

# SEND Strategy

2024 - 2028



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## INTRODUCTION

The focus of this strategy is to ensure that there is a clear agreed vision across the city so children and young people with SEND have the right support at the right time, delivered by the right people. Not only does this statement support this strategy but also feeds into the key wider local outcomes identified in the “To be the best I can be” priorities and outcomes that have been developed by children, young people and families.

As a partnership between Stoke-on-Trent City Council and the Integrated Care Board it is important that we understand the challenges and issues facing the local area in order to effectively support residents with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Our aim is to provide the best opportunities for every child across our city, inclusive of the SEND community and we know that there is a lot of good practice happening within the City of Stoke-on-Trent. However, the global COVID pandemic and the subsequent economic challenges has meant significant disruption and immense pressure for children and young people. For some families these have lessened resilience, increased poverty, and increased mental health difficulties across the population.

Feedback from children, young people and their families has informed this strategy and identifies that whilst there is good work happening within the city there is much more to do to ensure the SEND community in Stoke-on-Trent feel heard, that they belong and are supported to reach their full potential. There are improvements to make that will ensure that in Stoke-on-Trent, SEND is understood and embraced so services can shape the best possible co-produced solutions with our families and meet ambition and hope for the future.

### What this strategy does

The strategy identifies a set of shared priorities with clear outcome measures that will form the road map for SEND in Stoke-on-Trent. This has been informed by local data and extensive engagement and feedback from the community, partners and stakeholders. The strategy is also in line with the requirements of the SEND Code of practice 0-25 years and the SEND and alternative provision improvement plan: right support, right place, right time. There is work ongoing with partners to refresh Room to Grow, our children's partnership strategy, with a new children's strategy due to be launched in 2024. We will also refresh our improving education strategy during 2024.

## Working in Partnership

Stoke-on-Trent City Council and the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board (ICB) and its commissioned providers will work in partnership, which will be set out within this SEND Strategy. We will engage and co-produce with parents, carers, children and young people, the voluntary sector, service providers, professionals and other stakeholders to ensure inclusion is central to everything we do. We will directly address priority areas that matter most to children, young people and their families.

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## OUR VISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN STOKE-ON-TRENT

**“Children and young people with special educational needs, disabilities and social, emotional and mental health, living in Stoke-on-Trent will have the opportunity to be the best that they can be, live their best life and be as aspirational as they want to be”**

The area partnership sets out Stoke-on-Trent’s strategy to continually develop and improve services for children and young people aged 0-25 years with SEND.

We aim to ensure that all children and young people in Stoke-on-Trent feel valued, understood and that they belong on our city. We are ambitious for every child and young person in the city, ensuring they have opportunities and can reach their full potential. We want our children and young people to feel that they belong in their education settings, that they have access to and can attend health services and that they have access to social care support that meets their needs. We want our CYP (children and young people) to feel safe and included in their community and have a voice and representation in key developments.

This strategy has been co-produced with parents carers and families (including the Parent Carer Forum) children and young people who have lived experience; early years settings; schools; colleges; advocates; frontline practitioners; the voluntary and community sector; and North Staffordshire Combined Health Care, University Hospitals of North Midlands, Midlands Partnerships University NHS Foundation Trust, and Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care System.

[SEND Local Offer – SEND Local Offer \(stoke.gov.uk\)](https://www.stoke.gov.uk)

In addition to this vision within Stoke-on-Trent “Pots of Positivity” have been developed with children and families as part of the Room to Grow to ensure a joined up consistent approach within the city.

These outcome statements will be the centre of all decisions that involve and impact children, young people with SEND and their families.

