



Appendix 1

Doncaster SEND Strategy

2022-2025

DRAFT



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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

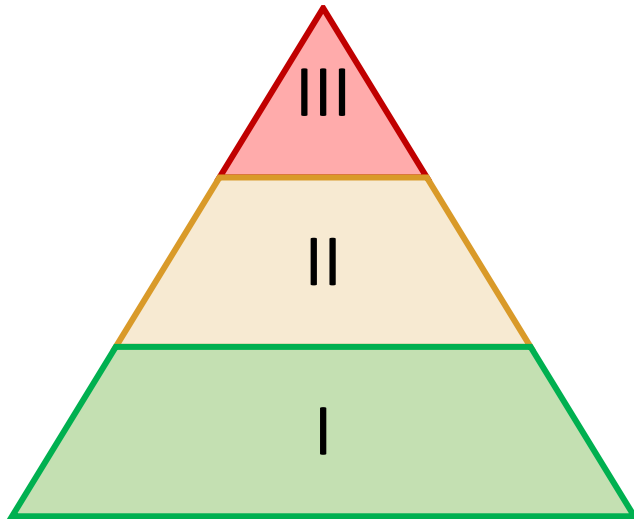
KEY PARTNERS

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



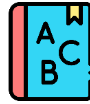
Change in the percentage of children and young people with SEN Support (2019-2022): **+0.5%** [National: +0.5%]



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.

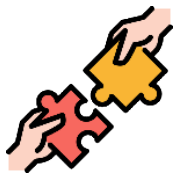
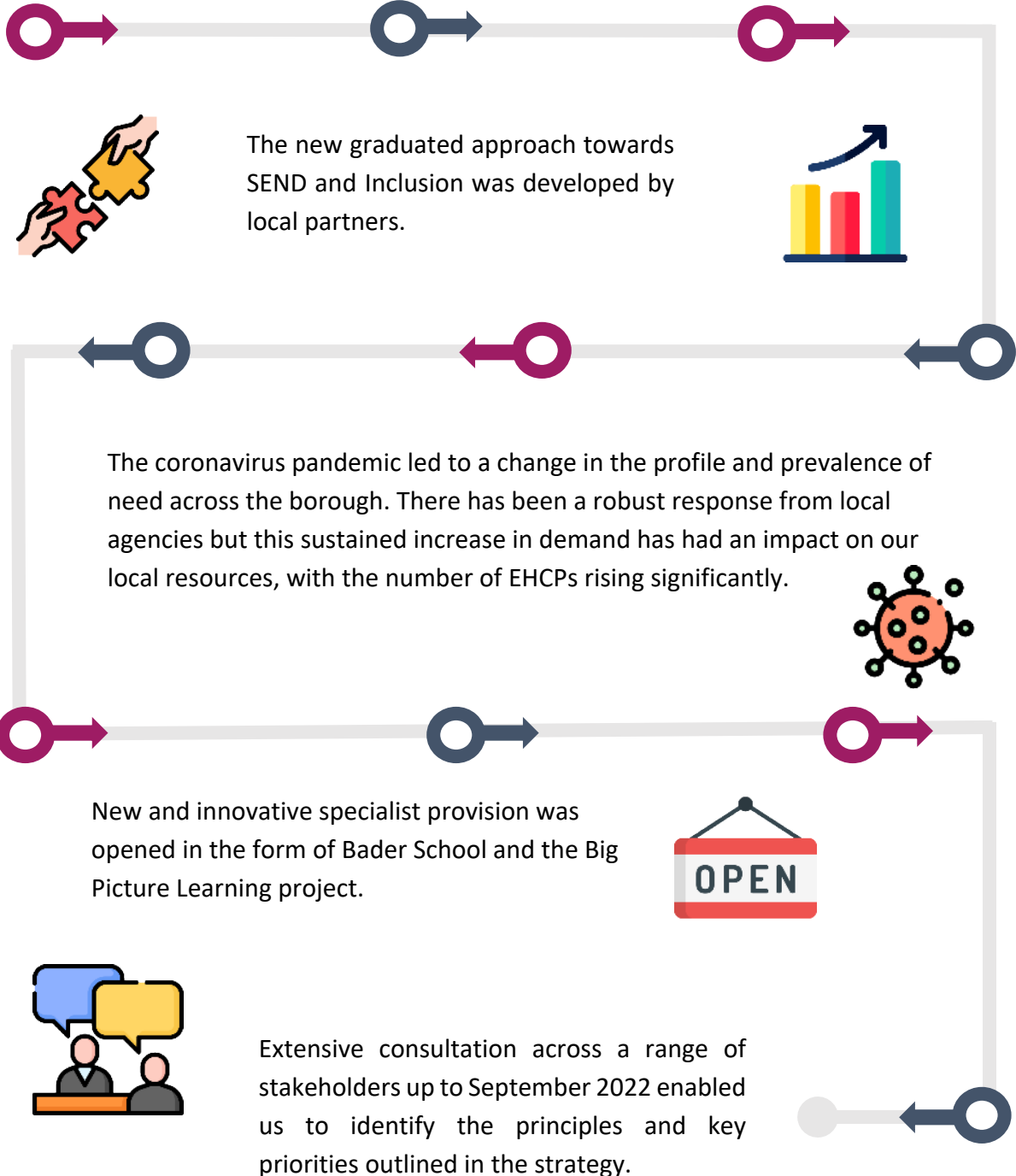
<p>SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> 	<p>Children and Families Act 2014 Children and Families Act 2014 (legislation.gov.uk)</p> 	<p>SEND Regulations 2014 The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 (legislation.gov.uk)</p> 
<p>Equality Act 2010 Equality Act 2010 (legislation.gov.uk)</p> 	<p>Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> 	<p>Children Act 1989 Children Act 1989 (legislation.gov.uk)</p> 
<p>Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions 2014 Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> 	<p>Mental Capacity Act 2005 Mental Capacity Act 2005 (legislation.gov.uk)</p> 	<p>HM Government SEND Review 2022 SEND review: right support, right place, right time - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> 

