



Lambeth

# Lambeth Local Area Strategy

Addressing the needs of all children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities

**2017-2020**





# Foreword

The purpose of this strategy is to set out our shared vision, principles and priorities to ensure partners are working together effectively to identify and meet the needs of Lambeth's children and young people with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities (SEND) from birth to the age of 25. The strategy aims to meet the requirements of the Children and Families Act in a way that is ambitious, inclusive and realistic in the challenging financial context.

Our strategy sits firmly within:

**Lambeth Borough's inclusive corporate vision: 'working together to tackle inequality'.**

Lambeth Clinical Commissioning Group's (CCG) vision:

**'To improve the health of and reduce inequalities for Lambeth people and to commission high quality health services on their behalf'.**

And Lambeth's Children and Young People's Plan vision:

**'Lambeth should be one of the best places for children and young people to grow up, providing a rich mix of relationships, experiences, opportunities and services that enable children and young people from all backgrounds and communities to thrive'.**

We recognise the wide range of services that play a part in delivering our vision. Elected Members, leaders and managers from education, health and social care services are driving our ambition forward through the Lambeth SEND Strategic Partnership Board, the Children and Families Strategic Partnership Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board. We have listened to what children and young people with SEND and their families have told us about their experiences, and developed this strategy as part of our commitment to working together to improve the lives of children and young people with SEND across the Lambeth local area.

As someone who went through school with dyslexia and whose brother has special educational needs, I know how frustrating it can be to struggle with some things your friends seem to find easy. We need to make sure our young people know that we are here to help them overcome any barriers and give them the skills to meet their aspirations – and those aspirations should have no limitations. We have high expectations of all our young people and want to ensure they have the right support, to thrive and be the best they can be.

**Cllr Jane Edbrooke,  
Cabinet Member for children and schools, Lambeth Borough Council**

# Introduction

**Lambeth council, the CCG and our partner organisations view SEND as a high priority. Our plans and strategies demonstrate that partners are committed to working together to improve the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people and their families in Lambeth.**

We want to be aspirational and ambitious for all our children and young people, including those with SEND. Lambeth's Education and Learning Strategy 2015-18 defines Lambeth's local authority champion roles as:

- a champion of vulnerable children and young people
- a champion of parents and families
- a champion of educational excellence

This strategy for children and young people with SEND, reflects those themes and extends the champion roles beyond the local authority and education, to all partners working together in the Lambeth local area. Achieving fully inclusive education means that the majority of children and young people with Special Education and

/ or Disabilities are welcomed by their local mainstream schools neighbourhood schools and are supported to learn, contribute and participate in all aspects of the life of the school alongside their peers. This strategy recognises the roles that all partners have in supporting that goal.

The Health and Well Being Board oversees the work of the Lambeth Children's Partnership Board (LCPB), of which the SEND Strategic Partnership Board is a sub-group. Governance and oversight of implementation of the SEND reforms is provided through these key strategic boards. Members of these boards are fully signed up to inclusivity for all children and young people and have contributed to the development of this strategy.

Lambeth has recently published a new Children and Young People's Plan, 'Our Children, Our Future' which focuses on SEND as one of its programmes of work. An extensive consultation exercise took place during the spring and summer 2017 with children, young people, (including those with SEND) and their families.





Our priorities and draft SEND Strategy, were informed by that consultation. Our subsequent engagement during the autumn with parents, carers and partners on the draft strategy, showed that while parents welcomed a new SEND Strategy, we still have further to go to ensure children and young people and their families have full confidence in the SEND system. Since 2014 we have been aligning support from education, health and care services to achieve our shared ambition of tackling inequality and providing local services and inclusive education provision for Lambeth's children and young people with SEND. This SEND Strategy will help us to continue that journey.

We continue to invest in local specialist provision with the aim of offering a mixed economy of inclusive mainstream schools, specialist resource bases, special schools and specialist colleges within the boundaries of Lambeth so that, as far as possible, all our children and young people can be educated within their local community.

