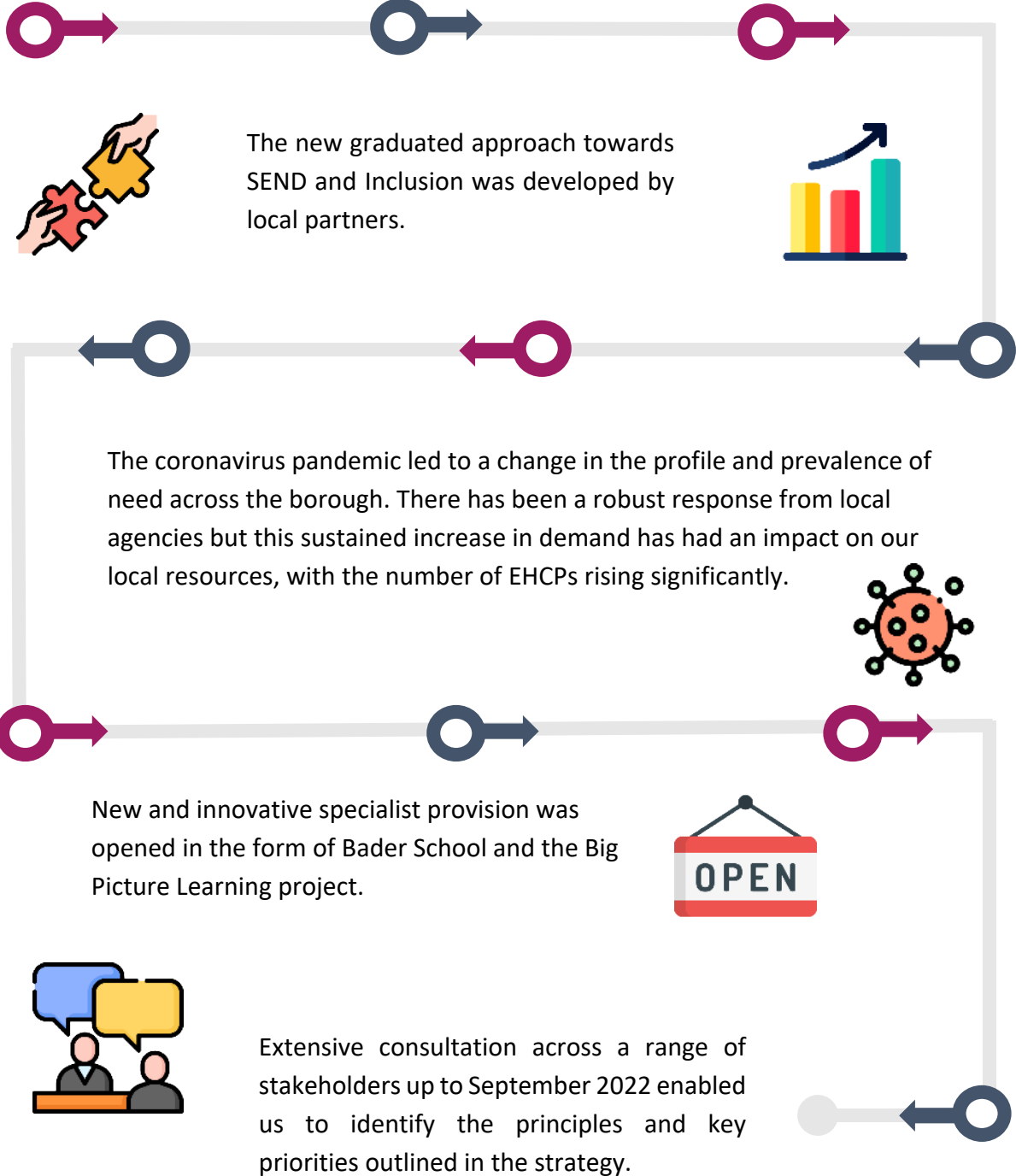
<p>SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281272/SEND_code_of_practice_0_to_25_years.pdf">SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> 	<p>Children and Families Act 2014 <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents">Children and Families Act 2014 (legislation.gov.uk)</a></p> 	<p>SEND Regulations 2014 <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/1013/contents/made">The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 (legislation.gov.uk)</a></p> 
<p>Equality Act 2010 <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents">Equality Act 2010 (legislation.gov.uk)</a></p> 	<p>Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281272/Working_together_to_safeguard_children.pdf">Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> 	<p>Children Act 1989 <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/27/contents">Children Act 1989 (legislation.gov.uk)</a></p> 
<p>Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions 2014 <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281272/Supporting_pupils_with_medical_conditions_at_school.pdf">Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> 	<p>Mental Capacity Act 2005 <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/9/contents">Mental Capacity Act 2005 (legislation.gov.uk)</a></p> 	<p>HM Government SEND Review 2022 <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281272/SEND_review_right_support_right_place_right_time.pdf">SEND review: right support, right place, right time - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> 

## OUR JOURNEY SO FAR

Ofsted and care quality commission inspection in May 2019 identifies key areas for development.



