



Department
for Education



The Local SEND Reform Plan

March 2026





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1. Introduction

Document Overview

This document is designed to support local area partnerships develop a **Local SEND Reform Plan** with most sections pertaining to the local area partnership as a whole, in particular, local authorities (LAs) and Integrated Care Boards (ICBs), multi-academy trusts (MATs) and schools. Sections that pertain solely to local authorities are clearly marked **Local Authorities**.

While this document addresses local area partnerships, the government's expectation is that the local authority is the system 'convener'; taking the lead to bring together all system partners and ensure they work together to develop and deliver the Local SEND Reform Plan. Similarly, the government has clear expectations on all system partners to proactively respond to the local authority's leadership, ensuring they commit resources and fulfil their responsibilities in the partnership. Central government will actively engage where system partners are not responding to the local authority's leadership.

The document contains the following:

1. **The Local SEND Reform Plan Guidance**

Overview and a practical guide to help local area partnerships complete the plan.

2. **Local SEND Reform Plan Template – Annex A**

The delivery plan that local area partnerships are expected to complete and return to the Department for Education and NHS England by **19 June 2026**.

3. **Supporting Documents – Annex B**

A list of key resources and references including links to relevant policy documents, tools, and guidance referenced throughout.



The Local SEND Reform Plan

The 0-25 SEND system has been under significant and prolonged pressure, resulting in a system that is failing too many children and young people. Local services are overstretched, some children's needs are escalating unnecessarily to crisis point, and financial pressures have become unsustainable. Yet within this challenging landscape, many local area partnerships have demonstrated determination and leadership - working very hard to improve their local services and often developing compelling and innovative approaches to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. The government is committed to collaborating with local area partnerships to build on and scale what is working well.

We recognise that system-wide reform and investment is needed to deliver an inclusive and sustainable system that stands the test of time. However, realising this vision will only be possible if every local area takes full responsibility for driving significant improvement in the sustainable delivery of local services. It is imperative that all local areas begin this essential work through robust action plans that demonstrate clear ownership, ambition and accountability. This step change in the delivery of local services cannot be optional; it is a critical expectation of all local area partnerships.

As set out in the Schools White Paper, the government will reform the current SEND system, building on ongoing work to create a system that's rooted in inclusion, where every child and young person receives high-quality support early on and can thrive in their local early years setting, school or college. The government's plan is to ensure opportunity for all by delivering an excellent, inclusive education for every child with a world class education and highly trained workforce. This will be based on an inclusive mainstream education system, with professional support for children and young people that need it, and improved, efficient and effective local delivery, as detailed below.

- **Inclusive mainstream system:** most children and young people with SEND will be supported to achieve and thrive in mainstream education settings through high-quality teaching, inclusive practice, and targeted support. Settings will be equipped to create the right environments, and multidisciplinary professional support services will be commissioned at a group level to address needs efficiently.

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- **Specialist support for children that need it:** Specialist settings will continue to play a vital role for children and young people who require a substantially different curriculum or highly individualised approaches that cannot be delivered in mainstream educational settings.
 - **Efficient and effective local delivery:** investment in and improvement of local services, including health, care, and wider workforces and resources, will support the delivery of joined-up, place-based provision. Local authorities will work with Integrated Care Boards to commission multi-disciplinary professional support across early years settings, schools and post-16 providers, taking a whole school approach at group level, so children and young people can access the help they need. Improvement of local services eases the pressure on home to school transport, ensuring fewer children and young people with SEND need to travel a long way from home to attend a school or setting. Local authorities will work with all settings to plan and deliver the right physical spaces in mainstream nurseries, schools and colleges.

Delivering lasting change will take collective commitment and sustained effort from all of us; government, local authorities, health partners, early years, MATs, schools and colleges; working together with parents and carers to build the inclusive system our children and young people deserve.

The Local SEND Reform Plan is the key delivery and accountability vehicle for this collaborative commitment, with expectations that it is revised annually as proposed reform is rolled out. We recognise that delivery of the plan will be within the current statutory framework, as such, local area partnerships will not be required to implement any policy that is being consulted on or that will require legislative change.

This first iteration is about building on existing foundations and putting in place the groundwork for reform. It aims to:

- Support central government to understand how the SEND system is being transformed nationally, understand how investment funding is being used to achieve reform priorities, identify innovative practice that can be disseminated and scaled up, and identify where additional support may be required.
- Support local areas - local authorities, health partners, early years, MATs, schools and further education - to develop and deliver a clear pathway toward



an inclusive and sustainable local SEND system that identifies and supports needs **early**, meets needs within the **local** area, is **fair, effective** and **shared**; building on existing work and tailored to the unique context of the local area.

