

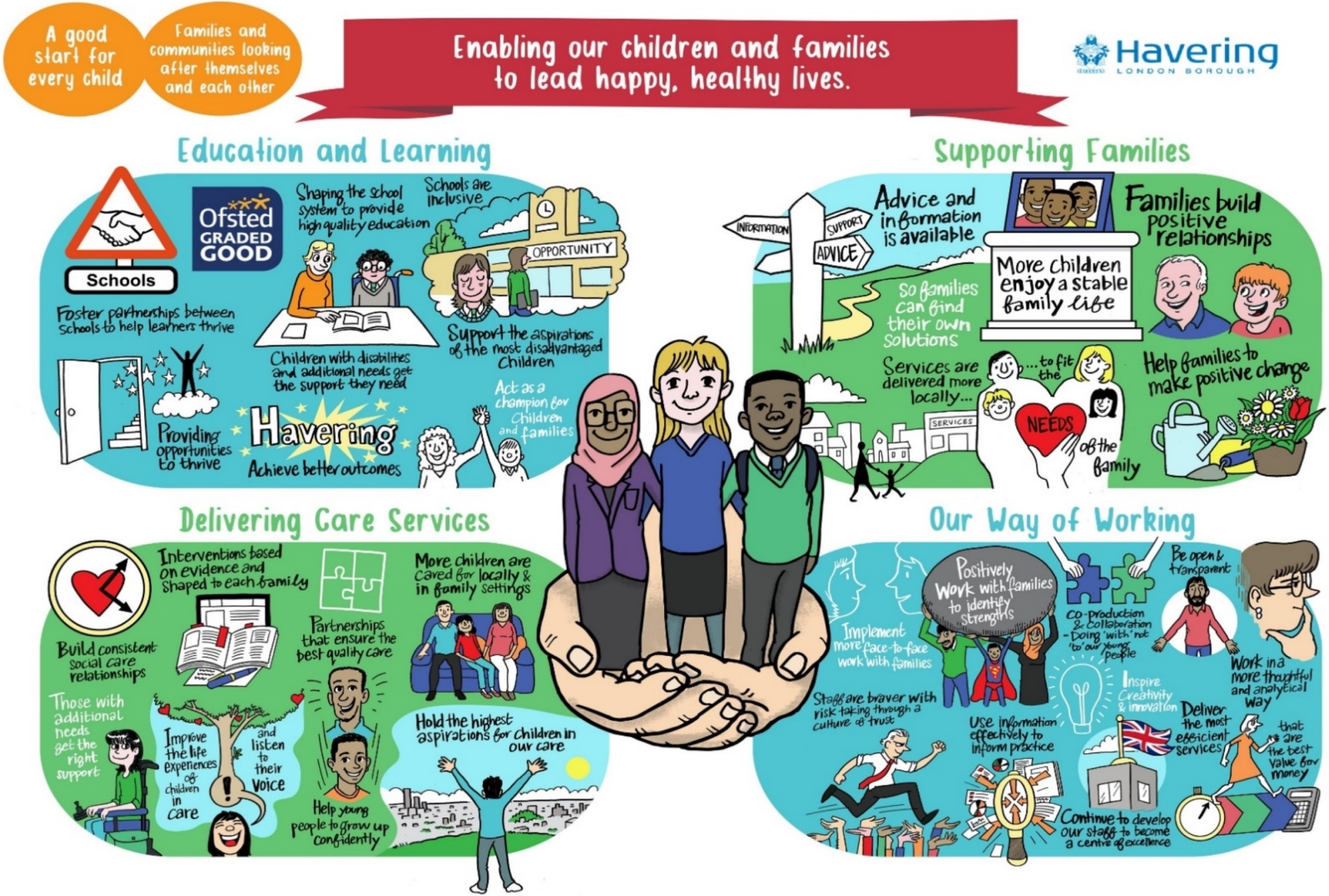
Special Educational Needs, Disability (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Strategy

2024 – 2028

Working together for better SEND and AP outcomes in the London Borough of Havering



Created in 2023 and refreshed in early 2024, Havering Council developed its vision and plan for the borough: [‘The Havering you want to be part of’](#). This vision sat alongside a new way of delivering services to meet ever changing need based on a structure of ‘People, Places and Resources’. Our new SEND and AP Strategy sits within this wider vision for Havering’s residents, and its vision for children and families.