This strategy requires a robust system of identification of children and young people's needs, in the context of high quality teaching

and learning for all children. Most children with SEND attend mainstream schools, so our strategy has been developed on the principle of evidence based, targeted interventions delivered by trained staff as part of the universal offer of a differentiated curriculum. The success of the strategy is reliant on a whole school approach rather than a stand-alone and therefore fragmented 'silo' approach to children/young people with SEND.

It is important to remember that the term 'special educational needs' does not mean the child and young person's needs are only educational. Whilst education progress is the core of the SEND reforms, ensuring that children and young people with SEND make progress educationally, can require a broader approach which includes family and health needs.

We are developing a shared understanding of need between the Local Authority and Health Services of the holistic packages of support required by individual children and young people and are focusing on improving joint commissioning to put the right support in place and make the best use of resources.

## Our SEND strategy is based on six core design principles:

### **1. A person-centred approach to service delivery:**

Central to our strategy is thinking about and working with the whole family in an integrated and joined up way, drawing on family strengths and supporting family members to help each other. This means co-producing plans and ensuring we take account of the parents', carers' and child's feelings, aspirations, needs and strengths. By adopting this principle across the system, we will transform services to embed an integrated, person-centred approach to early intervention and support into adulthood.

### **2. Systematic and proactive identification of SEND:**

We need to ensure all children's practitioners are consistently identifying children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. This includes those working in the Health services such as Health Visitors as well as Early Years settings and schools. We want all children with SEND to have their needs assessed and met as early as possible so that they are ready for transition from one setting to the next, are fully included and benefit from an appropriately differentiated curriculum that helps build their skills and resilience.

### **3. Developing capacity in mainstream schools:**

We must share our knowledge and expertise, through training, coordination and advice, so that mainstream schools can support the majority of children and young people themselves without having to refer on. This will help to ensure that needs can be met at the earliest possible opportunity.

### **4. Integrated, evidence-based services, interventions and approaches:**

Support for SEND must be built around children and families, not institutional or professional boundaries. This means closer integration between health, education and social care, including better information sharing. Interventions should be evidence-based to ensure maximum impact on outcomes for children, young people and families through cost-effective solutions.

### **5. Building alliances with the voluntary and community sector:**

Our community has a wealth of experiences, skills, knowledge and relationships. We intend to build on our existing strengths and increase collaboration across sectors.

### **6. Using digital solutions to build capacity and community connections:**

We need to exploit the potential of technological advances to use new, more efficient and potentially more effective ways of providing information and changing attitudes and behaviours. This could include new online portals, promotion of self-help apps or videos and group forums that support peer-to-peer relationships in the community.



# 1. Who this strategy is for

This strategy is for all the children and young people aged 0 to 25 in Lambeth with SEND, and their families. There are approximately 1800 children and young people with Education Health and Care plans (EHC) and at least 5640 receiving support for special educational needs being educated in Lambeth schools. These numbers do not include all the pre-school children with additional needs, and those aged 18-25.

The population of children and young people with SEND includes those who have other factors in their lives that add to their complexity of needs, such as those children known to social care, including those in the care of the council.

Other groups of children who generally do not achieve as well as their peers, include those from low income families and some ethnic groups. When these children also have SEND, their needs can be more complex.

SEND is everybody's business, and we know that if we get things right for these children and young people, our strategy will benefit all children and young people, because it is about the importance of promoting inclusion and a person-centred approach amongst professionals, which leads to greater understanding of, and empathy with, children, young people and their families.

# 2. The national context

This strategy sits within and complements the national developments in SEND support such as the SEND Code of Practice, the Children and

Families Act and the Care Act. Details of these are outlined in appendix one, see pages 11-12.



### 3. The local context

At least 318,000 people live in Lambeth, including approximately 67,900 children and young people under the age of 20. A further 22,139 (7%) are aged 20-25.

A higher percentage of pupils in Lambeth schools are identified as having Special Educational Needs (SEND) than the national, or London averages. In January 2017, 18.6% of pupils were identified as having SEND. We are always working to ensure that schools are not labelling children as having a long term special educational need unnecessarily. For instance Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) is the most prevalent primary need, at 24.6% of all children with SEND attending Lambeth schools, so we intend to moderate schools' identification of need to ensure this is never just because English is not their first language.