- Support local authorities to unlock investment funding and access support for historic and accruing deficits.

The Local SEND Reform Plan provides a framework that partnerships can use to establish a baseline for their local system and metrics against which transformation progress can be tracked.

The government, working alongside local area leadership, will use the plans - and the insights from regular progress reviews - to understand delivery, support decision-making on investment funding and access to the High Needs Stability Grant, and reflect progress on target metrics. The Department for Education, in particular, will use the plans - incorporating the data returns, local partnership maturity assessments and core local reform plan – to establish a baseline and ongoing monitoring of local area performance.

Throughout this process, DfE officials, health regional leads, SEND and financial advisers will support local area colleagues with access to tailored guidance and emerging insights to help shape and strengthen their plans. The Local Government Association (LGA) will also provide additional system leadership and transformation support through the children's and SEND improvement advisers.

2. Laying the Foundation for Reform

A central focus of this first iteration of the Local SEND Reform Plan is the introduction of the **Experts at Hand (EAH) Offer** and a strengthened approach to ensuring there are sufficient high needs places within mainstream settings, alongside a continued strengthening of effective partnerships and practice. Together, these initiatives aim to build a more inclusive and sustainable SEND system by ensuring mainstream settings, supported by collaborative and maturing partnerships, are equipped with both the right infrastructure and the specialist expertise needed to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.



The Experts at Hand Offer

The Experts at Hand Offer is a core pillar of the SEND reform programme, designed to strengthen the capability of mainstream education settings to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND more effectively and inclusively.

Local areas should provide a defined route for mainstream education settings to access specialist support, including from a range of experts with specialisms in education & health, such as in, educational psychology, speech and language therapy, and occupational therapy, as well as through outreach from specialist settings. By adding support to shift to increased group-based models and whole setting advice and support, health and education professionals can deliver evidence-based support and intervention with greater impact and value, ensuring, where possible, needs do not escalate. This not only makes better use of a limited workforce but also reduces dependence on costly, individualised provision. There will continue to be children and young people with complex needs that will require individualised and tailored support to meet their needs.

We know that strong practice and effective joint working already exist in many local areas where settings are supported to strengthen inclusive practice. We are keen to ensure that local areas are building on these as they develop and scale up their offer.

Local area partnerships (Local Authorities, ICBs, and system partners including settings) are expected to build their Experts at Hand Offer so that it becomes an ongoing and embedded element of the SEND system.

In order to achieve this, as well as to support a more effective SEND system overall, we need:

- To maintain access and referrals for those children who need specialist referral pathways identified at triage based on educational and clinical need.
- Better joint working across ICBs, LAs, and local system partners including education settings, Best Start Family Hubs, Parent Carer Forums (PCFs), health providers and children and young people.
- More effective joint commissioning between LAs and ICBs, including strategic planning and co-production with children, young people and families and local partners.

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- A strong universal offer and fluid layers of support which can be accessed from day one, one of which should include an offer of support for mainstream education settings giving them access to universal and targeted support from services across health and education – the new ‘Experts at Hand’ offer.

The aim of this offer is for mainstream early years settings, MATs, mainstream schools and further education providers to improve across the following areas:

1. Understanding the needs of children and young people in their setting.
2. Putting structures in place to build relationships and co-production with the parent/carers community.
3. Strengthening the baseline level of capacity of settings and staff to meet commonly occurring SEND needs.
4. Reviewing practice regularly to ensure current approaches are the most suitable.
5. Improving knowledge of when and how to draw down additional expertise when required.

This model allows for more efficient deployment of multidisciplinary professionals, promotes broader skill development across settings, and supports a more dynamic and sustainable workforce. It also puts a stronger focus on collaboration between health professionals and education settings, enhancing the role of health professionals in education and enabling them to focus on strategic support to schools and settings as well as system-wide impact.

The offer is designed to build capability within mainstream settings through joint working, empowering education staff to identify and meet a wider range of needs and enabling more children and young people to thrive in inclusive environments; and is expected to be jointly owned and resourced by the Local Authority and Integrated Care Board.

Local areas should consider how they will develop this offer to ensure there is support and appropriate provision across early years, primary, secondary, and further education settings. This should include developing effective models and partnerships for supporting young people with SEND who access further education in a different local area.



Local areas¹ have flexibility in how they commission or employ the multidisciplinary workforce required to deliver the offer. They are encouraged to explore, alongside other options, deployment through special schools and colleges, [alternative provision schools](#), [Neighbourhood Health Services](#), [Best Start Family Hubs²](#), and [Multi-disciplinary Family Help Teams](#). Local areas will need to work with neighbouring local area partnerships and representatives of the further education sector to consider how best to deliver this service to all colleges and other post-16 providers their young people attend – including those out of their area.