Pots of Positivity Outcome:

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>What this means for children and young people</b>
Live Well	I want to feel valued and part of a community and be respected by the people I meet
Good Education	I want to have a good quality education that is meaningful to me
Preparing for Adulthood	I want to feel confident about growing up and look forward to being as independent as I can be
Employment Opportunities	I want to have opportunities for work experience, apprentices and the chance to have a job I enjoy
Be Healthy	I want to be physically, mentally and emotionally healthy as I can be
Skilled Workforce for support	I want the people who support me to have the right skills and knowledge and for them to work together to help me be the most I can be



## WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT SEND IN STOKE-ON-TRENT

<b>58,305</b> children & young people live in Stoke-on-Trent	<b>41,643</b> children & young people (aged 3 – 18) in state funded schools	<b>8,073</b> children & young people have Special Educational Needs	<b>22.6%</b> of children & young people with SEND have an EHCP
<b>455</b> children & young people with SEND Support are known to social care	<b>249</b> children & young people with an EHC plan are known to social care	<b>871 (30%)</b> of children & young people with an EHCP attend LA mainstream schools	<b>504</b> of children & young people with an EHCP attend NMSS or ISP. <b>322</b> attend out of city provision
<b>28.3%</b> of children & young people with SEN support reached expected outcomes at Attainment 8 (national average is 34.6%) *	<b>11.2%</b> of children & young people with an EHCP reached expected outcomes at Attainment 8 (national average is 14.3%) *		



Data produced performance team October 2023 / November 2023 except for (\*) taken from MIME SEND Data July 2023

## ENGAGEMENT AND CO-PRODUCTION

The Stoke-on-Trent SEND Co-production Charter [Stoke-on-Trent SEND Co-production Charter](#) outlines the commitment, agreement and vision for co-production in the city.

Co-production in Stoke-on-Trent is about all stakeholders working together to ensure we achieve better outcomes for our children and young people. Better individual outcomes, better outcomes in services and better strategic vision and outcomes for the way we shape our partnership working.

Partners from across education, health, social care, parent carer forum and the voluntary sector have committed to the four cornerstones:

- Welcome and care
- Value and include
- Communicate
- Work in partnership

The four cornerstones are threaded throughout the strategy. We will work with our families and partners to be creative and innovative, with understanding, listening and actioning. The strategy has been developed with the people of Stoke-on-Trent for the people of Stoke-on-Trent keeping the local area context and experiences at the heart of the priorities.

## WHAT YOU SAID

### What does inclusion mean to me?

- Feeling equal
- To embrace all
- Every child feeling comfortable in their setting
- Playing together/happy expressions
- Enjoying each other's company

### What does good look like?

- Bespoke
- Calm but stimulating
- Welcoming
- All pupils belong
- Achieve progress
- Adapting to needs is fully accepted and automatic
- Kind and friendly, making sure no one is left out
- Included in play

### What does inclusion look like in the future?

- Employment
- Opportunities
- Safe
- Independence
- Holistic approach

### How can we overcome the challenges?

- Communication – listening/heard
- Confidence
- Understanding
- Planning
- Right time, right place – timely
- Well planned transitions
- Workforce development

## OUR SEND PRIORITIES



### Priorities:

- 1) **Nothing for us without us** - We will build positive, trusting and respectful relationships with the children, young people and their families, ensuring that we listen to the lived experience and that their views help shape and form services
- 2) **Part of the community** - All children, young people will feel safe, valued and included in schools and settings and within the wider community

- 3) **High aspirations and preparation for the future** - We will have high aspirations for children and young people supporting them to reach their full potential and be independent and prepared for adulthood
- 4) **Identify and assess early** - We will develop holistic plans together ensuring that support is meaningful, in the right place at the right time
- 5) **Skilled and knowledgeable professionals** - We will have a workforce that has the skills and knowledge to meet needs locally and in a timely way



## Priority 1

### **Nothing for us without us**

**We will build positive, trusting and respectful relationships with the children, young people and their families, ensuring that we listen to the lived experience and that their views help shape and form services**

We will do this by....

- Embedding the co-production charter and co-produce a toolkit that will be used across SEND services. The toolkit will include the full ladder of co-production so there is a shared understanding of how and when we will co-produce and engage
- Taking a restorative approach to working with children, young people and families
- Creating more opportunities and empower children and young people with SEND to share their views, experiences and aspirations to help inform decisions about their own lives and to shape services
- Continuing to develop the local offer ensuring that it is accessible and user friendly for all residents in the city
- Offer a variety of ways for families to co-produce and engage, including facilitating sessions online, face to face and at different times of the day accounting for the work and caring responsibilities that parents/carers have
- Reporting on and reviewing feedback from compliments and complaints to make meaningful service improvements
- Ensuring there is regular communication at service level and wider across the SEND system, including a termly Stoke-on-Trent SEND newsletter and ongoing updates on the local offer

This is what you will see....