OUR JOURNEY SO FAR

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



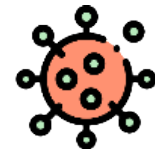
Our partnership working has supported a number of initiatives which have improved key outcomes such as reducing permanent exclusions and improving absence.



The new graduated approach towards SEND and Inclusion was developed by local partners.



The coronavirus pandemic led to a change in the profile and prevalence of need across the borough. There has been a robust response from local agencies but this sustained increase in demand has had an impact on our local resources, with the number of EHCPs rising significantly.



New and innovative specialist provision was opened in the form of Bader School and the Big Picture Learning project.



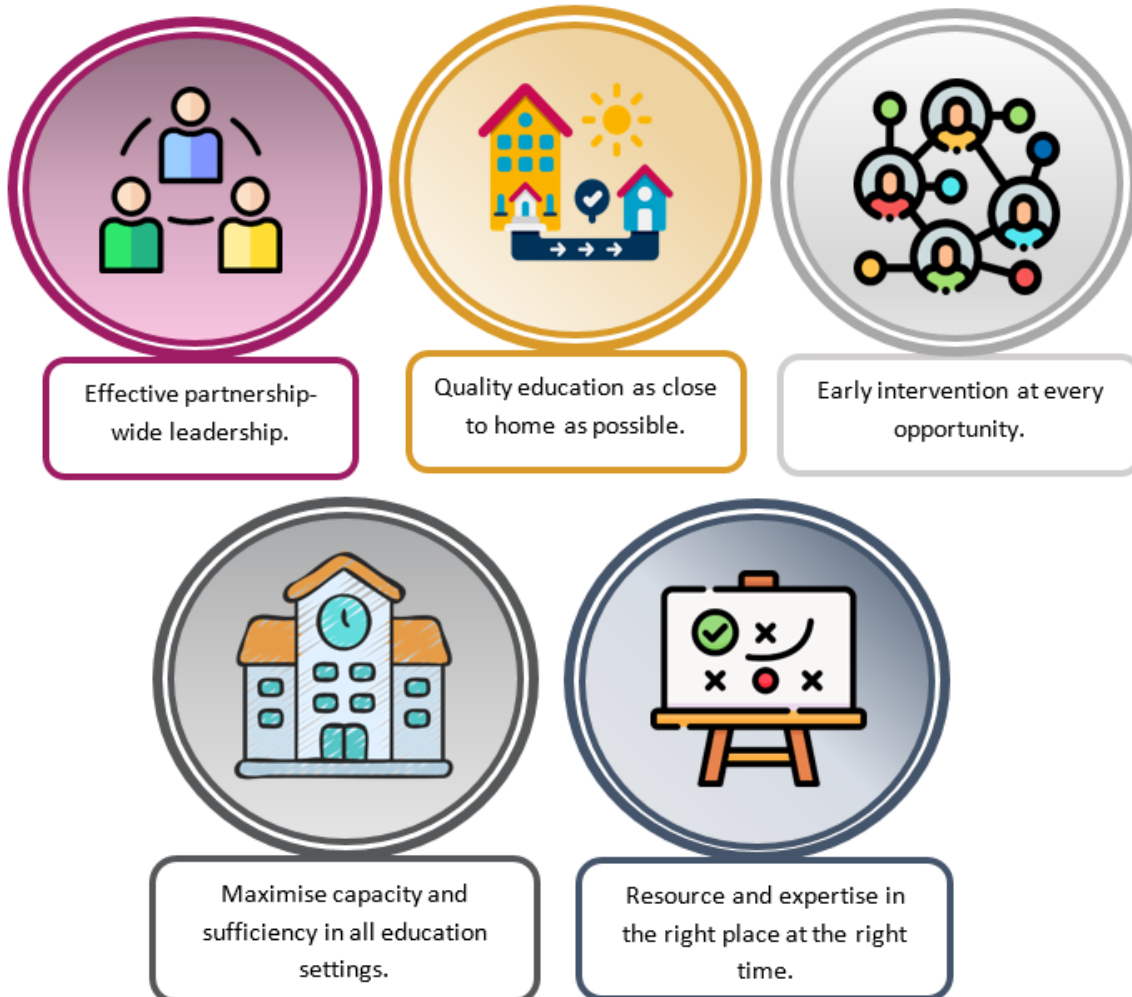
Extensive consultation across a range of stakeholders up to September 2022 enabled us to identify the principles and key priorities outlined in the strategy.