Local systems are expected to begin building this offer using allocated investment funding as a core focus of their delivery in the first year, with the aim of having all Experts at Hand offers established and operational as the new reforms are introduced.

Guidance relating to the Experts at Hand offer is due to be published **in Spring 2026**.

Core minimum requirements

Experts at Hand Offer

Local area partnerships will be expected to clearly and succinctly set out in their plan:

- The delivery approach for this offer and the rationale for why the outlined approach is optimal for the local area. This will include setting out if delivery will be local authority-led, contracted to the ICB, in partnership with another area or through an external partner, and setting out the role of Best Start Family Hubs. Where delivery involves an ICB or external partner, please specify the partnership vehicle (such as an SLA or MOU) and how performance will be assured.

¹ Local areas who have been involved in ELSEC and PINS can use the structures they have in place and the learning they have gained to support the design of their offer.

² New guidance to be published 23 March 2026.

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- A summary of the partnership approach to agreeing an optimal delivery model including how all system partners were engaged and how the approach was informed by needs-based data.
 - How the EAH funding will enhance existing routes to access specialist input, and how the delivery model will be integrated with other services or offers funded separately.
 - Proposal to collaboratively recommission alternative provision to align with the 3-tier model and best practice identified through Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforces (APST) models.
 - Where alternative provision capacity is constrained, whether the LA will contract provision, partner regionally, or share expertise and the route chosen.
 - Proposals for commissioning outreach from high-quality specialist providers, where appropriate.
 - Proposal for timely access to health and education professionals (e.g., in educational psychology, occupational therapy and speech and language therapy) for early years, schools and colleges based on assessed local need.
 - A detailed year 1 implementation plan, including recruitment approach and success metrics (e.g. coverage, scale of support available), and a high-level plan for years 2–3.
 - A proposed governance and accountability arrangement, as part of the Local Area Partnership Board, including oversight routes, budgets and funding arrangements, reporting cadence and escalation processes. This should include a single, named LA-based SRO to drive improvement and reform.
 - Clear expectations for joint governance, monitoring and shared accountability across education and health partners.
 - Proposed approach to settings accessing support which ensures support is not disproportionately accessed by the most proactive schools and settings and includes out of area mainstream further education settings attended by local young people with SEND.



Embedding the Experts at Hand Offer Within a Broader Reform Strategy

Local Authorities

While the Experts at Hand Offer will be a key building block to reform, it is not sufficient on its own to deliver the scale of change required for SEND. Local authorities are encouraged to continue to take a strategic approach to **place planning and capital investment** to ensure inclusive provision is available and accessible. Guidance relating to inclusion bases (formerly SEN units, resourced provision and pupil support units – SU/RP/PSUs) is due to be published in **Spring 2026**.

To support this, we expect that local authorities will:

- Set out how High Needs capital funding will be used to invest in new places and adaptations to the physical environment so that needs of children and young people with SEND are met in alignment with the reform aims of mainstream inclusion.
- Use capital investment to improve the inclusivity of provision in all settings, considering a range of interventions that could better support children and young people with SEND through the physical environment, working with professionals who can advise and support e.g. special school/alternative provision practitioners, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists, specialist nurses, mental health practitioners and support workers.
- Identify where inclusion bases (formerly SU/RP/PSUs) in mainstream schools or nurseries, or specialist provision in colleges, currently exist, where additional capacity is needed, and how this varies across planning areas.
- Engage proactively with early years providers, schools, multi-academy trusts and further education providers as well as health providers, to co-develop strategies for enabling more children and young people with SEND to access mainstream education.
- Engage with parent carer forums and children and young people forums to co-produce strategies that work for children and families.
- Ensure that decisions about the location and type of new SEND provision explicitly consider the proximity to where children and young people live and



the implications for transport, recognising this may not always be possible when commissioning SEND provision in large, further education colleges.

- Ensure that all sufficiency and capital investment decisions include an assessment of transport impact, with a focus on reducing long-distance travel and increasing access to local, inclusive settings.