- Children and young people sharing their views and making decisions about themselves in a way that works for them
- Children, young people and their families involved in sharing their experiences, views about services and ideas for improvements
- A reduction in complaints, tribunals and mediation coupled with an increase in compliments and positive feedback
- Families feel informed through good and regular communication
- A co-production toolkit that is shared, understood and implemented

## Priority 2

### Part of the community

#### All children, young people will feel safe, valued and included in schools and settings and within the wider community

We will do this by.....

- Working with families and partners to identify gaps in provision and support
- Working together with the wider community to utilise all available resources to provide a varied and appropriate offer of support and activities
- Scoping the current SEN (Special Educational Needs) Support offer and working together to further develop SEN Support within the city
- Co-producing a refreshed graduated approach across education, health and social care
- Developing a travel training offer so young people can access the community can travel to education and access services independently
- Working with schools and settings to promote a city-wide anti-bullying campaign
- Ensuring that family hubs will provide support in an accessible way for the SEND community
- We will produce/update an annual education sufficiency statement that outlines the plans to ensure there are sufficient SEN places locally

This is what you will see....

- A local offer that has a wide range of community activities and opportunities for children and young people to participate
- More children and young people with SEND participating in community activities
- Children and young people tell us they feel safe in education and schools/settings will report a reduction in the number of incidents of bullying
- Children and young people will tell us they feel safe and that they belong in the community
- An improved local offer that meets the needs and interests of the children and young people
- More children and young people having their needs met locally
- A refreshed graduated approach published on the local offer

- More young people are able to travel independently through universal support or travel training
- Children and young people accessing the network of family hubs that provide support and activities
- Most children and young people should have their education needs met locally

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## Priority 3

### High aspirations and preparation for the future

**We will have high aspirations for children and young people supporting them to reach their full potential and be independent and prepared for adulthood (their next stage)**

We will do this by.....

- Working with the Education Challenge Board ensuring that SEND is a golden thread and a priority to all schools and settings
- Working with Learning and Skills Board to monitor the progression and destinations of SEND learners
- Working with the City's Education Leaders to ensure SEND is a priority
- Continuing to develop the pathway to employment for young people with SEND, including increasing the number of supported internships and offering supported internships at the City Council
- Having robust quality assurance processes in place, including ensuring appropriateness of curriculum
- Provision in place to ensure children and young people with SEND achieve appropriate and ambitious qualifications
- Rigorously tracking school attendance data for children and young people with SEND and devising a strategic approach to attendance that prioritises pupils, pupil cohorts and schools on which to provide support to and focus efforts on addressing barriers to attendance
- Ensuring governing bodies comply with their statutory duties in relation to pupils with SEND when administering the exclusion process
- Health services planning with you the transition to adult services
- Where children are receiving support, they will be identified early to allow a well-planned transition as documented in our forthcoming Children's to Adult Social Care Transitions Policy

This is what you will see.....

- More young people complete supported internships
- More young people with SEND in education, employment or training
- More young people with SEND will progress into paid employment
- Increase in attainment for children at SEN Support and with EHCPs (Education, Health and Care Plans)



- Increase in attendance at SEN Support and for those with EHCPs
- Reduction in exclusions for those at SEN Support and with EHCPs
- Young people and their families report feeling supported and prepared when transitioning to adult services

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## Priority 4

### **We will develop holistic plans together ensuring that support is meaningful, in the right place at the right time**