Our partnership working has supported a number of initiatives which have improved key outcomes such as reducing permanent exclusions and improving absence.

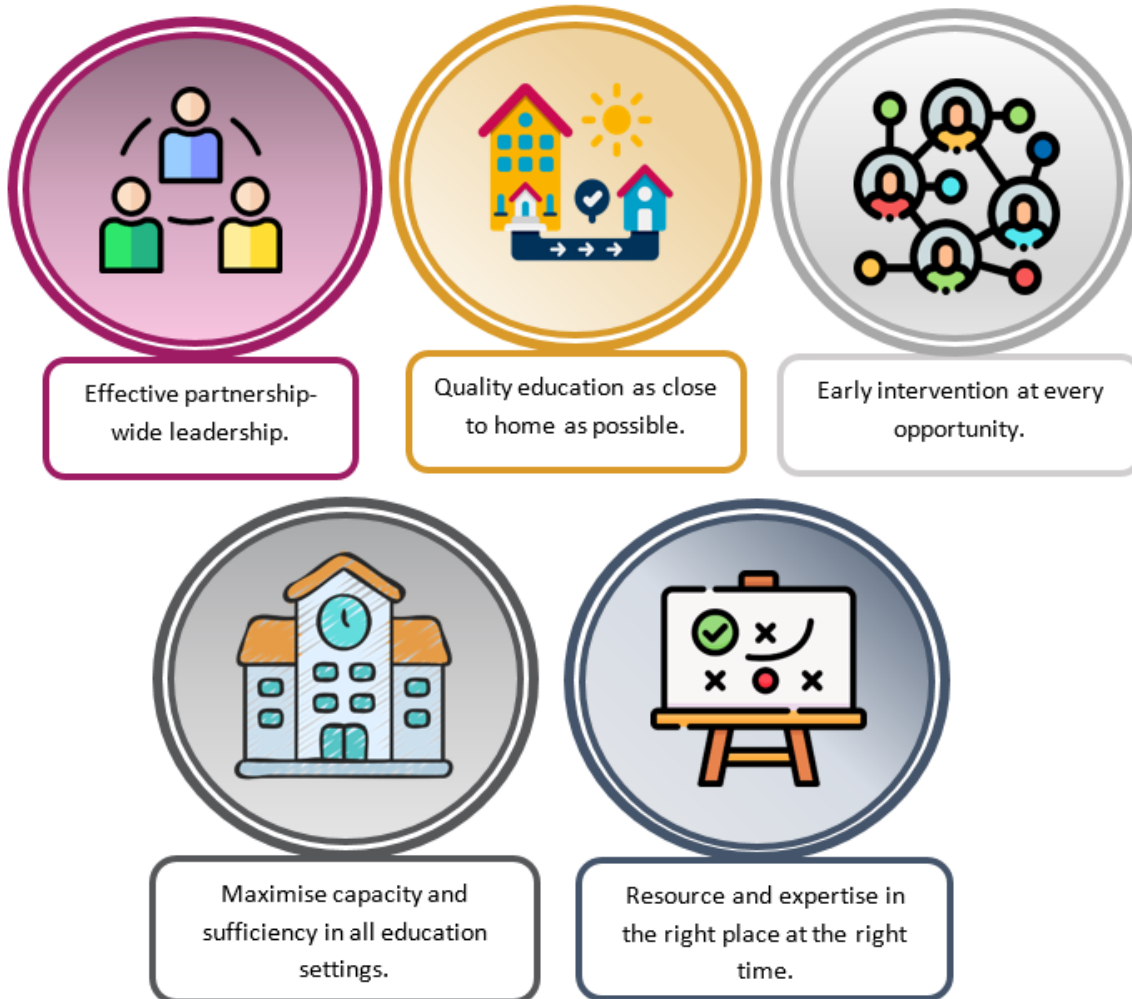


## OUR VISION

Our vision, developed in consultation with children, young people and families, is clear and concise. We want to deliver bold reforms that will provide the best possible support for our children and young people so that they can live happy and fulfilling lives. We are unwavering in our commitment to ensuring that services are joined-up, accessible and are able to offer support at the earliest point. Aligning our thinking and approaches to the principle of 'Right Support, Right Place, Right Time' set out in the SEND review will enable us to achieve our overall mission of being the most child friendly borough in the country.

