

Supporting Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs (SEND) and / or Disabilities

Our Local Area Vision and Strategy for Dudley

Draft for consultation July 2018

DRAFT



Children and
young people's
alliance



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Welcome to our draft Dudley area strategy for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This document sets out in straightforward terms our vision for the Dudley area SEND offer to children, young people and their families.

We are starting with positive building blocks already in place

- We are improving our whole system of support for vulnerable children and young people. Our strategy for special educational needs and disability is a key element of this, supported by a multi-agency SEND Improvement Board which includes our partners in Health, Education, Social Care, the Voluntary Sector and representatives of parents and carers
- There is an impressive range of skills, experience and resources within local education, social care and health provision to help us achieve our ambitions for children and young people
- We are working towards co-production – there is increasing stakeholder engagement and participation with parents, carers, children and young people within the local area

We have identified our three key improvement themes

- Theme 1: Co-Production with Families - Embedding a culture of co-production with our partners, stakeholders and families as the basis for how we plan, deliver and review local provision
- Theme 2: Joint Planning and Commissioning - Maximising the impact of our shared resources and information to secure a more integrated approach to commissioning and shaping the local area SEND offer
- Theme 3: Integrated Delivery - Building on the strengths of our local provision to offer the best mix of specialist and mainstream support that reflects the diversity of children and young people's needs

Delivering Our Strategy

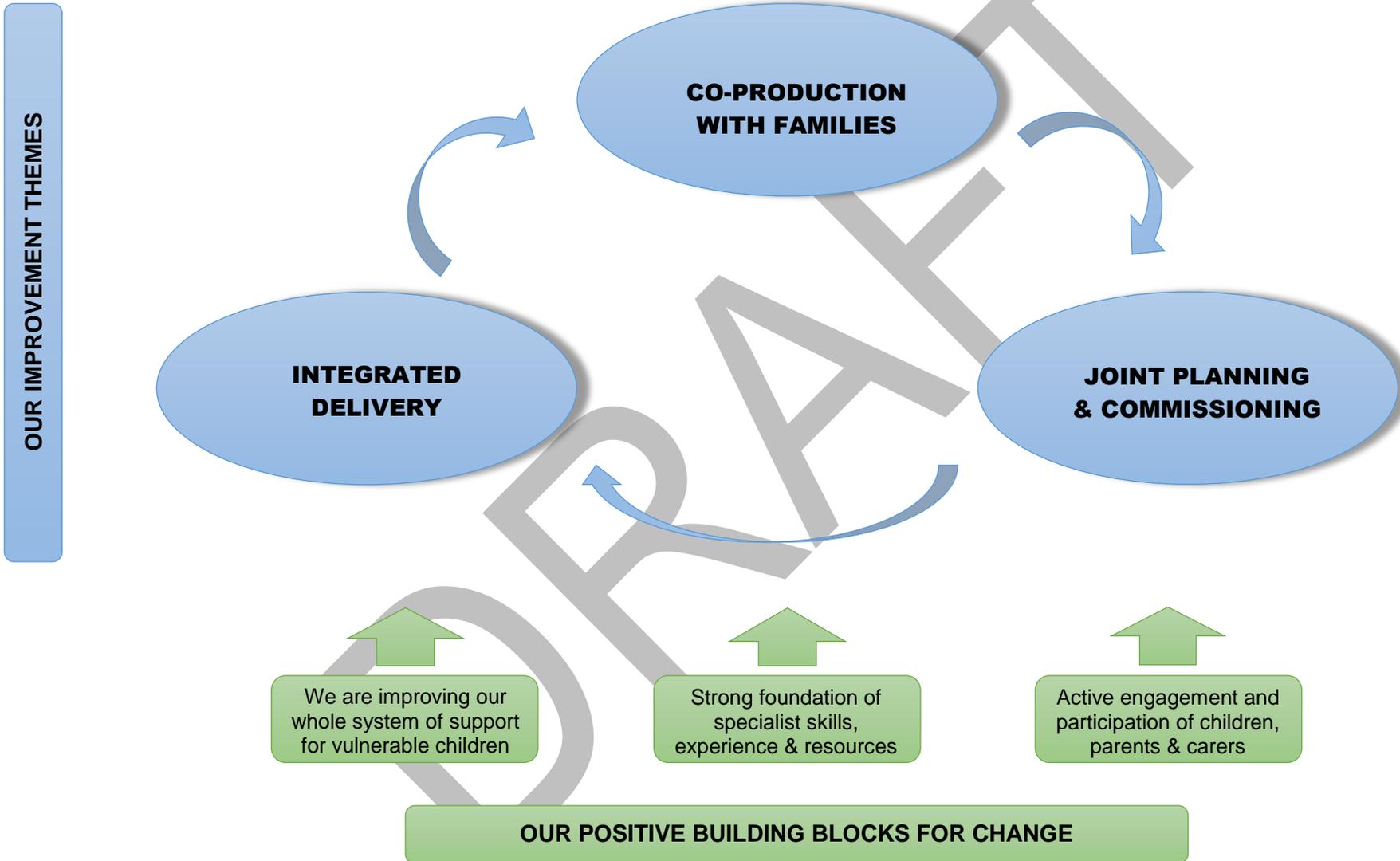
As part of our wider strategic framework of support for vulnerable children and young people, our multi-agency SEND Improvement Board will work with our partners, stakeholders and local communities to ensure that we collectively deliver on our ambitions for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Our SEND Improvement Plan will be refreshed and regularly reviewed in order that resources, action and impact is directed where we need it most. This will maintain focus and momentum in this critical area of support for local people in Dudley.