#### We will do this by....

- Embedding the quality assurance processes for Education, Health and Care Plans, creating a robust feedback and improvement loop
- Developing a range of opportunities for children, young people and their families to co-produce their plans
- Co-producing a Stoke-on-Trent SEN Support plan document to standardise the way we record assess, plan, do and review as part of the graduated approach
- Continuing to provide a joint education and health assessment of pre-school children through the Discovery Group at Hazel Trees
- Increasing the number of places for children with additional needs in PVI excellent, inclusive settings across the city by raising confidence and knowledge of setting staff through the SHINE award
- Improving access to health services at the right time by monitoring provision and looking at best reach
- Ensure that there is sufficient information on the local offer so families know where support is available
- Developing our Designated Social Care officer role to support social care and earlier help to provide the right assessment and support for children
- Ensuring local pathways are clearly understood and accessible to all professionals who may be supporting children and young people with SEN
- Updating the Joint Area Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) so the area has an up to date understanding of the support and provision that is required
- Jointly commissioning services where appropriate
- Further developing resource provisions so that children have their needs met at schools in their local community
- Co-produce our new short breaks offer

#### This is what you will see....

- Improved quality of Education, Health and Care Plans, containing relevant information and advice from across education, health and social care to support the 'tell it once' approach
- All schools and settings in the city use a Stoke-on-Trent SEN Support plan document

- Schools and setting report that they understand the graduated approach and that they are able to implement holistic plans with children/young people, parents/carers and partners
- Parent/carers report that they have increased confidence that early intervention is providing the right support at the right time
- More PVI's in the city who have achieved the SHINE Award
- Pathways are clear and children and families get the support they need at the earliest opportunity
- More children and young people attending schools and settings in the city and having their needs met
- More children and young people accessing support in a graduated way so that more family's needs are met at a universal level
- More children and young people that need targeted or high needs support receive the right support and provision in a timely way
- More Resource Bases in with city
- Children and young people will be able to access short breaks that will meet their assessed needs

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## Priority 5

### **Skilled and knowledgeable professionals**

#### **We will have a workforce that has the skills and knowledgeable to meet needs locally and in a timely way**

We will do this by.....

- Working collaboratively to map out the current training offer and planning a robust multiagency SEND training offer for the city
- Working collaboratively to offer support and training to the workforce, including front line staff and senior leaders
- Develop a 'SENCO Learning Academy' that is part of the graduated approach, where all education, health and social care training is advertised
- Utilising the national training offers and ensuring that teams are aware of support that is available
- Supporting the confidence and skills of mainstream schools to meet needs through a refreshed graduated approach and SEN Support offer
- Working in partnerships to train each other and understand roles and responsibilities
- Adoption of the Positive Behaviour Support approach as part of a child's plan
- Work with partners and commissioners to ensure joined up training

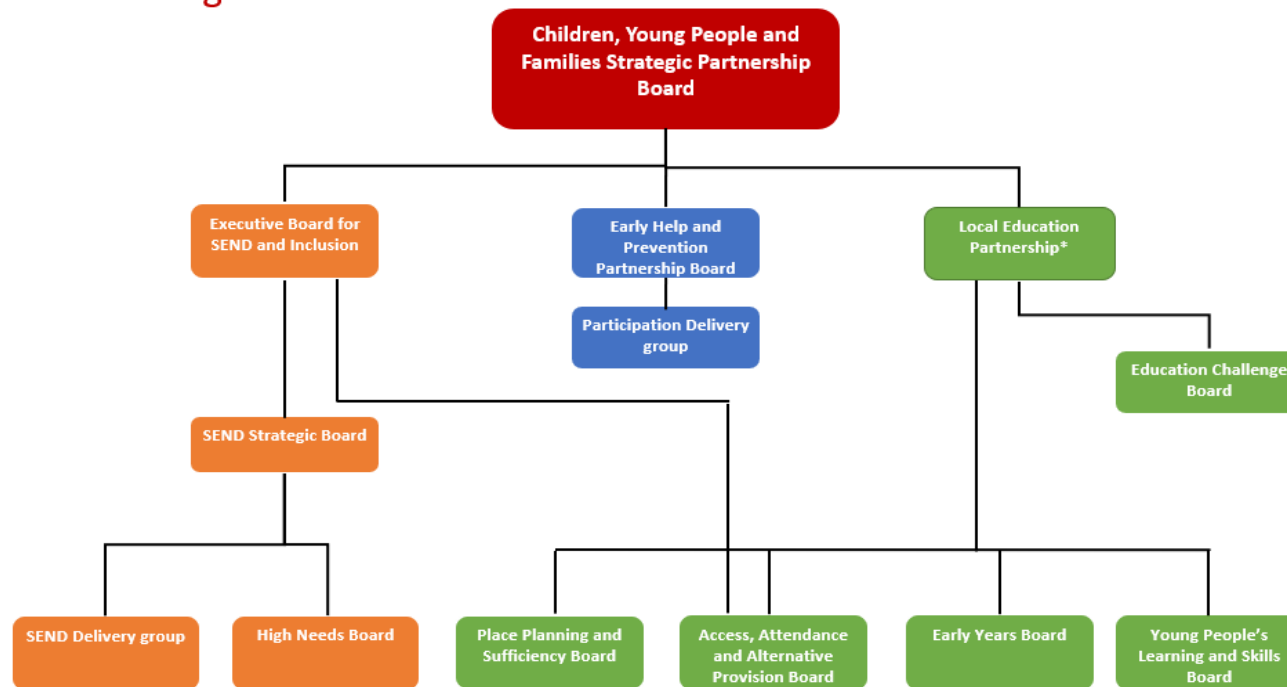
This is what you will see.....

