

# **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Inclusion Strategy**

**2021- 2024**




North Tyneside Council





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# Foreword



This strategy has a four-year focus on working together to meet the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in North Tyneside.

We have listened to families, children and young people. We have audited Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), held focus groups and stakeholder events, carried out surveys, and attended conferences and parental engagement events. These engagements tell us that children, young people, parents and carers and people who work with them have these shared views:

- Children and young people identified as having special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) have the same aims and hopes as everyone else.
- Parents and carers talk about not wanting anything special or extraordinary in terms of provision, just access to what is 'gloriously ordinary'.

Children and young people tell us they want to have fun, make friends, learn, work, have the opportunity to speak up and be heard and to be full participants in their community, in short a 'gloriously ordinary' life. We are aware that their SEND can mean that they experience barriers to this full engagement and achievement. Removing these barriers will be key to the success of this strategy.

Our intention is to use this strategy to build on what we know works well and drive the improvements that we know are needed and that our families want to see. Our central goal is helping our children and young people with SEND to thrive and live gloriously ordinary lives. This document shares how we want to achieve it, by sharing our understanding of the starting points and focus for our work. It details the current picture, what we know about SEND, what families and others have told us and how this is going to inform the actions we are going to take.

This document will set out what we want to achieve between now and 2024 and, in summary, how we intend to do it. More detailed action plans will be available as we address each of the areas over the next four years and we will publish an annual update so everyone can follow the work to enable all of our children and young people to lead a gloriously ordinary life.



# A shared understanding

It is not only in the best interests of individuals and families with SEND but also for the communities of North Tyneside as a whole, that collectively we have high aspirations for all our children and young people. That we support them through childhood to the transition into adulthood and to reach their full potential. That may mean employment, independent living, participating within an inclusive community, as well as meeting any health or well-being needs.

Children and young people with SEND may need extra support, sometimes significant support and adjustments, to meet a particular need. For example, a person who requires help in speaking, writing or being understood, is still meeting the same human need that we all share, the need to communicate. The only thing that is different is the degree of support or the way they meet that need, not the need itself.

When a child is very young, or SEND is first identified, families need to know that the great majority of children and young people with SEND, with the right support, can achieve their ambitions, find work, be supported to live independently, and participate in their community. All of those working with children and young people, for example, health workers, social workers, early years providers and schools must encourage these ambitions right from the start. They must seek to understand the interests, strengths and motivations of children and young people and use this as a basis for planning support around them. The support around them needs to be well enough planned to anticipate need or changes to need so that the support can be dynamic.

With the right support, many young people with SEND can build the confidence and independence they need to be leaders of their own lives. For some young people with the most complex needs, it's about celebrating the small steps towards maximising autonomy and the opportunity of a gloriously ordinary life. Whilst for others it is small tweaks and changes that can result in the chance to thrive.

Our understanding of 'gloriously ordinary' would include:

- Having friends and relationships
- Being a full part of a community
- Access to education
- Being healthy, happy and safe
- Having choices
- Having control and a voice
- Being able to take part
- Having fun!

# The current picture

We have worked together to prepare our children and young people for adult life and as a result the proportions of our young people in education, employment or training are high compared to national figures. We know that our children and young people are likely to attend a good or better school and all our specialist provisions are deemed good by Ofsted. Our education outcomes for children and young people with SEND compare well to national figures and when in school they have tended to have high levels of participation.

Our work to develop a cross service approach to education, health and care means that we are more connected than ever across the different teams who support children and young people with additional needs. Examples of this include a multi-agency training package, ever closer working between services, better sharing of information and stronger links between education and health providers. We have also been able to identify where our work was falling short and taken action to improve, for example around the time it takes to complete Education, Health and Care Plan assessments and better information sharing between health and local authority colleagues.

However, we know that things are not always perfect, and families have told us that their experiences have not always been positive. Families explain that they would like to see more consistent support that is easier to access - particularly in schools. We also recognise that even though professionals feel that they are working in partnership this has not, yet, been felt by our families who want to see an even closer approach 'on the ground'. All partners recognise the need to ensure annual reviews are timely and more clearly focussed on the young person.

We know that there has been a significant increase in the number of children and young people who are supported with an Education, Health and Care Plan and those who have additional needs that can be supported without a statutory plan. As a result, our education, health and care services are having to work hard to meet demand. We want to use the information we have to plan more precisely the support our families are likely to need so that they can access it without delay. Likewise, the services that support our children, young people and their families are under significant pressure and this can result in additional worries for the families and longer waiting times.

