

Southwark Council

Special Educational Needs and Disability(SEND): Education
Provision Strategy

2018-2021

Appendix 1:

Update of Special Provision Capital Fund (SPCF) in line with DfE guidance: High Needs Provision Capital Allocations Guidance April 2021

Southwark has many reasons to be proud of the quality of its services and the educational outcomes for children and young people with SEND. There is excellent provision for these children and young people within our special, mainstream schools and early years' settings.

At the time of writing, provision and outcomes for pupils with SEND in Southwark are excellent:

- Five out of the nine Special schools inspected by OFSTED are judged 'Outstanding'; all the others are good.
- At the end of the summer term 2019 (most recent published results) the achievement of pupils identified as 'SEN support' in Southwark mainstream schools was in the top 25% of local authorities in the country in the End of Key Stage assessments at age 6 and 11, at GCSE and Post – 16.

We recognise that only by continuing to work collaboratively with all Southwark stakeholders: parents, pupils and providers, can we maintain and build upon these high standards. We also fully appreciate that there is a need to keep pace with demand, to share best practice and improve the quality of provision further.

The Council Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND): Education Provision Strategy 2018-2021 committed to:

- Put children and young people with SEND and their families at the centre of all that we do (the golden thread).
- Offer more opportunities for children and young people with Complex Learning Needs including Autism.
- Provide timely high quality help and provision for babies and young children with complex needs in all early years' settings - nurseries and childminders.
- Develop greater confidence skills and competencies in mainstream schools to meet the needs of children and young people with

SEND.

- Build a model of further educational which enables more young people with SEND to learn and grow to adulthood in Southwark.

Our aim is to have a well-planned continuum of provision from birth to age 25. It means a strong commitment to early intervention, assessment, planning and support throughout the partnership of Children's and Adults Services across education, health, care, and the voluntary and community services. We expect all of our early years' settings; mainstream and special schools, as well as post 16 settings to be effective in ensuring children and young people with SEND make good progress in their learning and in their personal and social development, so they can transfer successfully to the next stage of their education or the world of employment and lead an independent adult life wherever possible.

Increased Capacity: and the impact of the strategy to date

Since 2018, there has been an increase in spaces in local special schools, further development of inclusive provision in mainstream schools and an overall growth of local capacity:

- Cherry Gardens primary school (SLD/PM LD) has now relocated to its new site in the heart of the borough. Places have increased to 80 and will rise further next year to 85. This represents a 45% increase in places for some of Southwark's most complex primary age pupils.
- Spa Camberwell (5-16 ASD) currently has 42 pupils on roll; numbers will rise to 67 in September 2021.
- Beormund primary school (SEMH) will move to its new central site in Peckham in 2022. It will have 15 additional places – roll rising to 50 - and will develop strong links with local primary schools and local authority services to reduce exclusions, develop inclusive provision and support for families in the local area.
- A secondary age resource base for students with ASD will open at the Charter School East Dulwich in September 2022 with between 4-6 places growing to 20 places.
- There are currently 26 SEND/inclusion expansion or repurposing projects completed or in progress in mainstream schools and colleges in the borough.
- Partnership developing between the Grove nursery and Spa Camberwell special school.
- SEND provision further developed in LA maintained nursery schools -including provision for hearing-impaired schoolchildren at the Nell Gwynn/Anne Bernardt federation.
- The Park College now provides vocational provision for 16+ students with complex autism.
- Southwark continues to return pupils from out-of- borough placements to places in schools in borough. 30 pupils returned in September 2020 and a similar number should return for September 2021.
- The newly formed PCC, Southwark independent Voice, is now operational and working in partnership with the LA on a number of projects.

To ensure the targeting of resources to meet local needs and maintain the continued involvement of local providers in the strategy the local authority has supported bids for capital projects in local schools and colleges to meet the needs of identified cohorts of pupils with SEND in line with borough trends and schools own development and accessibility planning. To publish impact assessments of all projects funded from SPCF two years after completion to establish/share initial positive outcomes for school communities.

We will continue to work with local providers in this way to ensure that local services are responsive and will meet the needs of children and families.

2021 onwards: a coordinated approach

In planning any capital projects, the DfE expect that local authorities will think strategically and consider economies of scale or efficiencies that may be achieved through, for example, combining HNPCA projects with condition works or other expansion schemes. Southwark has always done this as exemplified by the projects at Cherry Gardens and Beormund above.

The timing of this update provides the opportunity for Southwark to set SPCF in a broader strategic context.