Most children and young people with SEND attend a mainstream Early Years, school or college setting. However, some children with more

complex needs benefit from specialist provision.

Within Lambeth we have 7 enhanced nurseries provisions; 12 resource bases attached to mainstream schools and 5 special schools. Three of Lambeth's secondary special schools also offer post 16 provision.

An exciting development in 2016 was the opening of the Michael Tippett College, a 19-25 specialist college for students with Severe Learning Difficulties and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties. Students attending this college would not normally be able to access mainstream college provision. The college's aim is to equip students for adult life, having developed the confidence and skills needed and to have clear next steps for adulthood.

Lambeth has a higher than average proportion of 'good' and 'outstanding' schools and average pupil attainment is high. We are also proud that

on average Lambeth pupils with SEND make better academic progress than their peers in other London Boroughs.



However, this is not a wholly consistent picture, so we need to reduce the variation between schools and ensure all schools are inclusive and support all pupils to reach their full potential. In particular we need to find ways to improve the progress made by Lambeth children in the Early Years, who do not do as well as those in other London Boroughs.

The gap between the progress made by young children with SEND and their non-SEND peers has been getting wider, so we need to understand why that is and quickly reverse that trend. We want to ensure that every young child is ready to attend school, which means getting better at identifying any additional needs as early as possible. By providing appropriate support in the early years, we can better enable preschool children with SEND to enjoy a smooth transition to formal education.

We know that nationally and locally pupils with SEND are more likely to be excluded because some children with SEND may find it difficult to





adhere to their school's behaviour policy. We are also aware that some settings are better than others at identifying children with SEND earlier, and putting in place effective support that enables the child to thrive in a mainstream setting. We need to share good practice, and try to ensure that all mainstream schools are fully inclusive and proactive in assessing and meeting needs.

We are aware that the waiting lists for children's mental health and other therapeutic services are often too long. We are trying to address this and ensure that, those who need them can access the right therapeutic services at the right time.

However, we need to be realistic. The council and its partners, including schools are all facing budget deficits in a period of increasing demand and growing complexity of needs, so we need to work ever more closely together to find innovative ways of achieving more with less. We want to ensure that we are targeting resources effectively, and one way of doing that is to



improve the CCG and council's ability to assess the impact of interventions on children and young people's outcomes,

so that we better understand what makes the biggest difference. We are also looking at how we commission services across the whole 0-25 age range, as we know that the transition between children's and adult services is often a very challenging time for young people and their families.

Demand for our services is growing year on year. For instance, we have received over 600 new requests for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) since 2014, but the council and Lambeth Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are not yet able to accurately predict future demand for services due to rapidly changing demographics. This is an area we need to improve upon so that we can ensure the partnership has sufficient resources dedicated to SEND.

We have invested heavily in local specialist provision, but there are approximately 170 children and young people placed in independent and out of Borough provision at an annual cost of £6 million. This is something we are trying to address as the cost is unsustainable and it is usually better for the children and their families for education to take place closer to their communities.

Another area of high spend is SEND travel assistance. We also recognise the impact that a child or young person's journey to school can have on the rest of their day. So balancing the need to find savings whilst minimising the time that individuals spend travelling is something we are working on with parents, young people and providers. We are also supporting increasing numbers of young people to be more confident in travelling alone, so that they can become more independent as they become young adults.

This strategy and our Children and Young People's Plan will help us to build on our strengths and address our challenges, so that Lambeth becomes a truly inclusive place, where children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities can feel safe, and happy, and achieve their full potential.



# 4. Our vision and priority areas for improvement

## Our vision

**We believe that all children with special educational needs and/or disabilities have the right to a fulfilling life, with equality of access to opportunities that improve their life chances and empower them to be the best they can be.**

### **Parents of Lambeth children with SEND have told us that they want:**

- The information they need to support their child and help them to “be a happy family”
- Inclusive communities:
  - “We need supportive and inclusive communities that treat every child as an independent person”
  - “Understanding and awareness” of SEND, and others being “non-judgemental”
  - “Access to sport and leisure activities in the community”
- Everyone to share high aspirations for children with SEND: “Not being defined by disabilities, unlocking potential”
- Mental health support for young people with higher needs
- Less uncertainty about the future: “Children need to know that there is a future mapped out for them”.