Core minimum requirements

Sufficiency and Place Planning

Local area partnerships will be expected to clearly and succinctly set out in their plan:

- A summary of local sufficiency pressures and how planned place growth addresses demand trends, including EHCP drivers and opportunities to meet need through capacity in mainstream settings.
- How the planned increases in capacity across setting types will reduce reliance on special schools, especially out-of-area placements and independent specialist provision.
- How collaboration between LAs and MATs could be strengthened to identify suitable sites and jointly plan the development of inclusion bases.
- Assurance that proposed inclusion bases in early years settings, schools, and colleges would reflect local demographic need, maintaining high quality standards and clear expectations on type of provision.
- How existing school premises are factored in when planning new inclusion bases, including opportunities created by falling rolls.
- Detailed plans to meet need for specialist places, by increasing capacity in mainstream settings through inclusion bases, and to improve the suitability of the physical environment. This should set out how the investment would align with local need and reduce future pressure. Where plans propose use of high needs capital to create additional special school places, this should clearly explain why need cannot be met in mainstream, including how the investment would align with local need and reduce future pressure.
- Proposals for flexibility to accommodate rurality and local variation, ensuring provision remains viable and context appropriate.

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- Evidence that an impact assessment of travel arrangements has been carried out for any capital, inclusion base or special school expansion proposal, demonstrating expected changes to travel distances, journey times, and reliance on out of area placements. Including any explicit travel related mitigations.

Strengthening Effective Partnerships and Practice

Effective collaboration across all system partners, including local authorities, ICBs, health provider organisations, Parent Carer Forums, Best Start Family Hubs, early years settings, mainstream and specialist schools, further education, dioceses, multi-academy trusts (MATs), parents, carers, and children and young people with SEND, is essential to delivering meaningful transformation.

A transformed system that works for children and families must include co-production, collaborative partnership working and stakeholder engagement. Strong relationships at system and setting level are central to this.

The success of this transformation depends on shared ownership of decision-making, design and delivery of the local offer, and responsibility by all system partners, particularly local authorities, Integrated Care Boards and education settings.

The department is clear that MATs and schools have clear responsibilities in the development and active deployment of a strong universal offer of support to children and young people with SEND in their settings. They are expected to proactively collaborate with their system partners, including local authorities and ICBs, drawing on up-to-date understanding of the needs of children and young people in their settings to deliver consistent and robust support, particularly for the most commonly occurring and growing areas of need.

In the long term, MATs and schools will work together to pool some funding from their Inclusion Share for a more collaborative, efficient system to meet needs across their group and allow for better sharing of expertise and resources across an area. Local school groupings will need to be actively engaged with the local authority and Integrated Care Board. We will look to local authorities and their partners to shape the formation of groupings in their areas and have an oversight role for



these groups. In designing local systems, local authorities, MATs, schools and other system partners should start to consider how they might integrate school groups into the bigger picture, to work closely with their Experts at Hand and wider reform offer to provide a comprehensive SEND system.

We would like to work with school and local authority partners to understand how these groups are best structured while we move long-term to a system where all schools are part of strong groups. Guidance relating to school groups and pooled funding will be published in due course.

Core minimum requirements

Local area partnerships will be expected to clearly and succinctly set out in their plan:

Effective Practice - Universal Offer

- Proposal to co-develop, and regularly refresh, a partnership-wide universal offer agreement with schools, MATs, early years settings and post-16 providers which will be underpinned by up-to-date, needs-based data and signed off by the local authority, ICB, MAT and school representatives and Parent Carer Forum (PCF). The agreed universal offer should draw on approaches that will be set out in the National Inclusion Standards.
- Evidence of the processes and mechanism through which MATs and PCFs are engaged in the development of the universal offer.
- How early intervention services will be strengthened, with enhanced mainstream support to prevent escalation of need.
- How a strengthened universal offer will support mainstream settings to meet the most commonly occurring and growing areas of need. This should include how well evidenced early intervention approaches focused on speech and language (e.g. ELSEC³/NELI⁴), autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH), could be deployed.

³ Early Language Support for Every Child

⁴ Nuffield Early Language Intervention

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- How a strengthened universal offer and group level specialist support will reduce escalation into out-of-area placements with significant travel-assistance requirements.

Early Years (plans should align with LA Best Start in Life plans)

- Proposal for assessing sufficiency of current level of childcare provision for 0–5s, detailing: (a) availability of early years places; (b) availability of specialist SEND early years places; and (c) any local gaps for children with complex and emerging needs and plan to address these including the role of wider partners such as Best Start Family Hubs.
- Proposal to improve early years identification and intervention strategies, including the role of Best Start Family Hubs.
- Proposal to strengthen transitions from early years to primary school, ensuring effective information flow and timely specialist input.

Post-16

- Proposal to strengthen pathways to adulthood, supporting young people to access education, training, employment and supported internships.
- A clarification of pathways into and out of post-16 settings, informed by consistent information flow and timely, effective specialist support.