Local and national contexts and strategic developments

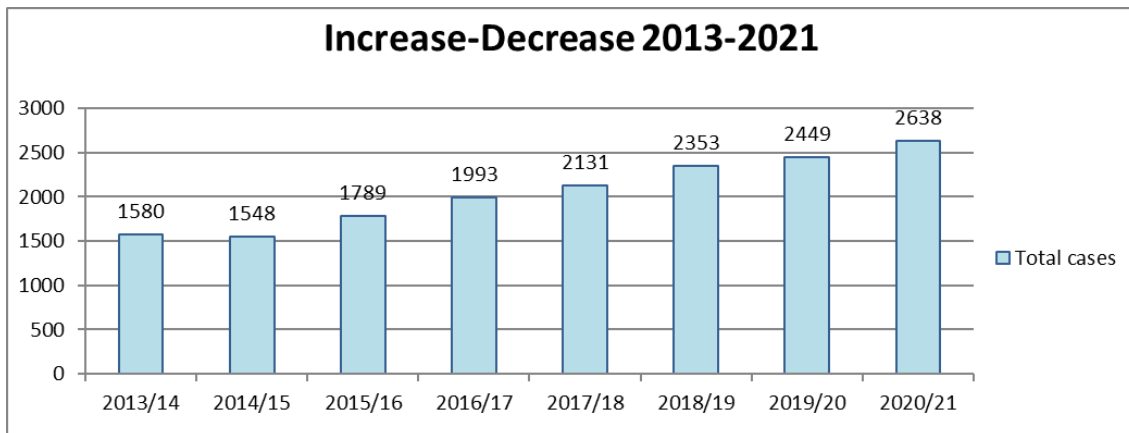
Covid 19

2019/20 and 2020/21 have been extremely challenging years for children and families with SEND across the country - Southwark has been no exception. The Covid - 19 pandemic has had a significant impact on how families access all local services including education. Schools have been on the frontline in providing advice and practical support to some of the most vulnerable families in our community. Covid 19 mitigation measures have dictated new ways of working. Planning for SEN capital developments has not been prioritised in schools.

In implementing the rolling back of practices developed during the pandemic, schools will be assessing the SEN needs of their pupils and the emergence of any new trends identified in the post pandemic landscape. The planned capital developments must take account of these developments and uncertainties.

The continuing growth in demand for specialist SEND provision

The number of children and young people with statements and EHCPs, for whom we are providing additional, different or specialised provision, has continued to rise since the strategy was first adopted in 2018. The rate of growth in EHCPs has increased. In the autumn term 2020, there were 2471 young people with EHCPs this is an increase of 66% since 2014.



This places pressures on local provisions that need to be addressed if Southwark families are to have continued access to high quality local services that meet the needs of all Southwark children.

- **Demand for special school places:** as detailed above Southwark has expanded local provision in special schools for pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties, Severe Learning Difficulties (PMLD/SLD) and for pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). More places for pupils with Social Emotional and Mental Health Needs will be available by 2023/24. Increased demand for these places may result in pupils being placed outside Southwark.
- **Demand for out-of-borough places;** when pupils are placed outside the borough it can put additional pressures on them and their families as tiring and stressful travel prolongs the school day. It can be harder to maintain effective communication skills further away from the family home. Also, the cost of transport and higher placement costs from a fixed High Needs Block reduce funds available to spend on local provision and pupils in Southwark schools both mainstream and special.

If the SPCF is targeted and strategically used it will contribute to meeting the needs of increasing numbers of pupils with EHC plans in the borough

High Needs Management Planning

SEND funding pressures have been part of the national picture for some time. High needs funding from central government has not risen in line with the increasing costs of making SEN provision at a local level. Most Local Authorities across the country now have a deficit in the High Needs Block - the element of the Delegated Schools Grant (DSG) that funds SEND. The financial problems in the Southwark High Needs Block started to emerge in 2017. In 2018 the council produced its high needs deficit recovery plan, showing how it would ensure costs did not escalate any further. Containing costs and balancing the budget in-year was the first stage of a longer-term plan. The plan has reduced the in-year deficit last year by two-thirds and High Needs spending will be balanced this year (2020/21).

The financial challenges remain and necessitate a fundamental re-think of how services are provided to ensure the very best outcomes for children and young people while providing the best possible use of resources whilst the incidence of special needs continues to rise. The re-thinking of services incorporates the main areas of growth over the past few years, 16 to 25 year olds and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). In addition, we need to consider the LA position on exclusions and how the work of inclusive schools provides better outcomes for children. Working with the Schools Forum the Local Authority have now plans in place to holistically change the delivery of service to not only future proof the high needs blocks from growth but to allow the school block transfer to be returned to schools.

The re-design of services is not a short-term strategy with quick wins but needs upfront investment to ensure the benefits are delivered along with new and expanded provision for SEND. The SPCF can contribute to this investment.

Falling Rolls

Pupil falling rolls is a serious issue for schools across London. A gradual fall in children entering reception was confirmed in 2018 as a trend.

Contributing factors include; a fall in birth rate, the uncertainty brought about by Brexit causing some families to leave the UK, and more recently, the global pandemic demonstrating to more families how they can work in London while living further afield. This is intertwined with the increasing lack of affordability of housing in the private sector, particularly in central London.

School funding is driven by pupil numbers, the more pupils a school has on roll, the more funding it receives. Unused or vacant school places create an immediate cost for schools through reduced budgets, which in turn can affect the overall sustainability and quality of education standards at the school.