## OUR PRINCIPLES

Our partnership has set five strategic principles that will underpin our work.

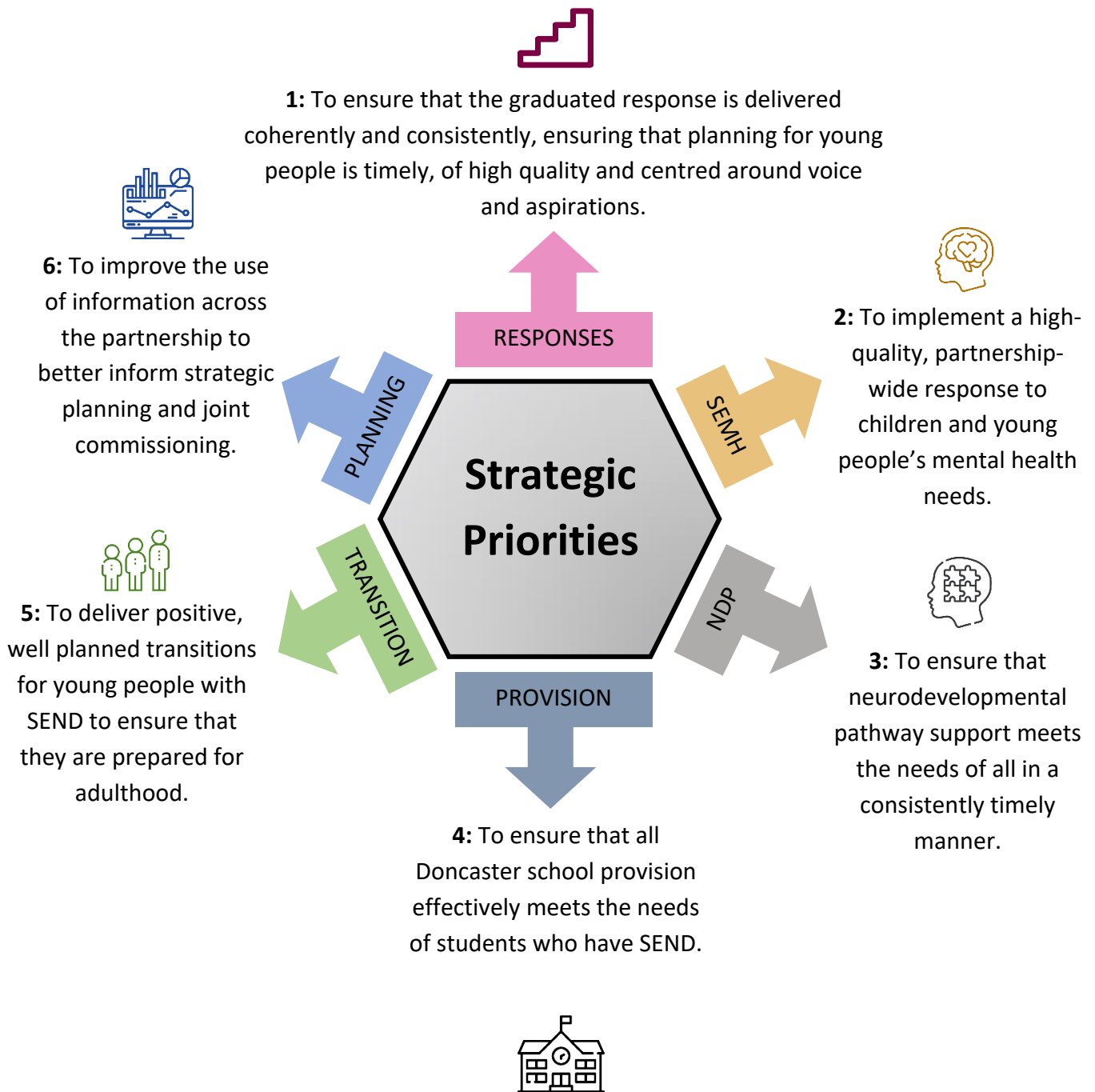


For clarification purposes these can be expanded on, as shown below.