### **Lambeth Children and Young People with SEND have told us that they want:**

- “Respect, equality, safety and opportunity”
- Help with overcoming fears, coping, moving on from difficulties
- To feel “believed and listened to”, especially when they are “sad or being bullied”
- To feel included: “don’t put me in a corner”
- More support with mental health issues
- To be more independent “I want to be able to travel on the tube on my own”
- To have someone who can help me out of the house with travel practice

- Support to help improve behaviour: “My goal is to get the trophy at school once a week. To achieve this goal I need to behave in class. I need help doing this”
- Help with controlling anger: “Spaces to let off steam.” “Sometimes I can’t control my anger”
- Help with social skills: “I want to feel confident speaking to other people”
- Opportunities to exercise, do sport, go to adventure playgrounds, parks, and youth clubs
- To be “Connected with other young people who are vulnerable for whatever health or disabilities, so together they feel more resilient to the outside world”
- After college activities for young adults
- Better support to help plan for the future. Teaching life skills at school.

## Our priorities

Having looked at what our performance information is telling us, and listened to what children, young people and their families are telling us, partners in the Local Area have identified the following priority actions grouped under four key areas.

Actions to support this strategy are part of a broader partnership action plan that is being overseen and monitored by the SEND Strategic Partnership Board.

Measurable targets will be developed for each priority, and progress will be reported to the Children and Families Strategic Partnership Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

## 5.1 Promoting independence for children, young people and their families

**Promoting independence for children and young people with SEND and their families, is a central theme to the Lambeth SEND strategy. The more independent an individual, the greater their ability to visualise their life aspirations and develop and implement plans to realise them. There are four ways this strategy aims to promote independence:**

- **Providing information, advice and support to parents and carers** to help them navigate the SEND system, make informed choices and access the right support when they need it.
- **Co-production:** We will involve children and young people and their families in shaping the services they receive. **We will take into account the child or young person's abilities, wishes and aspirations and fully involve them and their families in decision making.**
- **Personalisation:** We want to increase people's control over some of the specific services they receive, so they are better designed to their individual needs and preferences. This will be achieved in part through more families and young people having personal budgets, and direct payments enabling them to direct some of the provision they receive. Linked to this, more young people will be supported to achieve independent travel training, raising confidence and giving them more freedom to pursue interests.
- **Preparing for Adulthood:** Partners working together in the Lambeth area will support young people to achieve the best possible outcomes in adulthood. This will include
  - **teaching life skills to those most in need of support**
  - providing specialist careers guidance backed up by quality work experience placements and a better range of apprenticeships, maximising young people's ability to enter the world of work.
  - **improving the range of housing for young adults with SEND who want to live independently**

- further developing pathways to adult services to ensure a smooth transition from children's social care and health services, through to adult's services.



## 5.2 Early years, schools and education providers working in partnership to support inclusion and reduce inequality between children with SEND and their peers

**Whilst we recognise that some children will benefit from specialist provision**, we aim, wherever possible, to include children and young people with SEND in local mainstream education settings. Lambeth expects all children and young people to be included and supported to make the best possible progress from the Early Years onwards. To achieve this, we are committed to securing all children and young people with SEND a place in a good or outstanding educational setting.

Through Lambeth Schools Partnership we will further develop school to school support and strengthen partnership working between schools and education providers.

We will support Early Years providers to identify children with SEND and moderate schools' identification of pupils' needs to ensure all children requiring SEND support have their needs assessed and are appropriately supported to access education and make good progress.

We will also look at ways to allocate additional support to meet less complex special

educational needs, so that more children can have their needs met quickly.