- A workforce that is trained and equipped to support children, young people and their families on matters related to SEND and they know where to signpost to if required
- Families feel better understood and supported in a way that meets their needs
- A workforce that report they feel confident and supported to carry out their roles
- Skilled staff are retained in the city
- More children and young people have their needs met locally and in mainstream school

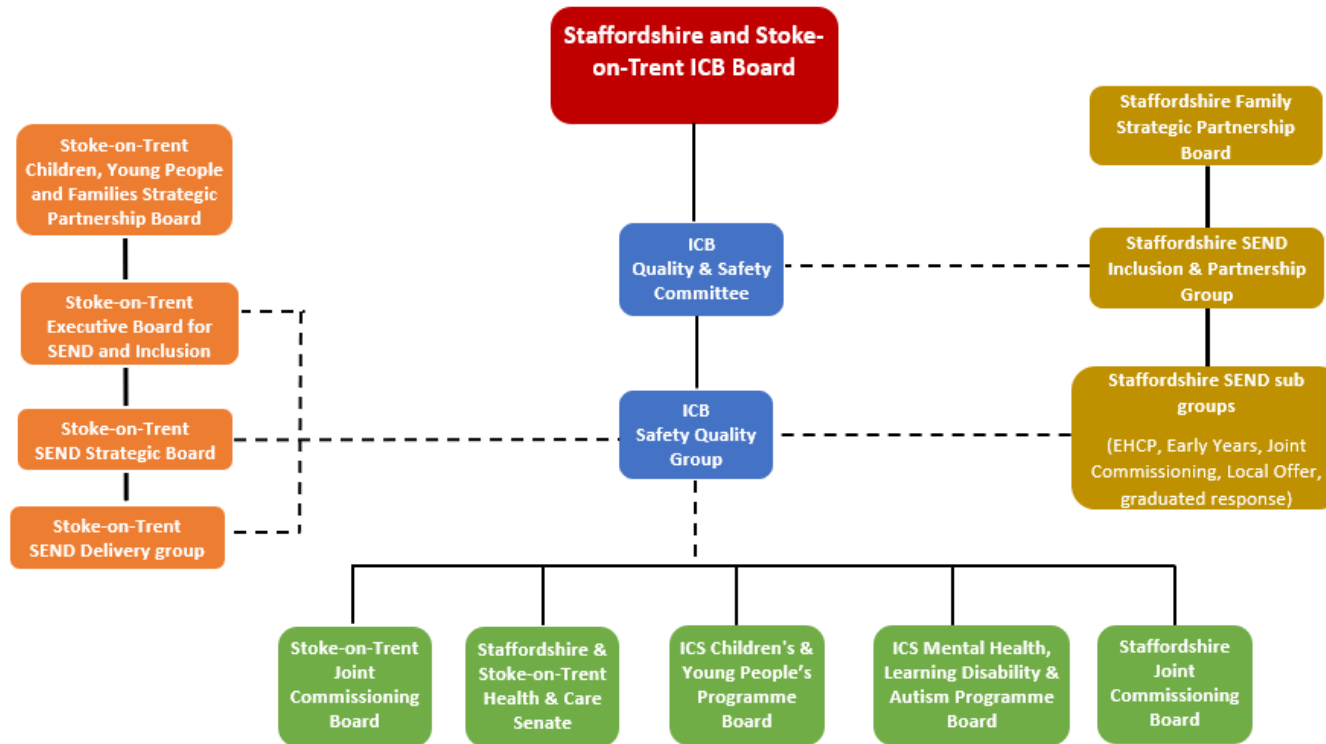
## HOW WE WILL MONITOR PROGRESS

There are strong governance structures in place to oversee the implementation and progress against the SEND Strategy priorities. The Executive Board for SEND and Inclusion is a multi-agency board with representation from Education, Health, Social care and Parents/Carers, the board provides support and challenge and will hold services to account on the delivery of the SEND Strategy.

### Education governance



## NHS Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board governance



There will be a clear co-produced action plan in place that sits alongside the area SEND self-evaluation and improvement plan, all of which support the journey of continuous improvement. Progress against the actions will be monitored at the Executive Board for SEND and Inclusion through quarterly progress reports. The action plan will be refreshed annually. It is imperative that we measure how successful we are in making progress against our priorities. We will identify key indicators linked to the priorities, the indicators will reflect and measure the impact that the agreed actions have on the lives of the children, young people and their families.

We will continue to communicate openly and transparently throughout implementation, sharing progress against the actions and about any challenges that we may face.