Effective Partnerships

- Evidence of effective, shared, partnership leadership and governance across all system partners, with clear and mutually understood accountability arrangements.
- Evidence of formal representation from early years, schools, MATs and further education on partnership boards, with appropriate links to Schools Forums to support coherent engagement across all settings.
- Proposal to underpin partnership working with shared, high-quality data, including joint dashboards and use of a partnership maturity matrix to assess effectiveness.

- How proposed/agreed mechanisms for engaging all schools, early years providers and post-16 providers (including out of area mainstream colleges accessed by local young people with SEND) would support collective responsibility for inclusive practice.
- Proposal to strengthen dispute resolution and decision-making processes so system partners can address issues early and consistently, supported by transparent escalation routes.
- A single named SRO who is part of the leadership team, to provide operational leadership and drive reform across the partnership. The SRO should be a senior local authority official.

Effective Co-production Practices

- Proposal to strengthen co-production arrangements so that parent carer forums are properly resourced and consistently engaged in shaping decision making.
- How the voice of children and young people is captured directly and distinctly from parent voice, with clear evidence of how their views influence decisions.
- How SENDIASS will be used to support parents carers with high quality, independent information and guidance, and how the local area will address variability in service quality where it exists, with reference to the minimum SENDIASS service standards. Please include proposed mitigation to any parental concerns about the perceived independence of SENDIASS within mediation processes.
- Proposal to adopt a minimum co-production benchmark (based on NHSE guidance) and self-assess against it in year one, identifying improvement actions where needed.

Mediation

- A description of local mediation and dispute resolution arrangements, demonstrating how they incorporate the voices of parents and children and young people.

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- Proposal to maintain metrics for timeliness, resolution rates and effectiveness to support monitoring and accountability.

Governance

The Local SEND Reform Plan should be a local area partnership plan. The local authority, as the system convener, has an oversight role over the process of preparing, submitting and delivering the overall Local SEND Reform Plan with active participation from all system partners.

Governance arrangement is expected to include active representation from all key partners, including ICBs, PCFs, MATs and schools, with clear roles and accountability. Where local area partnerships involve multiple education partners – including those not always located within their area such as further education colleges – or may commission therapy services from different health providers, they should agree how those institutions/providers can be represented and have a fair voice in decision making.

The local area partnership should agree a single, named Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for the Local SEND Reform Plan and local area transformation who will be responsible for overseeing SEND improvement and reform for the area. The SRO should be a senior local authority official and part of the local area partnership leadership.

The Local SEND Reform Plan should be discussed, agreed, and signed off at the relevant SEND Governance Board. As a minimum, the plan should be formally signed off by the Local Authority Chief Executive (CEO), the Integrated Care Board (ICB) Chief Executive, the Local Authority Director of Children's Services (DCS), the Integrated Care Board NHS Place Director, and the Local Authority Chief Financial Officer (CFO/Section 151 Officer), reflecting the joint statutory responsibilities for SEND across the system.

We expect your Local SEND Reform plan to be aligned with other local strategic plans you are currently developing, including your Best Start local plan. Both plans sit firmly within the government's ambition to improve child development and health



outcomes, and to create a more inclusive, high-quality system of support for all children and young people with SEND. Together, they should provide a coherent local approach to raising outcomes for children, young people and families.

Funding

To deliver our ambition for an inclusive and sustainable SEND system, the Department has secured targeted funding through the Spending Review. Some of this funding will be delivered directly to LAs and ICBs, other funding streams will be delivered to settings and will need to be considered when developing plans.

LA and ICB Funding

Funding	Description
Experts At Hand Offer Funding (for LAs and ICBs)	This funding is provided to support development of an Experts at Hand Offer which provides a defined route for mainstream education settings to access support, including but not limited to Educational Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy, and Occupational Therapy. Rather than relying on individual referrals, the offer enables a whole setting approach to group-level support, tailored guidance, and strategic advice, allowing for earlier and more impactful intervention. The funding will be paid via the Local Inclusion Partnership Grant after June 2026. LA allocations and methodology will be published in Spring 2026.
Transformation Funding Local Authorities	Transformation funding should support authorities to deliver the necessary changes to their local systems in line with the Schools White Paper while continuing to deliver effective and efficient services to children and young people with SEND through transition. This could be done through expanding capacity and capability within the Local Authority to deliver the required changes. For example, building data and analytical capability to enable effective monitoring of system performance so that decisions on