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.

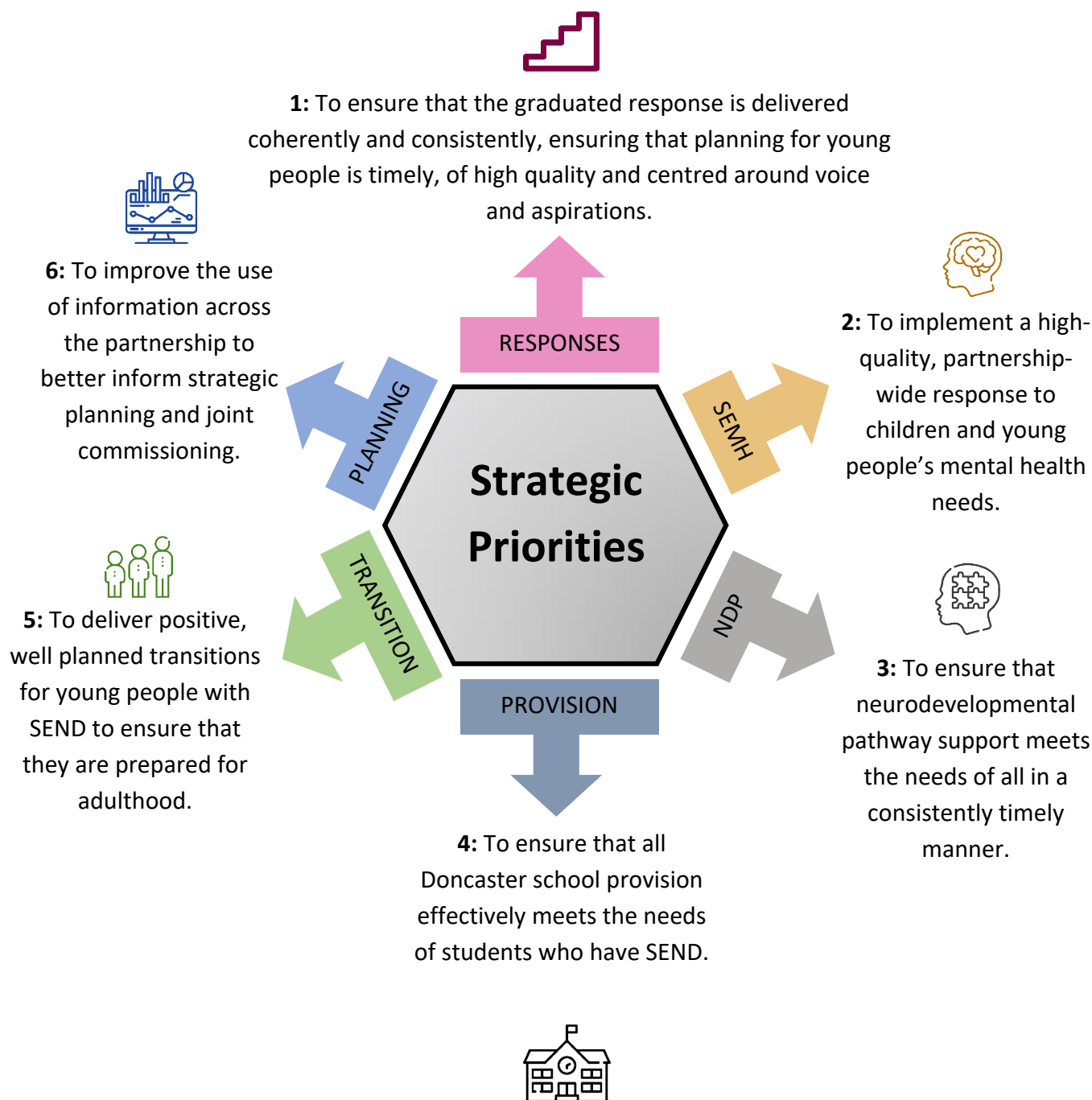


For clarification purposes these can be expanded on, as shown below.

- 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:

Build on current intelligence to create a SEND specific JSNA which projects future SEND education, health and care needs to underpin future commissioning decisions and resource allocation across the Borough and partnership.

Create a 'live' data dashboard to ensure that there is an ongoing up-to-date picture of trends within the borough.

Ensure there are clear routes for children, young people, parents and carers to shape future commissioning decisions and build on existing strengths in this area, in particular the young commissioners, young advisors and the work of Doncaster Parent Voice.

Develop knowledge of current local provision and how this overlays to identified needs. This will underpin future market shaping linked to agreed commissioning principles across education, health and social care.

Strengthen strategic management of high needs resources within the council so that there is strengthened shared accountability and planning.