- Deliver effective partnership leadership with a sharp focus on capacity, efficiency, and clarity of purpose.
- Ensure that children and young people are educated as close to home as possible.
- Reinforce the principles of early intervention and provide stronger accountability across the system.
- Improve capacity and sufficiency of provision in all schools and specialist settings.
- Move resources, expertise, and accountability closer to schools to support earlier intervention in settings.

## OUR PRIORITIES

Our principles outlined above, alongside extensive internal and external consultation, have informed the creation of our six key priorities, outlined below. These priorities will form the core of the strategy and the partnership actions outlined on the following pages.



**PRIORITY ONE: TO ENSURE THAT THE GRADUATED RESPONSE IS DELIVERED COHERENTLY AND CONSISTENTLY, ENSURING THAT PLANNING FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IS TIMELY, OF HIGH QUALITY AND CENTRED AROUND VOICE AND ASPIRATIONS.**

We know this is important because most parents and carers of children and young people with SEND would prefer their children to be educated in their local area, provided that provision is of a suitable and high quality. They have asked that the partnership work to reduce inconsistencies in care, support and provision. This will involve the delivery of a single workforce plan, covering all key partners including council teams, health, social, care and educational settings. This will involve the delivery of a single work

**Actions:**

Ensure the child or young person with SEND and their family is at the centre of the planning process at a corporate and individual level	Deliver a robust local graduated response to need in order to ensure consistency of identification and assessment. This will be supported by a single workforce plan which sets out how improvements will be made to the delivery of services at each level.	To improve processes and capability to deliver improvements in the timeliness of EHCPs within statutory expectations.
Develop a clear and effective process for securing timely information sharing and assessment from health services.	Ensure that all education, health and care provision is aligned to plan outcomes and that there is clarity around the nature and purpose of support from external agencies and therapeutic services.	Ensure that all elements of SEND Support and EHC plans are developed in conjunction with the child and their family, are clearly communicated and understood by all delivery partners and are implemented effectively.
Establish a routine QA process to secure consistently high quality plans and ensure that the annual review process includes a review of the quality of the EHC plan and a commitment to making alterations if required.	Develop a targeted early intervention funding system to support young people and schools, without the necessity for an EHCP, centred on a needs-led local funding process, supported and moderated by a specialist LA SEND team.	Develop a local sufficiency plan to ensure that Doncaster has sufficient places to meet rising need and to prevent the use of 'out of borough' placements.
Re-shape council services in order to deliver a coherent outreach service and a sufficiently resourced central SEND team with the capacity to support children, schools, and families through high quality case work.	Develop the quality, and raise awareness, of the published local offer so it provides all stakeholders with easily accessible information and helps to ensure effective person-centred planning to meet their needs.	Extend clinical support into SEND by supplementing our DMO with a Strategic DCO alongside an operational DCO lead at RDASH.



**PRIORITY TWO: TO IMPLEMENT A HIGH-QUALITY, PARTNERSHIP-WIDE RESPONSE TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS.**

We know this is important because children, young people, parents and carers have told us that getting the necessary support at the earliest opportunity is their top priority. Our actions in this area will complement the existing Doncaster Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing strategy.

**Actions:**

Commission new locality-based provisions for those with SEMH needs focused upon reinforcing mainstream provision and practice.	Develop a well-resourced and well-trained education workforce who are able to understand emerging needs at the earliest stage.	Support education settings in the development of effective whole school approaches to mental health.
Develop a single CPD offer for schools and ensure further engagement with the Trauma Informed Schools approach.	Improve the quality and level of engagement with the school improvement and outreach offer.	Ensure up to 15 new provisions have access to an in-house mental health support team from February 2023.
Improve the nature of challenge and support offered to schools in order to strengthen accountability.	Ensure the widespread sharing of good practice through inclusion networks and headteacher forums.	Develop our approach to facilitating and encouraging further peer challenge between schools.

**PRIORITY THREE: TO ENSURE THAT NEURODEVELOPMENTAL PATHWAY SUPPORT MEETS THE NEEDS OF ALL IN A CONSISTENTLY TIMELY MANNER.**

We know this is important because parents and carers of children and young people on these pathways tell us that the range of provision in Doncaster to meet the needs of their children needs to be reviewed and expanded with an emphasis on early diagnosis and whole family, multi-agency support. Our actions in this area will combine with the existing work on neurodevelopmental pathways in the Doncaster Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing strategy and in due course the SEND strategy will lead on this priority.