Southwark Council has already been to the schools adjudicator to bring down pupil admission numbers for a number of primary schools to help manage the fall in rolls.

Any capacity rendered available by school reorganisations may lead to opportunities for re-purposing existing education buildings to make provision for pupils with SEN or other vulnerable groups.

The council is working with all schools to agree a collaborative and strategic approach to be rolled-out in the autumn term 2021/22 that aims to maintain high quality and standards we have come to expect in Southwark.

Current and ongoing strategic planning strands

Review and development of pathways for pupils with ASD

The opening of Spa Camberwell 'all through' (Year 1 - Year 11) school is a significant expansion in local capacity to meet the needs of young people with ASD and their families.

ASD is the highest incidence special educational need in Southwark and there are now four local ASD designated provisions:

- Spa Bermondsey (11 – 19)
- Spa Camberwell (5 -16)
- Haymerle special primary school (4 – 11) and
- The Park College (16+)

Additionally there are four primary ASD resource bases, one planned secondary ASD resource base; between 30% to 50% (by setting) of the pupils attending other special provisions in Southwark have diagnoses of ASD and there are young people with diagnoses of ASD, with and without EHC plans, in all schools in Southwark.

The review of the provision made for ASD in all settings will take place in the spring/summer terms of 2021 to talk to practitioners, school leaders, parents and young people to establish clear pathways for learners as they grow and develop related to their needs, preferences of parents and their capacity of settings.

The review will establish:

- Greater clarity about the local offer and where each provider fits into the overall system
- Greater understanding of existing gaps and what can be done to address these
- A clearer continuum of provision to meet the continuum of need
- Positive opportunities for all pupils with ASD and their families which ensure that needs are met

- Increased confidence for parents/carers and young people themselves that local provision is high quality and can meet their needs

Beormund development group (SEMH):

A planning group comprising senior LA officers and leaders from Beormund School was established in December 2020 to support the schools expansion, development and relocation.

This group will work together to consider all aspects of the new school (including the building) required to deliver a curriculum that enables primary pupils with social emotional and mental health needs to access mainstream education whenever possible. Consideration is also being given to providing opportunities to build capacity in other schools to make effective provision to meet the needs of young people with SEMH needs and support their families.

Southwark Early Years and Foundation Stage strategy

In 2018, the Joint local area SEND inspection in Southwark identified ‘the need to remove inconsistencies in identification of SEN and/or disabilities in the early years’. SPCF has been allocated to make provision for pupils with more complex SEND in four out of the five Maintained Nursery Schools in the borough (including hearing-impaired provision at Nell Gwyn nursery school). Some parents of children with complex SEND do experience difficulties in accessing good EYFS/nursery provision for their children. Southwark’s maintained nursery schools do have the highest proportion of complex needs Early Years learners. However, all Early Years settings, including private and independent nurseries have children with SEND attending.

To address inconsistencies in provision and assessment of SEND Southwark will publish an overarching Early Years and Foundation stage Strategy in the autumn term 2021/22

Developing pathways to adult life (16 -25)

Key aim – to improve the life outcomes for young adults with SEND by ensuring they are supported to develop the skills which will enable them to live their adult lives as independently as possible.

This will be achieved by: -

- Improving working together across education, social care and health; ensuring that young people have comprehensive and progressive plans.
- More locally accessible and integrated services.
- Reducing the number of young people who remain in education without clear outcomes for independence.
- Better realise the range of available opportunities (e.g. supported internships, apprenticeships and training)
- Increasing the number of young people with SEND successfully supported into work or independent living.

National SEND Review (Central Government)

DFE guidance (April 2021) states: ‘When developing their strategic plans local authorities should also consider any future recommendations that may be made by the department’s forthcoming SEND Review, when this becomes available’.

Next steps: the Southwark SEND strategy including SPCF

The Council is committed to achieve the best provision and value for money for Southwark children and families and to do this it is essential to integrate the SPCF into the Local Authority's response to the demographic, financial and educational contexts as part of the developing strategies above.

In the September term of 2021 /2022, Southwark will adopt an overarching SEND strategy, which will continue to work towards the commitments of the first SPCF (Southwark SEND Education Provision Strategy 2018-21)

- Put children and young people with SEND and their families at the centre of all that we do (the golden thread).
- Offer more opportunities for children and young people with Complex Learning Needs including Autism.
- Provide timely high quality help and provision for babies and young children with complex needs in all early years' settings - nurseries and childminders.
- Develop greater confidence skills and competencies in mainstream schools to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.
- Build a model of further educational which enables more young people with SEND to learn and grow to adulthood in Southwark the strategy will also include a new priority:
- Working in partnership with health and social care

The SEND strategy will be drafted to consider the recommendations of the National SEND review now due to be published in the autumn term 2020/21.

Local Authorities have the flexibility to carry funding over into subsequent financial years in order to make the best decisions for their local area. The remaining capital from the 2019/21 SPCF has been allocated against the strategies described above.