Foreword

Havering Council, the North East London Integrated Care Board (ICB), and Havering SEND Family Voice are pleased to present this SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy.



Tara Geere
Director of Starting Well (Director for Children's Services), London Borough of Havering



Luke Burton
Joint Director of Partnerships, Impact and Delivery, North East London Integrated Care Board



Councillor Oscar Ford
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, London Borough of Havering



Havering SEND Family Voice
The Steering Committee of Havering's SEND Parent Carer Forum



Trevor Cook
Assistant Director of Education Services, London Borough of Havering

Havering is committed to its partnership with families to improve outcomes for all children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), along with those accessing Alternative Provision (AP).

We know there are things that we are doing well, there are also many areas that need improving.

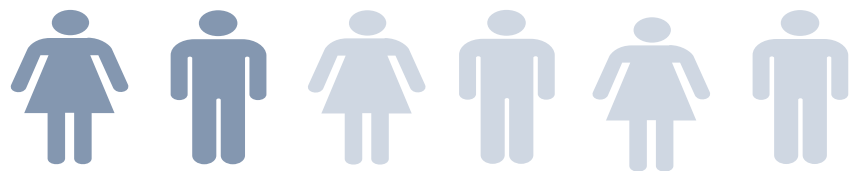
As such we are pleased to share with you our renewed SEND and AP Strategy, developed with our elected members, parents and carers, the Council's education and social care services, the Integrated Care Board and local NHS partners, and others.

This strategy sets out an ambitious programme for the next five years to improve the lives of Havering families with SEND, organised around six priorities which together represent our vision for Havering's SEND and AP system.

Our six priorities were generated through feedback from Havering families, as well as those working in Havering's schools, colleges, and nurseries, the voluntary sector, and in local education, health, and social care teams. We are committed to ensuring we continue to listen and work with, as well as for, our Havering SEND community. In doing so we will realise one of our six priorities: a SEND and AP system which places children and young people with SEND and their families at its heart.

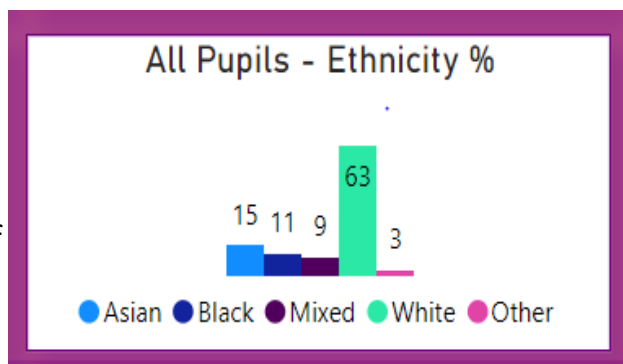
Context – Children, Young People, and Education in Havering (2024)

1 in 4 people living in Havering are aged between 0 and 19



Between 2011 and 2021, Havering saw a **15.2% growth in population of 0-17 year olds**, this compares to increases of 4.8% in London and 3.9% in England. During this period It has seen some of the highest growth in the number of children aged 0-9 in the country (24.3%).

The majority of our children are White British/White Other however the proportion of children from Global Majority Ethnicities has increased in the last decade.



Source: 2024, LIA Dashboard



The number of households with dependent children (i.e., families) in Havering has increased in the last decade by 28%.

Havering is the 3rd largest London borough

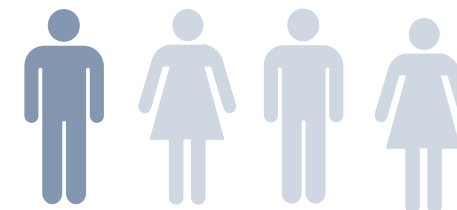


98% of our schools are Ofsted rated Good or Outstanding.