When asked, the top priority for parents and for professionals was the same: supporting all schools to offer an enhanced and consistent educational offer for children and young people with additional needs.

Both groups highlight the need to focus on:

- Ensuring annual reviews of Education, Health and Care Plans are focussed on the young person
- Enhancing the support that is available as soon as an issue is identified in education, health and care
- Reducing waiting times to access support

There are differences in what the two groups tell us; whilst professionals suggest that services work well together, the parents experience is not as positive. There are also differences of opinion about how easy it is to access information.

When we asked the children and young people, they told us the most important things to them were being safe, having friends and being healthy. The older children also highlighted the importance of their education.

When we asked what could be better for children and young people, they told us to focus on getting them the help they need quickly and better joint working between the adults who support them. The older children also asked us to focus on getting all schools to offer the same opportunities to all pupils.

Where our children and young people attend special schools, they saw being given the same opportunities as everyone else as being important.

Our children and young people's views are not dissimilar to that of their parents or the professionals that work with them. It is notable that they too feel the way in which adults work together could still be improved.

We have used what these groups have told us to help us devise our key actions, priorities and indicators.



# What do we intend to do?

In North Tyneside we define our passion as making North Tyneside an even greater place for our children and young people to thrive; where all, including those who are vulnerable, disadvantaged or disabled are able to have the best possible life.

Enabling young people with SEND to have a gloriously ordinary life, fits with the vision of North Tyneside to be a great place to thrive and the pledges we have made to our families that:

- We will intervene early with evidence-based, family focused services
- We will work in partnership to keep children in school
- We will keep children and young people safe at home, healthy and connected to their local communities

We are clear in our purpose for all children and young people. This is no different for those with additional needs.

By aiming for a 'gloriously ordinary life' we mean to ensure our children and young people are supported to be safe, healthy, happy, have opportunities and a voice.

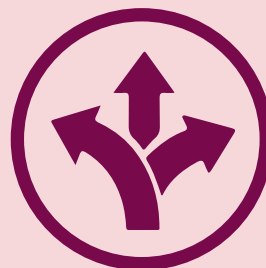
To achieve this, we need to consider specifically the barriers for our children and young people with additional needs in having a voice, being able to participate fully, being part of their community and accessing the support they need when they need it. These are key to enable all of our children and young people to live gloriously ordinary lives.



**I AM  
SAFE**



**I AM  
HEALTHY**



**I HAVE  
OPPORTUNITIES**



**I HAVE  
A VOICE**



**I AM  
HAPPY**



We know that our children and young people may face additional barriers and we need to reflect those in our approaches. Achieving a gloriously ordinary life is, therefore, about enabling, empowering and supporting young people with SEND to:

- Develop the skills and confidence they need to participate as independently as possible and to move successfully through their education and into adult life. **(Participation)**
- Become and remain active citizens; living in, participating in and contributing to their local communities. **(Community)**
- Access whatever level of support they might need to keep themselves safe and healthy, to know what support services are available and how to access them to maintain or achieve good health, well-being and safety. **(Support)**
- Be heard in decision making and planning. **(Voice)**

If we are successful, then we will see:

- Our children and young people with SEND are participating in society, including having friends and supportive relationships, and participating in, and contributing to the community.
- Children, young people and their families with access to the education, health and care support they need when they need it.
- Our children and young people able to live healthy, happy and safe lives in their chosen community.
- All our children and young people with choice and control over their lives and the means by which to communicate.



# How will we achieve our ambition?

We have listened to children, young people, their families and the people who work with them to establish what we need to address to achieve a gloriously ordinary life. This has helped us to identify the areas which we intend to focus on over the next four years. In brief these areas are:

- Ensuring that our annual reviews of Education, Health and Care plans are more effective in identifying the needs and provision for our children and young people. These regularly reviewed plans need to be timelier and focus more on the voice and ambitions of the children and young people.
- Whilst we know that the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training remains low, we want to ensure this continues to improve by enhancing vocational opportunities through participation in volunteering opportunities; work tasters, work experience; supported internships; apprenticeships; job coaching; and paid employment. We also want to increase the range of local opportunities for our young people to remain in borough whilst in education.
- Children, young people and their families tell us that we should look for participation opportunities where engagement and opportunities are enhanced for children and young people.
- Supporting all schools to offer an enhanced and consistent educational offer for children and young people with additional needs. Parents and professionals are clear that they see inconsistency in the provision in different schools. We need to understand this more clearly and, where needed, look to support and challenge this.
- Where provision is not matched to need, or available when it is needed, we should look to reposition resource. This also means we need to use the information we have more effectively to support us in planning for the needs of our community.
- Recognising that early intervention can often lead to the best outcomes for children, young people and their families, finding more and improved ways of getting help to them at the earliest possible opportunities.
- Families tell us about their experiences of being a fight and that the systems don't work well together. As a result, they have to share their stories repeatedly. We should aim for families to truly 'tell us once' and at the same time improve their perception of how well services work together.