	delivery are informed by high quality and good use of data or building project management functions that can organise and sequence work, ensuring efficient and effective deployment of resources. The funding will be paid via the Local Inclusion Partnership Grant after June 2026. LA allocations and methodology will be published in Spring 2026.
Best Start Family Hubs Funding Local Authorities	This funding supports the rollout of Best Start Family Hubs across England. Best Start Family Hubs will have a children and family services professional specifically trained in working to support inclusion for children with additional needs.
High Needs Capital Funding Local Authorities	This funding is provided to support local authorities to provide places for children and young people with SEND, or who require alternative provision (AP). This funding is expected to fund a transformative expansion of inclusion bases, as well as adaptations to improve the accessibility and inclusivity of mainstream settings, reducing the need for pupils to travel a long way to a special school and the costs of LA arranged transport. It can also fund places in special schools for the most complex needs. More details on this funding and local allocations will be published in Spring 2026.
Inclusive Early Years Fund Local Authorities	We expect early years settings to use the Inclusive Early Years Fund to strengthen inclusive practices across the whole setting. This may include freeing up staff time to participate in continuing professional development (CPD), collaborate on inclusive planning, or engage in early assessments. The funding can also support activities such as adapting the curriculum, improving the learning environment, or implementing targeted, evidence-based interventions for groups of children. These approaches aim

	to embed inclusive practice into everyday provision, reducing the need for individual applications or formal diagnoses.
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Local areas should consider how these funding streams will be used strategically and effectively to support reform priorities, build capacity, and ensure priority outcomes are realised.

Other Inclusion Funding

We are also investing in mainstream settings to ensure that they are able to meet the needs of more children with SEND effectively.

Funding	Description
Inclusive Mainstream Fund (for Schools, and Post-16 settings)	We expect settings to use this funding to identify commonly occurring, predictable needs such as difficulties with reading or emotional regulation and take meaningful steps to improve everyday teaching and universal provision, so that it works well for all from the outset. Settings will also be able to spend the funding on developing more targeted evidenced-based support offers such as transition support or specific group interventions for those who need them, without the need for as many formal assessments or diagnoses.

Structure of the Local SEND Reform Plan

The Plan is structured into five key sections:

1. **Vision** – What the local area partnership is trying to achieve
The vision and goals for your local system in line with the national vision set out in the Schools White Paper.
2. **Strategy** – How the local area partnership plans to achieve it



Where the local system expects to be in the next 3 years, its theory of change, roadmap for the next 3 years and delivery plan for the first year.

3. **Monitoring and Evaluation** – How the local area partnership will know delivery is on track

The processes for tracking progress against milestones and outcomes and reporting to decision-makers.

4. **Governance** – What action the local area partnership will take to stay on track

The governance and processes for monitoring progress and taking action to ensure delivery remains on track.

5. **Central Government Support** – How we can help the local area partnership

An opportunity to identify practical support from central government that will help you deliver your plan.

The Local SEND Reform Plan is set out in **Annex A**.

3. Submission, Review, and Monitoring Process

Submission

Local areas are expected to submit the first iteration of their Local SEND Reform Plan by **Friday, June 19, 2026**.

A month prior to final local leadership sign-off and formal submission of Local SEND Reform Plans; SEND and financial advisers will be available to review a final draft of local area plans to flag any significant gaps or concerns, and together with health regional leads and DfE officials, will offer intensive support if they believe a plan is at risk of not meeting the minimum quality threshold. Local area partnerships will then have an opportunity to action these concerns prior to formal submission to the department.



Local area leadership are encouraged to self-assess their plans using the ***Local SEND Reform Plan Quality Assessment Framework*** prior to sign-off and submission.

Further guidance on the submission and review process will be shared closer to the submission date.

Review

DfE and NHS England will use the plans to help identify effective, innovative practice and barriers, and identify how to effectively target support through the period of transformation.

The government will use the ***Local SEND Reform Plan Quality Assessment Framework*** to assess the quality of plans and facilitate access to the High Needs Stability Grant for local authorities.

The department will apply a consistent multi-tier assessment and moderation process to ensure that the review and assessment of plans is rigorous, consistent and fair.

DfE officials, health regional SEND leads, SEND and financial advisers will support local area partnerships in reviewing the plans using the ***Local SEND Reform Plan Quality Assessment Framework*** in the first tier.

Assessment tiers will include Regional Directors and independent senior civil servants from across the department. A SEND Delivery Board chaired by Regions Group Director-General, Tim Coulson, with DfE non-executive directors, DfE Performance and Risk Committee members and Sir Kevan Collins, the Secretary of State's delivery advisor in attendance will sign off final ratings and agree recommendations to the Secretary of State.

The Secretary of State will make the final decision to approve or not to approve a plan with assessment outcomes will be communicated in September

Monitoring

DfE Officials, health regional SEND leads, SEND and financial advisers will support local areas to develop iterative reform plans and, together with the local area



leadership, jointly monitor the implementation of plans as reforms are rolled out.