To further promote inclusion, we will support mainstream teachers to develop specialist teaching skills to meet the needs of a wide range of children and young people. We will also provide a range of support, outreach and training packages directly to local mainstream educational settings. We will also support and encourage schools to identify children at risk of exclusion, and put in place effective interventions much earlier, so that no child with SEND is excluded temporarily or permanently.

To maximise the effectiveness of interventions and support packages, early intervention pathways will be further developed. We will work more closely with health partners to develop more robust processes so that young children with needs are identified and referred to the appropriate agencies in a timely manner.

### 5.3 Working together effectively to maximise the value and impact of services and resources

**We know that parents often have to deal with lots of different organisations to access support for their child.** Lambeth has recognised that it needs to develop a more holistic approach to **sharing information** and commissioning; enhancing the way we work together, not just across education, health and care, but also across children's and adults' services.

The Joint Commissioning and the Local Offer strand of work will seek to establish an approach



to joint-commissioning that is well-planned, evidentially based, and consistently applied to deliver improved outcomes at demonstrable value for money. Initially, work is focused upon the establishment of a robust population baseline, and the modelling of future demand. This will be augmented with a financial model and the outline of our current range of provision, leading to an understanding of where gaps in provision – both current and future – may exist.

Our Local Offer, published in September 2014, is a comprehensive directory of services available within the borough – whether directly commissioned or otherwise. We are aware that the Local Offer does not yet include all the special educational, health and social care provision for children and young people with SEN or disabilities.

We are also aware that although every effort has been made to include information for those who do not have an EHCP, this is not yet as comprehensive as we want it to be, nor is our information relating to preparation for adulthood. This is being addressed as a priority during the development of the refreshed Local Offer website.

### 5.4 Securing the right local specialist provision

**We recognise that mainstream school is not always able to meet the needs of those children with profound and very complex needs, so will continue our specialist provision capital programme, using population forecast data to keep this under review, ensuring that, wherever possible we can meet children's needs locally.**

We are aiming to decrease the number and cost of independent non-maintained placements and reduce the number of out-of-borough placements.

The Vanguard secondary School for ASD students is due to open in September 2019 and will reduce the need for independent placements for secondary age pupils with ASD.

# Appendix 1

## The national context

The Children and Families Act 2014 introduced a set of significant reforms across education, care and health services.

The overall purpose of the reforms is to bring about better outcomes for children and young people with SEND by:

- implementing a new approach to joining up support across education, health and care from birth to 25
- ensuring help is offered at the earliest possible point
- ensuring children and young people, parents and carers are fully involved in determining their own aspirations and participate in the decisions about the type of support they need to achieve these
- establishing more efficient ways of working.

The specific requirements of the reforms are outlined in The Children and Families Act 2014 and the guidance on implementation is detailed in the revised SEND Code of Practice 2014.

### Summary of the main requirements of the legislation on local authorities

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ to involve young people and children with SEND and their parents, carers and families, in shaping the provision of services for those with SEND.</li><li>■ to develop closer co-operation with partners, including early years providers, all types of schools and colleges; health providers; children's and adult social care services and introduce a duty for joint commissioning to ensure joint responsibility for providing services.</li><li>■ to undertake joint assessment, planning and commissioning of services between education, health and social care to ensure more streamlined and integrated support through a single assessment process and single plan (EHC Plan) covering a child and young person from birth to age 25.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ to produce a 'Local Offer' which details all the services to support children and young people with SEND and their families in a clear and transparent way so they can understand what is available.</li><li>■ to provide an entitlement for parents, carers and young people to have a personal budget to extend their choice and control over the education, health and social care services they receive.</li><li>■ to ensure positive transitions at all key stages from birth to age 25, especially in preparing for adulthood. Providing greater powers for the Local Authority to continue services beyond 18 and introducing new protections for young people aged 16-25.</li></ul> |
|---|---|

## Appendix 1 – continued

These requirements became statutory obligations from September 2014. Some additional requirements related to supporting children and young people with SEND who are detained in custody became applicable from April 2015.