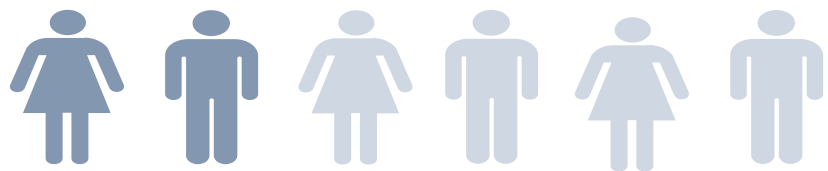
In 2023/24 **8,505 (19.8%)** children are eligible for Free School Meals on the basis of household income.

25.6% of children under 16 live in absolute low income or relative low income families

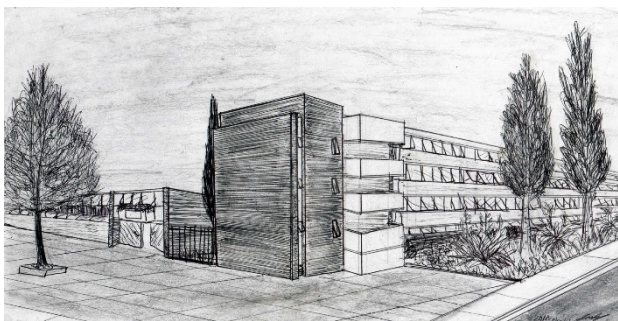


In 2023/24 **25.6%** of our children have a first language other than English.

Context – Children and Young People with SEND and/or accessing Alternative Provision in Havering (2024)



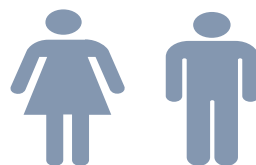
In 2023/ 24, **4.4%** of Havering's children and young people had an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) compared to the national average of 4.8%. A further **9.9%** of Havering's children and young people receive SEN Support, lower than the 13.6% national average.



Compared to elsewhere in the country, the attainment of Havering children and young people with SEND is strong at the end of secondary school (KS4), and less strong in the early years and in primary school.



The number of Havering children and young people with **EHCPs has risen by 53%** between 2020 and 2024. The biggest growth has been seen among those whose main area of need is communication and interaction, including autism, and social, emotional and mental health needs.



More children with EHCPs are **boys (70.4%) than girls (29.6%)**, although this gender gap is smaller in Havering than the national average.



Havering performs well in terms of the number young people aged 16 or over who have SEND in Education, Employment or Training.

AP

2022-23 saw **731** referrals for Alternative Provision, up from 650 in 2021-22. Around **40%** of these referrals were for pupils with SEND.

Our vision

By working with children and young people with SEND, their families, and those whose role is to support them, we have established a share vision for a SEND and AP system...

...where every school and setting is confident, skilled, and enabled to effectively support our children with SEND



...that has a wide range of SEND and AP settings and services providing community members the help and support they need



...which makes sense, which families can navigate, and which places families at its heart



...where children and young people with SEND and those accessing AP are valued, visible, and prepared for adulthood



...where leaders work together effectively to deliver what is needed for our children with SEND and those accessing AP



...where education, health, and social care teams do what matters well and in a timely way



How was this strategy developed?

This strategy is our 'roadmap' to a SEND and Alternative Provision system that realises the vision set out on the previous page. This vision, and the improvements listed on the next six pages, were developed through a wide range of listening and engagement activities completed over the last two years. They include surveys, workshops, and focus groups. The vision and improvements were also informed by regular discussions with our SEND Parent Carer Forum, *Havering SEND Family Voice*, and others from across education, health, and social care services, as well as third sector / voluntary organisations, who collectively make up the local area SEND partnership.

Before creating this strategy, what we learned through our listening and engagement activities was used to create the *London Borough of Havering's Local Area Partnership Special Educational Needs, Disability and Alternative Provision Self Evaluation*, which can be read [here](#). The Self Evaluation is intended to provide an overview of what the partnership is doing well and what it needs to do better, in terms of delivering in all areas that matter for positive outcomes for children and young people with SEND and accessing Alternative Provision.



Priority 1: Participation & Communication *A SEND and AP system which makes sense, which families can navigate, and which places families at its heart*

We will...