**Actions:**

Build on the introduction of the new Healios digital assessment system to develop further the use of innovative solutions that allow for more timely assessments.

Continue to review the current commissioned pathway for ADHD assessment in recognition of the increased waiting list.

Strengthen post-diagnostic support for children, young people and families so that needs can be understood and met at the earliest point.

Support schools to identify, assess and meet the needs of SEND Code K cohorts with a strengthened offer of expertise and funding, and deliver training for SENCOs on effective use of the GDA pathway.

**PRIORITY FOUR: TO ENSURE THAT ALL DONCASTER SCHOOL PROVISION EFFECTIVELY MEETS THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE SEND.**

We know this is important because children and young people say that they need a good basic educational grounding to progress into independent post-16 training or education.

**Actions:**

Involve school leaders in the development, implementation and review of the new SEND strategy, and reinforce joint accountability for SEND outcomes.

Develop a local 'SENCo charter' in order to ensure sufficient recognition, support and development for the role across all settings.

Develop the LA school effectiveness strategy so that there is a clear inclusive focus on improving provision and outcomes for all children and young people including those with SEND.

Further improve our support and challenge continuum to secure effective provision, including involvement from the Regional Schools Commissioner, if and when required, to ensure that the local area MATs are fully on board.

Develop the LA school effectiveness strategy so that there is a clear, inclusive focus on improving provision and outcomes for all children and young people including those with SEND.

Work with the schools with the highest levels of suspensions in order to minimise the use of these measures for SEND cohorts.

**PRIORITY FIVE: TO DELIVER POSITIVE, WELL PLANNED TRANSITIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE PREPARED FOR ADULTHOOD.**

We know this is important because, although progress has been made in a number of areas of the post-16 curriculum in recent years, both professionals and parents recognise that post-16 SEND provision can be fragmented, lacking in coherence and does not prepare young people with SEND for work or independence as well as it should.

**Actions:**

Establish a 'pathways into employment' SEND sub-group, which captures input from all key stakeholders, including training providers, colleges, transition workers, participation team, DWP rep, ESF providers and a rep from the post-16 group.

Carrying out a strategic analysis of the effectiveness of FE and training provision, special school sixth forms and sixth form level 2 vocational, ESF and DWP programmes in delivering successful pathways into employment.

Improve adulthood transition planning by building robust transition plans which outline support at all key stages from 'cradle to career' and identifying specific adulthood needs from age 14 onwards.

Gather detailed input and viewpoints of NEET young people with SEND in order to develop case studies and ascertain barriers to employment.

Use the information gained from the strategic analysis and case studies to identify evidence-based good practice and gaps in provision, and inform future strategy.

Create a mechanism for sharing good practice between post-16 providers.

Work with local providers to fill gaps in provision and, if needed, work with the Regional Schools Commissioner and Education Funding Agency to bring in new providers.

Develop increased opportunities for young people with SEND to engage in work-based learning clearly linked to long-term employment opportunities and draw on learning from Project Search and other successful supportive internship programmes.

Work through the Local Integration Board to engage with employers and support them to take on young people who have SEND.

**PRIORITY SIX: TO IMPROVE THE USE OF INFORMATION ACROSS THE PARTNERSHIP TO BETTER INFORM STRATEGIC PLANNING AND JOINT COMMISSIONING.**













We know this is important because parents and carers of children and young people in Doncaster agree that having a shared professional direction can only benefit individual children. We are also aware that there needs to be more coherent arrangements for strategic commissioning. Through the DfE 'Better Value' project we are ensuring that our diagnostic data is comprehensive to enable this process.

**Actions:**








## SUCCESS CRITERIA

We will know that our actions have been successful if we can demonstrate achievement against the success criteria outlined below.

-  Children and parents tell us that they feel listened to and understood. They can identify how these changes have improved their lives.
-  Children, young people and parents will tell us that service work in a joined up, efficient and effective way.
-  Schools have a clear role in defining and driving local strategic priorities.
-  Children can be educated in their local mainstream provision wherever it is possible and appropriate.
-  There is local provision in place for young people with social, emotional and mental health needs.
-  There is a clear plan for future local provision, which anticipates how needs will be met locally.
-  Schools are a friendly place for children with additional needs, they are part of the whole school community and are offered differentiated learning opportunities to support their academic achievement.
-  EHCPs are of demonstrably consistent high standard.
-  SENCos are confident that they have the correct resources and time to be able to deliver positive impact for children and young people with SEND.
-  There is a strong range of post-16 opportunities for young people that enables them to access meaningful employment and training.
-  Our children are more independent and young people are prepared for adult life.
-  High needs funding will be more efficient, working to support young people at the earliest point.