The purpose of the joint monitoring is to:

- i. provide assurance that funding is spent in line with reform priorities and that local area partnerships are working together to co-design and implement key changes to local service delivery, including changes to roles and responsibilities; and
- ii. provide assurance that the implementation of reforms is delivering the anticipated changes and outcomes, by rebalancing the system towards early intervention, inclusive education, and sustainable local services.

DfE officials, health regional SEND leads, SEND and financial advisers will join quarterly review meetings with local area partnerships (utilising existing governance forums) to understand implementation progress and provide appropriate support and challenge as needed. Where applicable, these review meetings will be consolidated with other engagement or monitoring meetings from DfE or health regional SEND leads.

Local area leadership and officials are expected to discuss progress against the plan, including:

- Progress against key metrics
- Whether key milestones are on track to be achieved
- Whether risks are being effectively mitigated
- Identifying effective and innovative practice that can be shared; and
- Identifying where additional support may be needed or barriers unblocked.

Local area partnerships are required to provide quarterly data returns to DfE against the selected metrics outlined in the accompanying data template. DfE will, in turn, provide quarterly data reports with visualised analysis and benchmarking that will support local delivery, monitoring, and evaluation.

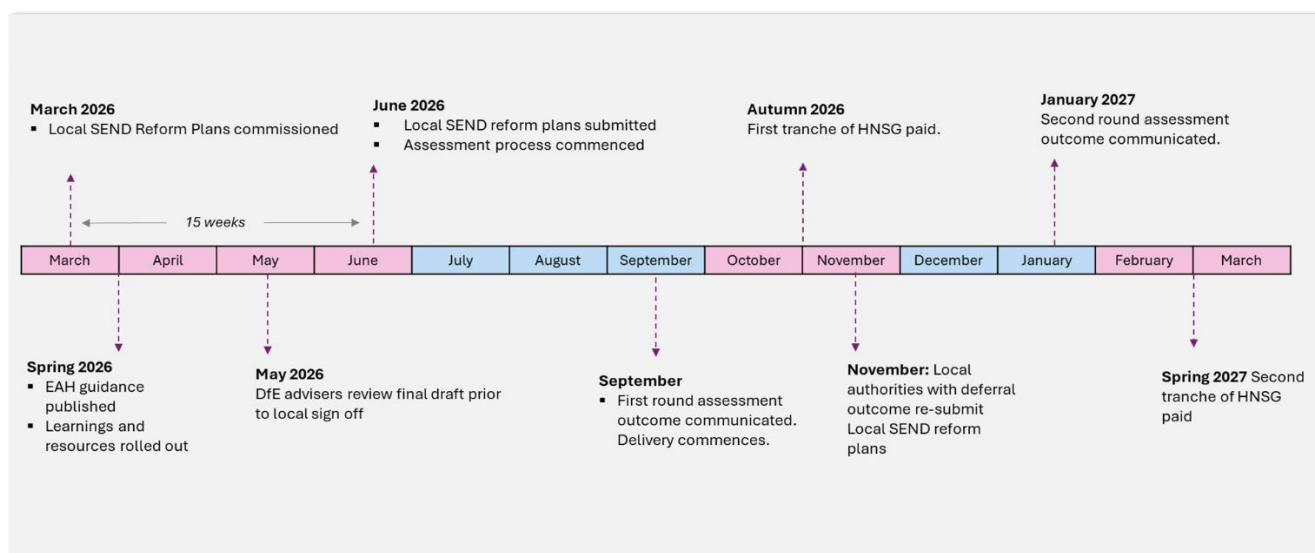
DfE officials and health regional SEND leads will use these data returns and discussions at review meetings, alongside submission of this Local SEND Reform Plan and the Local Partnership Maturity Assessment, as well as Area SEND inspection reports, to assess performance and delivery at the local level. These

assessments and this ongoing monitoring will ensure that support and engagement is best allocated and targeted throughout this period of reform.

High Needs Stability Grant

The government will address long standing SEND financial pressures by covering 90% of local authorities' High Needs-related DSG deficits accrued up to the end of 2025–26 through the High Needs Stability Grant. This grant will be paid subject to each local authority securing the Secretary of State for Education's approval of their local area's Local SEND Reform Plan. Payments will be made in Autumn 2026 for local authorities whose plans are approved. Local authorities whose plans do not meet the threshold for approval will be required to revise their plans to ensure they meet the required threshold, with appropriate support. Local authorities whose plans are subsequently approved will receive the grant payment in Spring 2027. Local authorities will not receive any payments until successful approval of their local area's Local SEND Reform Plan.