- Embed a culture of participation, communication, and engagement at every level of the SEND and AP system, ensuring children and young people with SEND and their families are equal partners in the design, delivery, and implementation of improvements to the support and services available in Havering, as well as discussions about their own support.
- Co-produce with children and families a 'SEND Working Together Charter', or equivalent. All those working with children and young people with SEND and their families will understand how the charter principles will help ensure families' experiences of the SEND system are respectful and supportive.
- Work with children and young people with SEND, their families, and professionals, to agree what it is we want to ensure all our children and young people with SEND have and achieve so they have the best quality of life they can. This will be captured in the area's SEND Outcomes Framework produced in collaboration with the Council for Disabled Children. This framework will be used to guide decision making on SEND and evaluate how well the local SEND system is delivering these outcomes for Havering children and young people.
- Redesign and vastly improve the quality of our SEND Local Offer as part of a wider range of initiatives to strengthen listening and engagement in Havering's SEND and AP system. The SEND Local Offer will provide an up-to-date, accessible online directory of information, guidance, and services to support children and young people with SEND and their families. Similar work will be undertaken to increase awareness of our Early Help offer, particularly services offered by the voluntary and community sector that are often used by families of children with SEND.
- Regularly provide information and feedback for families of children and young people with SEND through a regular SEND newsletter, more opportunities for Havering residents to 'have their say' on SEND, while continuing to build families' trust in the SEND and AP system through transparency and a 'you said, we did' approach.
- Make better use of social media as a means of engaging with our community on issues relating to SEND and AP.
- Explore use of the 'Joy' directory of services to improve access to services for Havering children and young people with SEND and their families, building on existing work to map and provide a directory of existing mental health support and services for children and young people in Havering.
- Establish a new SEND Young Advisors' Participation Coordinator role within Early Help. The purpose of this role is to strengthen channels through which children and young people with SEND inform the design and delivery of support and services in the area.
- Learn from effective initiatives within our health teams, notably CAMHS, to involve children and young people at all levels of service improvement activity, as well as align SEND-focused work on participation with Havering Council's Engagement Strategy and cutting-edge practice in the area of participation and engagement led by the North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT).
- Sustain the already strong completion rates for Havering's Youth Wellbeing Census, an annual survey to explore what Havering children tell us matters most for their wellbeing and how well the local area promotes their wellbeing and happiness. A clear link between the census findings for children with SEND and improvement action will be established.
- Health professionals, including those in CAMHS and providing therapies such as a Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy, will review the accessibility of reports and care plans, working towards more 'aspiration-led' and 'person-centred' reports that children and young people understand and feel focus on what matters most to them. Similarly, Children's Services including social care and education services will refresh and relaunch standards relating to care plans, focusing in particular on the involvement of children and young people in their own plans.
- Co-produce an 'easy-read' version of the SEND and AP Strategy that will be accessible to a wider audience including children and young people with SEND.

Priority 2: Inclusion

Every school and setting is confident, skilled, and enabled to effectively support our children with SEND

We will...