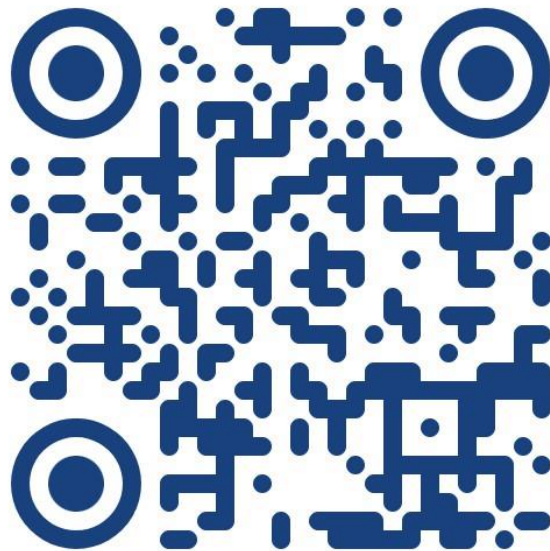
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## LOCAL OFFER

The Local Offer is the one stop shop for accessing information about education, health, social care and the community for children and young people 0-25 with special educational needs and disabilities in Stoke-on-Trent

Scan the QR to go to Stoke-on-Trent SEND Local Offer:



**SEND Local Offer**

What is the SEND Local Offer? Advice and Support Support for learning Feedback You Said, We Did Language Accessibility

Education Childcare Social care and staying safe Things to do Health Being Independent Support for learning Preparing for adulthood SEND support in educational settings SEND support services

### Area SEND inspection for Stoke-on-Trent Local Area Partnership

We have now received official notification that Stoke-on-Trent's local area arrangements for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and alternative provision will be inspected under the Area SEND and AP inspection framework by [Ofsted](#) and the [Care Quality Commission \(CQC\)](#). The inspection process begins today (15 January 2024) and will last a period of three weeks. Inspectors will be on site for some of that time and will be based within the Civic Centre as well as visiting sites across education, alternative provision, health and care.

We are informing you, as partners of our service, both to advise you that you may be called upon by inspectors to share your experiences of our service during the three weeks of the inspection but also to ask for patience during the inspection period as we will be focussing on the inspection and may not be in attendance or have to send a representative to some meetings.