Consultation – How you can help to shape our strategy

This strategy is being shared with all of our partners and stakeholders including the families that we are working with. You can respond directly online or by participating in a programme of workshops and partnership conversations. The details of how you can participate are set out in this draft strategy.

DUDLEY AREA SEND STRATEGY



INTRODUCTION

OUR VISION FOR THE AREA SEND OFFER IN DUDLEY

“Our vision is to enable children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in Dudley to secure outstanding outcomes. Our offer will be first and foremost driven by children, young people, their parents and carers as equal partners”

Welcome to our draft Dudley area strategy for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This document sets out in straightforward terms our vision for the Dudley area SEND offer to children, young people and their families, our positive building blocks from which we can grow and develop, our key areas for improvement where we need to focus our energy and resources, and our strategic priorities.

Our strategy is firmly located within our wider offer of support for vulnerable groups in Dudley, ranging from our early help arrangements through to more intensive intervention and support. Our ambition is that this strategy is owned at the highest level of every organisation and stakeholder group within the Dudley area. This will provide a strong and determined platform for driving forward the positive changes and improvements that we are all seeking.

To fully realise the vision and priorities set out in this strategy, we face significant challenges, but we are building from a positive base with strong partnership arrangements, increasingly well-developed and pro-active groups driven by parents, carers and young people, a rich resource of specialist experience and skills within our shared workforce, and a valued range of local education provision

Importantly, we have positive momentum behind our improvement journey within Children’s Services. Whilst this has primarily focused on safeguarding services, the Council and partners in Health, Education, Social Care, the Voluntary Sector and representatives of parents and carers have prioritised the development of effective SEND provision as an integral strand of improving support for vulnerable groups. This has ensured a strong and sustained focus on developing the quality and impact of support for children and young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities. This has included initiating an independent peer review and working with local partners and the LGA to progressively improve our local area offer, in parallel with wider improvements to Children’s Services.

Our strategy is focused on the age spectrum up to 25, and on the critical transition to adult services if support is still needed. This approach is building on the emerging Dudley Disability Service arrangements in Dudley. This reflects our local commitment to focusing first and foremost on individual children, young people and their families, on their needs, on their experience of accessing support, and on minimising transition points and changes of worker across the system.

The delivery and realisation of this strategy can only be secured in a close partnership between local agencies and stakeholders. This includes the commissioners and providers of services, schools, colleges, community groups and, most importantly, with children, young people and their families. The principles and values of co-production run throughout our strategy and will ultimately shape the way we plan, deliver and review our local offer.

Thank you for taking the time to read through and consider our strategy. We are really very excited about taking this forward in partnership with you.

Sue Butcher, Chair, Dudley SEND Improvement Board

OUR LOCAL CONTEXT – POSITIVE BUILDING BLOCKS FOR CHANGE

“We are improving our whole system of support for vulnerable children and young people. Our strategy for special educational needs and disability is a key element of this, supported by a multi-agency SEND Improvement Board”

- Dudley Council and its partners within Health, Education and the wider community are working together across the whole system of support for children and young people – from our early help arrangements through to more intensive intervention and support - to progressively improve outcomes for individual children and local communities.
- Within a strategic framework of support for vulnerable children, the SEND Improvement Board provides a sharp focus on driving change and improved outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities. This has ensured a continuing focus on this critical area of work throughout the wider improvement journey for Dudley.
- We have commissioned an LGA Peer Review and other independent capacity to provide robust challenge and support to inform the way we shape our SEND offer in the Dudley area. This has given us an increasingly self-aware evidence-base for planning long-term sustainable improvements to the local area offer

“There is an impressive range of skills, experience and resources within local education, social care and health provision to help us achieve our ambitions for children and young people”