- Deliver enhanced support to preschools, nurseries, childminders, and to families where children are not attending a preschool setting through a stronger SEND Early Years Support Service. We will improve partnership working between education, health, and social care teams providing support in the early years, including through strengthening ties between social care's Early Help Service and local Health Visitors to ensure that families, as well as settings, are supported to help children with SEND with school readiness.
- Undertake a root and branch review to better understand the factors that explain the under-identification of children and young people needing SEN support and develop an action plan to improve this. This will include addressing higher absenteeism among children and young people with identified SEND, but without EHCPs.
- Complete a thematic review of SEND practice in Havering schools to identify what helps and hinders highly inclusive practice. This will guide how we refine and further develop our comprehensive package of SEND training, coaching, and support for schools.
- Develop a model of peer support for schools focused on SEND. This will enable school leaders to support and challenge one another, 'raising the bar' for inclusion in all schools.
- Embed new guidance, assessment, and intervention approaches to support children and young people with literacy difficulties.
- Offer every school and setting in Havering training, guidance, and support on developmental trauma and emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA), raising awareness that school attendance difficulties and exclusion disproportionately affects children and young people with SEND, including in Havering where exclusions of pupils with EHCPs are above the national average. Develop a shared understanding and common language across the Havering community on how we promote emotional wellbeing and notice, discuss, and support those needing emotional support.
- Further strengthen the offer for schools on supporting neurodivergent pupils through the launch of the Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) project and the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies for Children and Young People with Neurodivergent Conditions project.
- Expand training, workshops, and guidance for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND, based on what they tell us they need, aligning this support with approaches used in Havering's schools, settings, and services.
- Review SEND funding for schools and settings to find ways of making sure that where resources are needed for SEN support they are available in a timely way, free from unnecessary bureaucracy.
- Enhance training for school governors about SEND. This will help ensure inclusion is a priority for schools and that head teachers are supported and challenged on outcomes for pupils with SEND.
- Bring SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) processes and services into closer alignment, informed by the Department for Education's (DfE's) SEND and AP Improvement Plan. We will increase AP available in the area, particularly for primary pupils, and support schools to be confident commissioners and developers of AP.
- Reinvigorate our SEND Education Support Service by establishing new Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), Physical and Sensory (P&S), and Communication and Interaction (C&I) Advisory Teacher Teams who provide support in schools and colleges to develop staff knowledge and skills on SEND.
- Improve support for SEND among vulnerable groups, such as Children in Care, Children in Need, and those known to the Youth Justice Service, as well as those from global majority ethnic groups or those living in poverty. This will be achieved through strengthening collaboration between education, health, and social care teams, which includes the repositioning of Havering's Virtual School within the Council's Education Directorate.
- Identify key training needs among our school's Senior Mental Health Leads and support them with training and advice through our Havering Education Mental Health Leads Network.

Priority 3: Support, Services & Sufficiency

A wide range of SEND and AP settings and services providing community members the help and support they need

We will...

- Build a new 300-place all-through special school for pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties and associated communication, emotional, and sensory needs, opening September 2027.
- Continue to grow the number of specialist units attached to mainstream schools and colleges, with the aim of three new units being in development each year. We will also support schools and colleges to develop new types of specialist provision or alternative learning pathways.
- Maintain close collaboration between health and education services so that new specialist education provisions have the support they need from specialists, e.g., therapists, nurses.
- Develop SEND-specific programmes as part of an improved Early Help parenting offer, such as *Triple P* and *Time Out for Parents*.
- Undertake a system-wide review of support and services that promote positive mental wellbeing from early years through to adolescence, aligning this with the London-wide Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) transformation plan, but also looking beyond CAMHS at the role all services play in child and adolescent mental health.
- Have a dedicated workstream involving parents and carers, health professionals, and those working in education which co-produces an enhanced support offer for children and young people with sensory differences, whether sensory sensitivities or sensory-seeking behaviours.
- Act on the recommendations of a comprehensive review to strengthen complex nursing in education services that support children and young people with health needs in mainstream and special schools.
- Undertake a mapping exercise looking at existing therapy services and reprioritise these to better meet needs within the local area.
- Improve support for families whose children are awaiting a neurodevelopmental assessment, such as those exploring autism or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- Strengthen networks between third sector organisations (i.e., charities, community groups) and partners in health, education, and social care, in recognition of the vital and important work the third sector plays in support and information for families of children and young people with SEND.
- Continue to work with families to change and grow the Short Breaks offer within social care. We will increase the range of providers in the borough and simplify the process for families of children with SEND, including targeted improvements to remove financial or geographical barriers to families accessing Short Breaks.
- Deliver on commitments in the borough's Autism Strategy to expand locally available residential care and supported accommodation for children and young people with complex learning disabilities.
- Ensure that the strengthened induction processes and new mandatory rolling programme of bite-size training for social care staff includes a strong focus on SEND.
- Continue to develop our understanding of the mental health needs of our care experienced young people and develop a strong response to deliver what they tell us they need.

Priority 4: Community & Children and young people with SEND and accessing AP are valued, visible, and prepared Preparing for Adulthood for adulthood

We will...