We will update you regarding the progress of the inspection as soon as we are able. If you have any questions during the inspection period please contact Natalie Williams ([natalie.williams@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:natalie.williams@stoke.gov.uk))

Simon White  
Interim Director of Children and Family Services

#### Parental help, support and guidance

Information, guidance and advice for parents including links to parent forums and groups

#### SENDIASS

SENDIASS support parents, children and young people to ensure their views, wishes and feelings are heard.

#### SEND Travel Assistance

We will assist with a pupil's school transport arrangements if they meet the criteria set out here.

#### Graduated Approach

The graduated approach is about early identification of children and young peoples' needs

#### Search for organisations in local offer directory

Search by need, age or location

Search

#### Quick links

- » [SEND jargon buster](#)
- » [SEND Travel Assistance Policy](#)
- » [You Said, We Did](#)
- » [Section 41 - Department for Education approved list of providers](#)
- » [Local policies, guidance and legislation](#)

## APPENDIX 1 – LINKED STRATEGIES

[Room to Grow Children & Young People’s Strategy 2020 – 2024](#)

[Early Help and Prevention Strategy](#)

[Children’s Commissioning Strategy](#)

[Children & Young People’s Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy](#)

[Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021 - 2025](#)

[Youth Participation Strategy 2021 - 2025](#)

[Joint All Age Carers Strategy 2021 - 2025](#)

[Young People's Learning & Skills Strategy 2022 - 2027](#)

[Joint Commissioning Strategy 2023 - 2028](#)

[Learning Disability Strategy 'Living my best life' 2021 - 2026](#)

[Short Breaks Services Statement 2023](#)

[Integrated Care Partnership Strategy](#)

## APPENDIX 2 - GLOSSARY

### Glossary of Terms

#### **Co-production**

The term 'co-production' refers to a way of working where the people who use services (in this case children and young people with SEND, their parents, carers and service providers all work together to create a service that works for them all).

#### **Education Health and Care Plan**

A legal document that set out the education, health and care need of a child or young person. It is for children or young people who have a disability and or special educational needs that cannot be met by support that is usually available in school or college

#### **Governance**

Corporate governance is the structure of rules, practices, and processes used to direct and manage organisations.

#### **Mainstream Schools**

In a mainstream school a child with Special Educational Needs or a Disability (SEND) would be supported in following the National Curriculum alongside peers without SEND. All state maintained educational settings including nurseries, schools and colleges have a legal obligation to support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and disabilities (SEND).

#### **Outcomes**

The outcome of an activity, process, or situation is the situation that exists at the end of it.

#### **Pathways**

A Pathway is interconnected navigated support, a number of professionals can support an individual to meet their support needs.

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## Special Education Needs and Disabilities

A child or young person has special educational needs and disabilities if they have a learning difficulty and/or a disability that means they need special health and education support.

## Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice provides statutory guidance on the SEND system for children and young people aged 0 to 25.

### Acronyms

**ADHD** - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

**ASC** - Autism spectrum disorders

**CYP** - Children and young people

**EHCP** - Education Health and Care Plan

**ICB** - Intergrated Care Board

**JSNA** - Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

**LA** - Local Authority

**SEND** - Special educational needs and disability

**SEN** – Special educational needs

**SLCN** - Speech language and communication needs

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## APPENDIX 3 – STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT

The following engagement sessions were held:

- Parents focus groups – one face-to-face, one online
- Stakeholder focus group
- Local Authority SEND focus groups
- Parent/Carer Survey
- Stakeholder Survey
- Children and young person Survey

### National Inclusion Week

Stoke-on-Trent Local Authority with partners from schools and settings developed assembly and lesson content to raise the profile of inclusion and also provide the children and young people of Stoke-on-Trent the opportunity to contribute to the development of the refresh of the strategy.





**Year 2 took part in 'Inclusion Week'.**

**We thought about how we are all different and different ways we are included in a variety of activities. We shared our own differences and then thought about special talents we can share with each other.**



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