- Frontline staff, managers and strategic leaders working together across the full spectrum of local provision bring a wealth of specialist experience, skills and knowledge to inform our support for children, young people and their families. Our workforce is at the the core of our local shared resource and at the heart of our offer to local people.
- Our education offer in the Dudley area for children and young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities includes a well-developed and impressive range of specialist provision alongside a continuum of support within mainstream settings.
- Following a period of change and improvement across the system in Dudley we are strengthening and stabilising the strategic leadership of our support for vulnerable children, young people and their families. Permanent appointments to key and influential positions offers stability of expertise and commitment to drive through sustainable change

“We are working towards co-production – there is increasing stakeholder engagement and participation with parents, carers, children and young people within the local area”

- Dudley has a well-developed and effective parent & carer forum which is driven by a collective passion and commitment for securing the very best deal and voice for children and young people. This forms part of a wider network of participation and service-user voice in the Dudley area
- There are increasing examples of where the voice and active participation of parents, carers, children and young people have informed and influenced policy, procedures and practice in Dudley.
- We are slowly but steadily getting better at ensuring the voice of children and young people is evidenced in our direct practice, informing our assessment, planning and delivery of frontline support across all of our services. For children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities this is of particular importance regarding Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCP's)

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OUR LOCAL CONTEXT – SOME KEY FACTS

SEND IN DUDLEY

- 16.8% of children attending Dudley schools have been identified as requiring support with special educational needs and/or disabilities – 2.1% higher than the national average (NA)
- The % of pupils with a statement (or Education Health & Care Plan - EHCP) has dropped from 3.3% (2013/14 - above NA of 2.8%) to 2.6% (2016/17 - below NA of 2.9%)
- There has been a drop in the % of children and young people receiving SEN Support from 16.2% (2013/14) to 14.3% (2016/17)
- 33.7% of children looked after receive SEN Support (3.7% more than NA)
- 19.1% of children and young people have a statement/EHCP compared to 28.2% (NA)
- 18.3% of children and young people in need have a disability compared to 12.8% (NA)

EDUCATION SETTINGS IN DUDLEY

In Dudley we support children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities in a mix of education settings – these include:

- 3 FE Colleges and one 6th Form College
- 78 primary schools (39 with nursery facilities)
- 20 secondary schools
- 7 special schools
- 1 standalone nursery, 2 enhanced nurseries & 3 specialist nurseries
- 2 Pupil Referral Units
- 1 Specific Learning Difficulty Unit (at Primary phase)
- Speech, Language & Communication Needs facilities (2 at KS1 & 1 at KS2)
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder facilities (1 Primary & 1 Secondary)
- Hearing Impaired facilities (1 Primary & 1 Secondary)

EMERGING THEMES FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

In Our Primary Schools ...

- We have a high proportion of children and young people identified with speech, language and communication needs.
- Specific learning difficulties of children and young people do not appear to be well-identified in the primary phase (compared to secondary)
- We have a high proportion of children and young people identified with a physical disability

In Our Secondary Schools ...

- There is a notably high rate of children and young people identified with a moderate learning difficulty
- The proportion of children and young people identified with speech, language and communication needs is significantly reduced at secondary phase
- There is a low rate of identification of social, emotional & mental health needs

In Our Special Schools ...

- We have twice the national average % of children and young people with moderate learning difficulties attending our special schools
- We have a very low % of children and young people with severe learning difficulties in our special schools
- A significant % of children and young people with autistic spectrum disorder attend our special schools

OUR SEND IMPROVEMENT THEMES & STRATEGIC OUTCOME PRIORITIES

We have identified three key improvement themes which provide a framework for driving system-wide change and improved outcomes for local people

THEME 1: CO-PRODUCTION WITH FAMILIES

“Embedding a culture of co-production with our partners, stakeholders and families as the basis for how we plan, deliver and review local provision”

Our Strategic Outcome Priorities

1. Children, young people and their parents and carers are equal partners in reviewing and shaping local services. Co-production is embedded across the local area
2. Co-production is core to how we do business at all points in the process from early thinking and ideas generation, through to the evaluation, review and shaping of provision.
3. Co-production and the voice of families, children and young people informs and drives frontline practice across all of our support, education and community services

THEME 2: JOINT PLANNING AND COMMISSIONING

“Maximising the impact of our shared resources and information to secure a more integrated approach to commissioning and shaping the local area SEND offer”

Our Strategic Outcome Priorities

1. Leadership and governance of the SEND agenda is owned at the highest level across our partner agencies and this is reflected in organisational priorities and decisions about resources
2. We have an integrated approach to strategic planning, commissioning and resource management for SEND and disability provision, building on the foundations of the emerging Dudley Disability Service. Our action is driven by more robust analysis and interpretation of our shared data, performance and quality outcomes and feedback from children, young people and families
3. Our local provision is progressively reshaped to offer the best possible mix of individually tailored support and learning opportunities across social care, health and education