- ❑ Work with the National Development Team for Inclusion to launch a new Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) Strategy bringing together the improvements outlined below. It will set out all aspects of how the local area partnership will support young people with SEND to achieve the best possible outcomes in adulthood focusing on employment, independence, good health, and friendships, relationships and community inclusion.
- ❑ Improve awareness and the quality of practice around the PfA agenda as part of annual review processes for children and young people with EHCPs, ensuring all children and young people with SEND, with and without an EHCP, are supported to plan for next steps and transitions in a timely way.
- ❑ Improve pathways for children and young people with SEND and accessing AP into employment, including through an increase in the number of supported internships available in the local area.
- ❑ Strengthen the Children With Disabilities Team in Social Care and its processes, including support and information for families of children at the point of transferring working with Children's Services to Adult Social Care.
- ❑ Create a dedicated working party whose focus is on improving community access for children and young people with SEND. This will act on feedback from children and young people with SEND, and their parents and carers, telling us that there is a need for a wider range of more accessible community activities open to children with SEND. This work also serves as a response to findings of Havering's Youth Wellbeing Census, where children with SEND told us they experience a weaker sense of belonging within their local area than their peers without SEND.
- ❑ Establish and increase access for young people to support as part of the Healthy Weight Management pathway, focusing in particular on access for children and young people with SEND.
- ❑ Make sure that the safeguarding of children and young people with SEND is everyone's business. This includes raising awareness of their additional vulnerability to abuse as part of wider initiatives including promoting the NSPCC's Talk PANTS campaign, safeguarding training and advice for those working in the partnership, volunteers, and parents and carers, as well as a focus on safety and independent living as part of the PfA agenda.



Priority 5: Leadership & Governance *Leaders work together effectively to deliver what is needed for our children with SEND and those accessing Alternative Provision*

We will...

- ❑ Revitalise our SEND governance arrangements as part of a wider review of governance prompted by the newly formed Integrated Care Board, Place-Based Partnership, and Starting Well Directorate. The new clarity this will bring in terms of decision-making, oversight, and operational responsibility will ensure delivery of the SEND and AP Strategy.
- ❑ Broaden formal representation of Havering's Parent Carer Forum (Havering SEND Family Voice) and of children and young people with SEND across all levels of the new governance arrangements.
- ❑ Embed a process for routinely gathering information to evaluate how well the partnership is delivering positive outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families using the partnership's new SEND Outcomes Framework. What we learn from this evaluation will inform commissioning, priorities, and other improvement activities.
- ❑ Improve how we analyse complaints and compliments about services within the SEND and AP partnership, as part of wider initiatives to increase opportunities for Havering families to have their say in the design and delivery of local SEND services and to see this feedback heard and acted upon (*you said, we did*).
- ❑ Increase the capacity for leadership on SEND within health and social care services by establishing the Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO) role and strengthening the role of the Designated Clinical Officer (DCO). These roles will improve strategic oversight and delivery of improvements for children and young people with SEND within health and social care.
- ❑ Improve joint commissioning arrangements for SEND between the Integrated Care Board (NHS) and Council services and ensure we work in partnership with families when making commissioning decisions. These new processes will be established as part of wider work that embeds the new Starting Well structure that brings together health services and the Council's Children's Services.
- ❑ Make improvements to processes, systems, and information sharing agreements in place to ensure they enable effective collaboration and information sharing across Council education and social care teams and local health services.
- ❑ Ensure leaders across the partnership have a secure understanding of what the partnership needs to do better and how it will improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND through its Havering SEND Needs Analysis. This will align with and inform the partnership's wider Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.



Priority 6: Performance *Education, health, and social care teams do what matters well and in a timely way*

We will...