These areas cross over and help us address the four aspects we have identified as being part of achieving gloriously ordinary lives. This is mapped out on the next page.

**Participation:** Develop the skills and confidence they need to participate as independently as possible and to move successfully through their education and into adult life.

**Community:** Become and remain active citizens; living and participating in their local communities and making a positive contribution to the development and improvement of them.

**Support:** Access whatever level of support they might need to keep themselves safe and healthy and know what services are available to support them and how to access what they need to maintain or achieve good health, well-being and safety.

**Voice:** Children and young people are heard in decision making and planning.

## Key areas of focus

Ensuring that our annual reviews of Education, Health and Care plans are more effective in identifying the needs and provision for our children and young people. These regularly reviewed plans need to be timelier and focus more on the voice and ambitions of the children and young people.

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Whilst we know that the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training remains low, we want to ensure this continues to improve by enhancing vocational opportunities through participation in volunteering opportunities; work tasters, work experience; supported internships; apprenticeships; job coaching; and paid employment. We also want to increase the range of local opportunities for our young people to remain in borough whilst in education.

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Children, young people and their families tell us that we should look to increase opportunities for participation. Where engagement and opportunities exist, they can be enhanced for children and young people with additional needs.

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Supporting all schools to offer an enhanced and consistent educational offer for children and young people with additional needs. Parents and professionals are clear that they see inconsistency in the provision in different schools. We need to understand this more clearly and, where needed, look to support and challenge this.

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Where provision is not matched to need or available when it is needed, we should look to reposition resource. This also means we need to use the information we have more effectively to support us in planning for the needs of our community. This will help us be more dynamic in our use of resources.

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Recognising that early intervention can often lead to the best outcomes for children, young people and their families, finding more and improved ways of getting help to them at the earliest possible opportunities.

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Families tell us about their experiences of being a fight and that the systems don't work well together. As a result, they have to share their stories repeatedly. We should aim for families to truly 'tell us once' and at the same time improve their perception of how well services work together.

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The remaining pages of this document summarise how we will evidence success in addressing our areas of focus. Each key area will have its own action plan, lead and work streams that will be identified through the SEND Strategic Board. The action plans will be reviewed on a quarterly basis and progress will be published on an annual basis, demonstrating the impact we are having and how we are supporting our children and young people to lead a gloriously ordinary life.

The success of this strategy will be understood by indicators that will be reviewed and monitored by the SEND Strategic Board and links to the Children and Young People's plan, that reports to the Children and Young People's Partnership Board.

Key area of focus 1	How will we know if we have been successful?
Ensuring that our annual reviews of Education, Health and Care Plans are more effective in identifying the needs and provision for our children and young people. These regularly reviewed plans need to be timelier and focus more on the voice and ambitions of the children and young people.	Timeliness for annual reviews will improve and we will be able to ensure more annual reviews are completed in line with expectations.
	There is a greater focus on preparing for adulthood in Education, Health and Care Plans by the time young people are 14 and this is demonstrated through our audits of plans and from feedback from partners.
	All plans contain the voice the child or young person and this is demonstrated through quality assurance procedures.
	All children and young people are actively engaged with their plans and their participation is effectively captured.
	Quality of plans and content will be evidenced by outcomes of audits and by regular quality assurance.
	Transfers at key transition points are timely and in line with national expectations for the vast majority of children and young people.
Key area of focus 2	How will we know if we have been successful?
Whilst we know that the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training remains low, we want to ensure this continues to improve by enhancing vocational opportunities through participation in volunteering opportunities; work tasters, work experience; supported internships; apprenticeships; job coaching; and paid employment. We also want to increase the range of local opportunities for our young people to remain in borough whilst in education.	The post 16 offer is enhanced and developed in line with the needs of the community so that pathways in education are clear and linked to the aspiration and interests of our young people.
	Participation opportunities and engagement are enhanced for children and young people with, for example, enhanced vocational opportunities through participation in volunteering opportunities; work tasters; work experience; supported internships; apprenticeships; job coaching; and paid employment. This will include working with increased numbers of businesses and charities.
	Developing what's available in the local community to support children and young people with SEND so they have the same opportunities as those without additional needs.
	Proportion of young people, with EHCPs, educated outside of North Tyneside decreases or we are assured that this is a positive choice on their part.