Develop stronger links with the maintained specialist sector, strengthen ownership of local strategy and improve commissioning, quality assurance and funding arrangements













Continue to explore the possibility of pooled budgets for children and with special educational needs through a section 75 arrangement.

Further embed, both functionally and structurally, the move towards integrated commissioning to maintain the rate of progress already evidenced.






Pool information held by local authority, care and health services to provide area leaders with a clear understanding of the effectiveness of provision for SEND.

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.

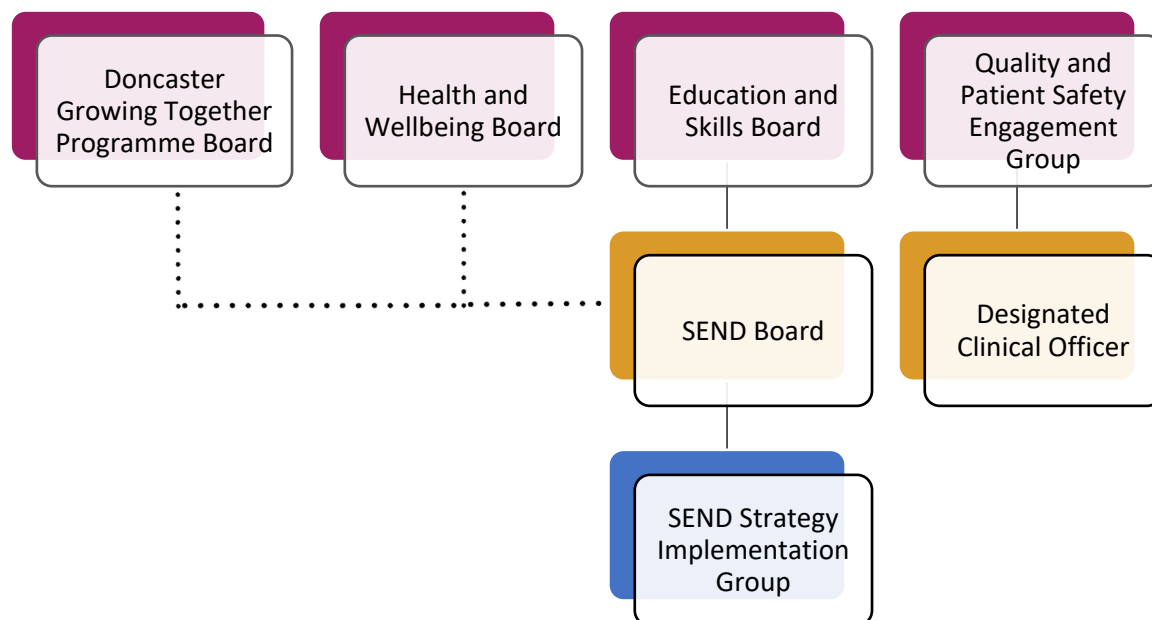
-  Academic outcomes for SEND children and young people have improved.
-  The number of EHCP requests will decline over time.
-  Waiting times for ASD and ADHD diagnosis will be reduced.
-  The rate in the number of young people placed in out of authority placements will reduce.
-  High needs funding 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