- Maintain strong outcomes for Havering children and young people with SEND, most notably older pupils with EHCPs, while targeting underperforming groups. Children with SEND but without an EHCP as well as preschool children with SEND are those most clearly achieving less well in terms of their attainment compared to similar children in other areas of the country.
- Improve outcomes for children and young people through investment in the Council's SEND Assessment & Placement Service who oversee statutory SEND processes (i.e., EHCPs) to improve the timeliness and quality of Education, Health, and Care Needs Assessments (EHCNAs), Annual Reviews, as well as ensure stronger communication with families, schools and settings, and the timely resolution of appeals.
- Continue to grow our Educational Psychology Service (EPS) so that psychological advice informing EHCPs remains high quality and meets statutory deadlines in terms of timeliness, without compromising the highly-valued services the EPS provides to schools, settings, and the community, alongside its statutory responsibilities.
- Finalise a comprehensive piece of work to create and embed a Quality Assurance Framework for EHCPs and other SEND processes. Quality assurance will be a high priority with robust oversight from the partnership's leaders and a process that involves children and young people, families, and other stakeholders from across the partnership (i.e., schools, health, social care).
- Improve processes for assessing the quality of commissioned Alternative Provision and the impact it has on outcomes for children and young people, including successful reintegration into a long term educational setting. We will also review processes for the oversight of provision for particularly vulnerable children and young people with EHCPs. This includes Havering children and young people with SEND who are attending independent or non-Maintained special schools including residential schools outside of the borough, those who have a social worker, and those known to Youth Justice Services.
- Publish monthly reports on the Council's website of SEND performance captured on the partnership's SEND and AP Dashboard. This will include the timeliness of education, health and care needs assessments but will be expanded to capture a wider range of performance indicators relevant to the lives of children and young people with SEND, as well as providing performance measures organised by different groups (e.g., ethnicity, gender, children with social workers) to help identify potentially disadvantaged groups.
- Improve and maintain better performance data on wait times for neurodevelopmental assessments and other health assessments and treatments. This will be achieved through initiatives and investment including a new diagnostic pathway for autism assessments, as well as a Royal College of Psychiatrists-supported Quality Improvement Project for CAMHS.
- Maintain strong performance in terms of the take up of Annual Health Checks for children and young people with learning disabilities, as well as establish new Child Health Hubs, each with a Child Health Hub Coordinator working closely with GPs to ensure that care and treatment feels seamless for children and young people with SEND and their families.
- Improve the quality and consistency of recording on case management systems and review processes for ensuring timely, necessary, and proportionate information sharing across education, health, and social care in the best interests of children and young people with SEND and their families.
- Improve understanding and use of data within the SEND and AP system to enable intelligence-driven actions that support improved quality and outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- Maintain strong overall performance in terms of developmental checks for two to three year olds, while exploring ways to target areas of the borough where take up is lower.
- Undertake a review of wait times and associated processes for Early Help services including those regularly accessed by families with SEND, identifying improvements where necessary.
- Ensure better and more consistent recording of autism within adult and children's social care, a required improvement identified in the Council's Autism Strategy.
- Improve the timeliness of Short Breaks assessments and families' satisfaction with the ease and value of these processes through investment to grow our Children With Disabilities Teams within Social Care.

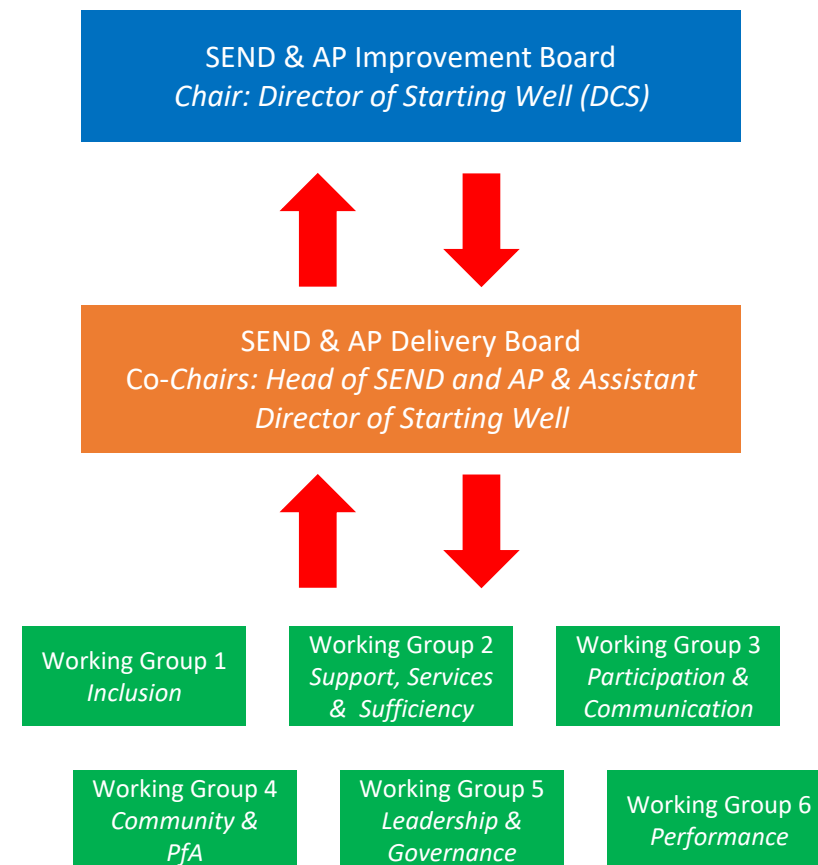
How will we ensure we deliver these improvements?