### Key area of focus 3

### How will we know if we have been successful?

Children, young people and their families tell us that we should look to increase opportunities for participation. Where engagement and opportunities exist, they can be enhanced for children and young people with additional needs.

Developing what's available in the local community to support children and young people with SEND so they have the same opportunities as those without additional needs. We understand this through regular gathering of feedback.

Work with local leisure facilities so that they are more able to identify and offer increased participation opportunities identifying for example, named SEND champions in facilities and offering training to staff.

A menu of leisure opportunities is curated, enhanced and updated so that what is available is clear and accessible through the Local Offer.

A menu of participation and engagement opportunities is curated, enhanced and updated so that what is available is clear and accessible through the Local Offer.

### Key area of focus 4

### How will we know if we have been successful?

Supporting all schools to offer an enhanced and consistent educational offer for children and young people with additional needs. Parents and professionals are clear that they see inconsistency in the provision in different schools. We need to understand this more clearly and, where needed, look to support and challenge this.

Increasingly children and young people are educated within their appropriate community school of choice.

We want to ensure where young people are accessing provision outside of the borough that this is a positive choice and if not, we look to enhance or develop the local offer.

There is a consistent graduated approach to education in North Tyneside that is shared by all of our schools and settings so that families can recognise more similarities between schools and that we are offering the best practice.

The local education offer is matched to need and reviewed so that the families are clear about what is on offer and how it supports the aspirations of their young person.

Clear published pathways and routes through local education provision is available for all our learners.

Rates of attendance and exclusion continue to compare well to national figures.

Where it is in line with their needs and aspirations more of our children and young people are educated in mainstream provision.

Proportions of children and young people with identified SEND are more in line with the national picture and statistical neighbours.

Key area of focus 5	How will we know if we have been successful?
<p>Where provision is not matched to need or available when it is needed, we should look to reposition resource. This also means we need to use the information we have more effectively to support us in planning for the needs of our community. This will help us be more dynamic in our use of resources.</p>	<p>Waiting times for key services reduced and support is increasingly available at the point of need.</p>
	<p>An enhanced menu of pre-diagnosis and post-diagnosis support is available for children, young people and their families.</p>
	<p>We will have reviewed and, where needed, enhanced the short break offer.</p>
	<p>We will have reviewed and, where needed, enhanced the independent travel training offer.</p>
	<p>The numbers of young people accessing their annual health checks will increase.</p>
	<p>More effective place and sufficiency planning allow us to use our resources more effectively and this follows a clear, published, annual calendar of events that ensures we have the capacity to meet the needs of our SEND community.</p>
	<p>We will ensure our services are reviewed regularly and action taken where it needs to adapt to meet the needs within our community.</p>
	<p>Our Local Offer is clear, enhanced, easily accessible and well used by families and the people who work with them.</p>



## Key area of focus 6

## How will we know if we have been successful?

Recognising that early intervention can often lead to the best outcomes for children, young people and their families, finding more and improved ways of getting help to them at the earliest possible opportunities.

An early intervention cross-service model is developed, embedded and reviewed over time.

Access to support is clear and families tell us they are accessing the help they need when they need it.

The cross-service model will feature an integrated, graduated approach. This will clearly identify, and signpost all available resource at a universal, targeted and specialist level. Families and partners will be able to navigate systems and get the support they need, when they need, more easily. We will routinely gather information about the experience of families and partners to ensure its effectiveness.

## Key area of focus 7

## How will we know if we have been successful?

Families tell us about their experiences of being a fight and that the systems don't work well together and as a result they have to share their stories repeatedly. We should aim for families to truly 'tell us once' and at the same time improve their perception of how well services work together.

We can share information more effectively between services so that where children, young people and their families are being supported by several services, and where permission is given, the services are aware of each other's work and strive to complement this.

Improve attendance at meetings from partners specifically at key transfer points or potential changes to provision. Where attendance is not possible increase the frequency of reports and information sharing to help in decision making.

We are more systematic in gathering feedback about what is working well for families and what should improve.

We will be clear on access and referral routes to support that is available for families in relation to all the services we offer across education, health and care.





North Tyneside Council

Northumbria Healthcare **NHS**  
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North Tyneside Parent Carer Forum cic

**NHS**  
**North Tyneside**  
Clinical Commissioning Group