THEME 3: INTEGRATED DELIVERY

“Building on the strengths of our local provision to offer the best mix of specialist and mainstream support that reflects the diversity of children and young people’s needs”

Our Strategic Outcome Priorities

1. Assessment and planning for individual children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities is integrated and high quality across education, health and social care provision
2. Our multi-agency workforce and the families we are working with are equipped with the skills, knowledge and capacity to identify and meet individual needs in a timely and effective way
3. The local area education offer to children and young people offers a continuum of support that is first and foremost driven by local need and that reflects the inclusion agenda

Delivering Our Strategy

Governance: SEND Improvement Board

- The multi-agency SEND Improvement Board will own strategic accountability for the implementation of our Dudley strategy for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This will form a critical element of the wider framework of support for vulnerable children and young people in Dudley. The SEND Improvement Board will work with all partners, stakeholders, families and local communities to ensure that ownership of delivery is secured at the highest level and that obstacles to delivery are quickly identified and tackled on a collaborative basis.

Action Planning: SEND Improvement Plan

- The Dudley Area SEND Improvement Plan will be refreshed to ensure a strong alignment with the SEND strategy. The Improvement Plan will act as the primary vehicle for planning and driving action by our partners to ensure that our ambitions for children, young people and families are fully realised and that we make a real and positive difference at point of delivery within our local communities.

Continuous Improvement: Inspection and Review

- In Dudley we welcome the challenge and opportunities presented by independent review and inspection of our SEND offer. The Ofsted/CQC framework and SEND Code of Practice provide an invaluable framework for informing and driving the quality and impact of local services. WE will continue to complement regulatory visits by commissioning peer review and other sector-led improvement opportunities as part of our wider local framework for driving improvements to quality and frontline practice. Co-production with children, young people and their families will be an increasingly strong local driver for positive change.

CONSULTATION & NEXT STEPS

How you can shape our strategy

The themes and priorities set out in our draft strategy have been developed from taking a thoughtful look at the local picture in Dudley, taking account of national and local policy developments and with a strong emphasis on actively listening to the voice of children, young people and families who we are working with. However, in order that we can put in place a strong and credible plan that gives us the best possible opportunity to deliver positive outcomes for local people, it is critical that all partners and stakeholders have an opportunity to actively contribute to shaping this strategy before it is formally agreed.

In order to give you an opportunity to contribute to shaping our strategy, we have put in place arrangements during from 3rd July through to 21st September 2018 to capture your views and ideas.

Opportunities for you to contribute to this consultation include:

- An **online link** where you can read the draft strategy and submit a direct response to some specific questions as well as setting out any other thoughts or ideas you may have www.dudley.gov.uk/sendconsultation
- Presentations to a range of established **stakeholder and partnership forums** where there is a particular interest in this area of work. This will include schools forums, multi-agency partnerships and parent, carer and young people's representative groups
- A small number of **bespoke workshops** which will provide an opportunity for a mix of partners and stakeholders to directly contribute to the strategy
- Particular consideration is being given to the most effective methods of engaging **the voice of children and young people**. This will build from established participation forums and will draw on existing information and views that have young people in Dudley have already contributed to shaping this area of work
- If you require special assistance or additional information to help complete this form please contact us at: sendconsultation@dudley.gov.uk and we will ensure that you get all the help you need to participate fully in the consultation process

Next Steps

Following the consultation process, it is anticipated that our strategy will be formally agreed by partners in October 2018. Meanwhile we are not waiting before implementing positive change. Throughout the summer of 2018 we will continue to drive forward positive change and improvements to our local offer within the framework of our established Dudley All Area SEND Improvement Plan (2017-19).

Thank you for taking the time to read our draft strategy. We are looking forward to your active participation in shaping our ideas and creating a positive way forward for realising our vision and ambitions for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in Dudley.

APPENDIX

LINKS TO USEFUL FURTHER READING

DOCUMENT	LINK (click on the link or copy & paste into your browser)
SEND – Guide for Parents and Carers	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-parents-and-carers
SEND support – Easy Read Guide for Children and Young People	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-support-easy-read-guide-for-children-and-young-people
Ofsted & Care Quality Commission Inspection Framework for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-area-send-inspection-framework
SEND Code of Practice (Statutory Guidance)	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf
SEN Support – research evidence on effective approaches and examples of current practice (2017)	http://www.sendgateway.org.uk/resources.send-support-research-evidence-on-effective-approaches-and-examples-of-current-practice-in-good-and-outstanding-schools-and-colleges.html