The area partnership is revitalising what's known as its governance arrangements. Put simply, governance is the way an organisation makes decisions and makes sure it is doing what it should be doing.

Our proposed new governance arrangements are presented here. The **SEND and AP Improvement Board** will be made up of local leaders within the SEND and AP System. It will be chaired by the Director for Starting Well, or a suitably experienced independent chair, and its role is to make decisions, remove barriers to change, hold people to account, and in turn, be held to account, for overall performance. Below that, the **SEND and AP Delivery Board**, co-chaired by the Council's Head of SEND and AP Services and the Assistant Director for Starting Well (ICB), has oversight of the operational delivery of SEND and AP services and the actions taken to improve the local SEND and AP system, as set out in this strategy. Finally, all of the actions taken to improve local SEND and AP services are designed and implemented through various **working groups**, each reflecting the six priorities taken from the strategy. These working groups can focus on more than one improvement at a time (e.g., improvements to the SEND Local Offer, or work to enhance the Early Help offer to families with children with SEND).



These SEND and AP governance arrangements sit within a wider governance structure, including a number of boards that have a primary focus on health outcomes and services but with a strong focus on SEND, and which sits at the top, Havering Council's Cabinet. For example, before reaching the Cabinet, this Strategy was considered by the Local Area's Health and Wellbeing Board and its Place-Based Partnership Board.

A healthy SEND and AP system ensures that the community it serves knows what it is doing, through regular updates on its improvement activity and information about the impact of this on outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND and accessing AP, and their families. One way this is achieved by ensuring that Havering families are represented at all levels of the governance structure, and so this is what we will do. We will also ensure that updates are published on our SEND Local Offer twice a year, showing what progress has been made and where there are challenges. It will also be achieved by the community being able to track the progress of actions included as part of this strategy by visiting the regularly updated SEND and AP 12 Month Action Plan, available [here](#).



How to get more information and get involved...

SEND / Local Offer

What is the Local Offer?	Give Feedback
 Young People	 Parents and Carers
Join the Disabled Children's Register	
Advice & Guidance	
What to do if your child has Special Edu...	Education, health and care plans - EHCP
CAD 0-5 Support Team (Children and Adult...	CAD 5-19 Support Team (Children and Adul...
Welcome to the Assessment and Placement ...	Keyworking service for children and youn...
Area SEND inspections: information for p...	Education Psychology Service
Short breaks	Report a concern about a child
Money matters	SEND Information and Advice Support Serv...
Transport	Other boroughs Local Offers
Havering's Accessibility Strategy	Equipment and Adaptations
Havering Schools with ARP's (additionall...	
What's On'?	You Said, We Did

To find out more more about special educational needs and disabilities service available in Havering please visit the [Local Offer | Havering Directory](#)



If you are a parent or carer who wants to support efforts to improve the lives of Havering children and young people with SEND, or keen to find out how you can join a Facebook Support Group, please visit [haveringsendfamilyvoice.org](https://www.haveringsendfamilyvoice.org)

If you have feedback on this document you would like to share click [here](#) or scan the QR Code [need to create this, so need a space to add this QR code]

Other plans relating to improving the lives of children and young people in Havering

PAGE TO BE UPDATED WITH HYPERLINKS TO OTHER RELEVANT HAVERING STRATEGIES...