The qualitative and quantitative measures outlined below will sit underneath these top-level criteria as part of the strategy implementation plan.

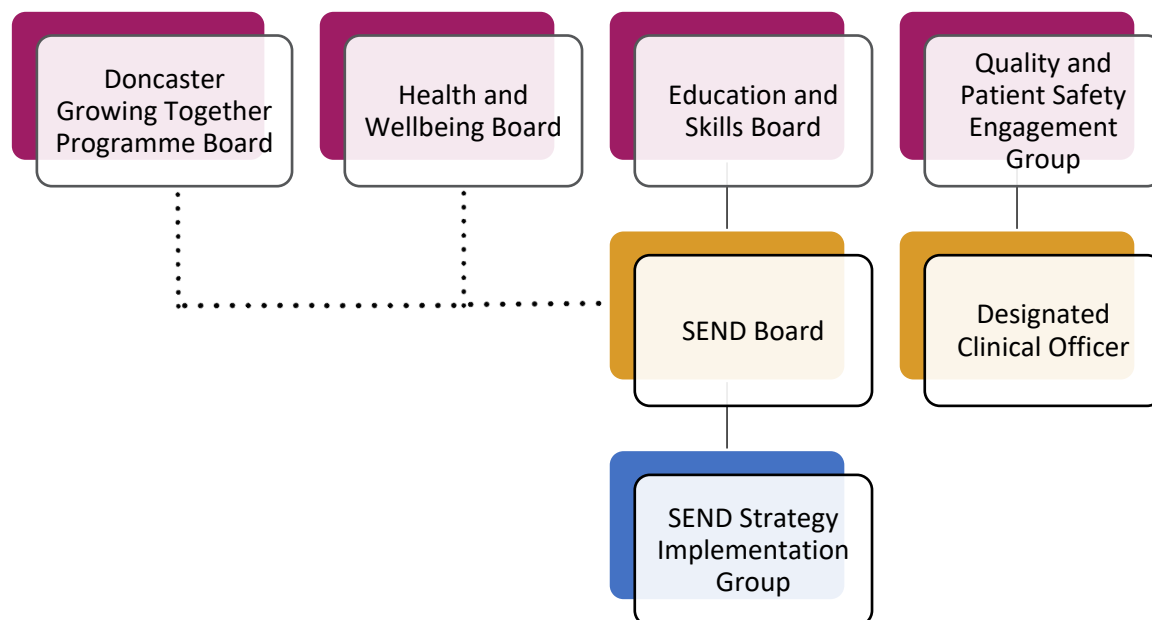
-  Academic outcomes for SEND children and young people have improved.
-  The number of EHCP requests will decline over time.
-  Waiting times for ASD and ADHD diagnosis will be reduced.
-  The rate in the number of young people placed in out of authority placements will reduce.
-  High needs funding will work more efficiently to ensure that needs are met as early as possible.

## GOVERNANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION

It is our intention alongside this document to develop an implementation plan that sets out our intended actions over the three years of the strategy. The plan will be designed to identify key actions, provide clear timelines alongside measurable success criteria to ensure that we, as a partnership, work in a way that is SMART, ensuring that our goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound.

Strategic Action(s)	Action	Responsible	Deadline	Success Criteria

In order to ensure effective monitoring, the Local Area SEND Board will meet every six weeks and report upon the progress of work-streams attached to each of the above priorities. Prior to each board a Parent Co-Production Group, a young people’s ‘Shadow Board’ and a Head Teacher group will meet in order to scrutinise progress and develop key issues. The full governance and reporting structure is set out below.



## FURTHER INFORMATION

More information on the Doncaster Local Offer for SEND and our work in practice is provided on the Doncaster Council Website. This is accessible via the link or QR code below.

[Local Offer - Special Educational Needs / Disabilities \(SEND\) - Homepage - Doncaster Council](#)





## GLOSSARY

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
AP	Alternative Provision
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DCO	Designated Clinical Officer
DfE	Department for Education
DMO	Designated Medical Officer
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
ESF	European Social Fund
FE	Further Education
GDA	General Developmental Assessment
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
LA	Local Authority
MAT	Multi-Academy Trust
NDP	Neurodevelopmental Pathway
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
QA	Quality Assurance
SENCo	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

This page is intentionally left blank