Transitional arrangements apply up to April 2018 while children and young people with Statements of Special Educational Needs or Learning Disability Assessments are transferred to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

In addition to local authorities, a range of other public bodies are required to have due regard to the Children and Families Act and Code of Practice 2014. These include: schools, further education colleges, early years providers, NHS commissioners and provider organisations, local Health and Wellbeing Boards and Youth Offending Teams. An underlying tenet of the legislation and associated guidance is ensuring that all these bodies work more effectively together in the provision of support for children and young people with SEND, including ensuring that they experience better transitions, especially from children's to adults' services.

The specific responsibilities of other public bodies are underpinned by a variety of legislation and guidance, for example, the NHS Mandate. Through the Mandate, the Department of Health have provided a duty for the NHS Commissioning Board to ensure children and young people with SEND can access the services identified within their agreed plans and have the option of a personal budget.

From 1 April 2013 the Health and Social Care Act 2012 gave General Practitioner (GP) led Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) statutory responsibility for commissioning health services for children and adults. This legislation also transferred responsibility for public health from health to local authorities. The relationships developed between local authorities and CCGs are therefore vital in establishing effective joint commissioning for SEND – something which both organisations are under a duty to deliver.

Under the same legislation local authorities were also required to establish Health and Wellbeing Boards. The role of these boards is to provide leadership to the development of local health and social care services and to ensure service provision becomes more integrated.

# Appendix 2

| <b>High level priority actions</b><br>(References to actions in the Strategic Action Plan in brackets)  |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| <b>1. Promoting independence for children, young people and their families</b>  |                              |
| Further increase the participation of young people with SEND and their families in the design, delivery and monitoring of the services they receive.  | (C.3)                        |
| Increase the personalisation of the individual service packages through more personal budgets, direct payments and independent travel training.   | (B.7)                        |
| Maximising people's opportunity to enter the world of work through appropriate educational placements, careers advice, apprenticeships and work experience opportunities.                                   | (C.3)                        |
| Improve young peoples' experience of transitioning to adult services, through implementing the transitions element of the Care Act and the Children and Families Act.                                       | (B.11)                       |
| <b>2. Early years, schools and education providers working in partnership to support achievement and progress</b>   |                              |
| Further improve early identification of children and young people with SEND.  | (A.2), (A.3)                 |
| Develop the expertise of mainstream teaching staff who support children and young people with SEND, so that more students can be included within a mainstream environment or additional resource provision. | (A.2), (C.6)                 |
| Improve achievement; where children and young people need more than quality first teaching make sure the right levels of expertise and interventions are in place to support progress.                      | (C.5), (C.6)<br>(C.8), (C.9) |
| Improve the allocation of resources to children requiring SEN support, but not requiring an Education, Health and Care Plan.  | (B.1)                        |
| Make effective use of the Education and Health Care plan processes and in-school working to improve effective multi-agency working.   | (B.2), (B.4)<br>(B.5)        |
| <b>3. Working together effectively to maximise the impact of services and resources: joint commissioning and the Local Offer</b>  |                              |
| Publish all services and provision on the Local Offer and improve navigation.   | (B.13)                       |
| Ensure rigorous governance and oversight of spend, to manage resources within budget and allow flexibility to respond to need and improve services.   | (C.1), (C.2)                 |
| Improve quality of high need placements contracts and contract monitoring to challenge and seek redress from schools failing to honour essential elements of delivery.                                      | (C.4)                        |
| Improve the shared data, over and above the detail held in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, between agencies to enhance the accuracy of baseline data and statistical forecasting.                     | (A.1), (C.3)                 |
| Develop a three-year SEND Commissioning Strategy (to complement the overarching SEND Strategy).   | (B.6), (C.1),<br>(C.2)       |
| <b>4. Securing the right local specialist provision</b>   |                              |
| Use the baseline data, projections of need, the gap analysis, and commissioning priorities produced by the Joint Commissioning Team to ensure Lambeth has the right provisions to meet need.                | (A.1), (B.9),<br>(C.2)       |
| Ensure enough high need placements are available in borough to meet demand and decrease the number and cost of independent non-maintained placements and reduce the number of Out-of-Borough placements.    | (B.8)                        |