Review and payment timeline outlined below.



4. Questions

For any questions relating to this document or the Local SEND Reform Plan more widely, please get in touch with your DfE SEND Lead or contact

Implementationsupport.SEND@education.gov.uk



Annex A: Local SEND Reform Plan

Developing a Local SEND Reform Plan is an important first step for local areas to set out how they will lay the foundation for reform, and design an approach tailored to their local context. A shared plan which focuses on co-designing the local approach as system partners and with children, young people and families will help foster collective responsibility for delivering the reforms.

It is critical that all system partners, including health, education and childcare settings, work together to design and deliver the Local SEND Reform Plan, under the local authority's leadership. It is also crucial that representative family carers e.g. the local Parent Carer Forum, are involved in the development of the plan.

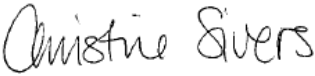
The expectation is that this plan is discussed, agreed, and signed off at your relevant SEND Governance Board. As a minimum, the plan must be formally signed off by the Local Authority Chief Executive (CEO), the Integrated Care Board (ICB) Chief Executive, the Local Authority Director of Children's Service (DCS), the Integrated Care Board NHS Place Director, and the Local Authority Chief Financial Officer (CFO/Section 151 Officer). We encourage other colleagues and partners who have contributed to also review and sign-off the plan, particularly early years, school, college and trust leaders.

Name of Local Authority: South Gloucestershire Council

Name of Integrated Care Board: BNSSG

Local SEND Reform Plan SRO: Chris Sivers

Signatories

Role	Name	Signature	Email contact	Date
SRO & Executive Director of Services for People (SGC)	Chris Sivers		Chris.Sivers@southglos.gov.uk	17/06/2026
Chief Executive Officer (BNSSG)	Shane Devlin		shanedevlin@nhs.net	18/06/2026
Chief Executive Officer (SGC)	Dave Perry		Dave.Perry@southglos.gov.uk	17/06/2026
Chief Clinical Leadership & Delivery Officer (BNSSG)	Rosi Shepherd		rosishepherd@nhs.net	19/06/2026
S151 Officer	Joss Convey		Joss.convey@southglos.gov.uk	17/06/2026
Chief Strategic Commissioning Officer	David Jarrett		David.Jarrett2@nhs.net	18/06/2026

Executive Summary

A brief summary of your local system 'change story' – your local context, where you are now, where you want to get to in the next 3 years, how you know you are succeeding and how you will know you have achieved your vision for the next 3 years. Please include a brief qualitative summary. This summary should also include your assessment of current and forecast performance against the headline metrics.

Please structure your 'change story' using the following aims:

- *Build a 0-25 system where children and young people receive support to achieve and thrive through (a) more inclusive settings and (b) stronger local partnerships*
- *Improve capacity and capability of the mainstream and specialist workforce to identify and meet need*
- *Improve confidence of children, families, and stakeholders in reform and readiness of the system*
- *Stabilise finances and improve value for money*

Executive Summary (500 Words)

Local context and current position

South Gloucestershire Council welcomes the Reforms. Our ambition is that every child has the best start in life and is supported to thrive. The Reform Plan is built on strong local foundations: robust leadership, effective partnerships, and increasingly inclusive and collaborative schools, as recognised in the 2025 Area SEND and AP Inspection and local maturity assessment.

Significant challenges include: variability in inclusion, inconsistent early identification of need, poorer outcomes — particularly for children with social, emotional and mental health needs. This is reflected in high Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) requests, exclusions,



poor attendance, and reliance on high-cost specialist provision. Families do not always feel listened to or confident in the system. Financial pressures include an unsustainable High Needs deficit.

Where we want to be in three years

In three years, the system will have shifted to a more inclusive, early-intervention model with needs identified and met earlier within mainstream. Children and young people will experience consistent, high-quality support across a fully integrated 0–25 system, and families will report growing confidence.

Our change story through four aims:

1. Build a 0–25 inclusive system with strong partnerships

We will strengthen inclusive practice across early years, schools and post-16 provision and AP, supported by enhanced cluster arrangements, pooled funding and integrated working. Co-production with families will be embedded, ensuring their voices shape services. **Success measures:** increased inclusion in mainstream settings, improved attendance, fewer exclusions, fewer tribunals and positive family feedback.

2. Improve workforce capacity and capability

The “Experts at Hand” model will build a highly skilled workforce identifying and meeting needs earlier. This will be complemented by a strengthened universal offer and targeted specialist input within mainstream settings. Capital investment will create local specialist provision within clusters. **Success measures:** reduced escalation of need, more mainstream inclusion bases, fewer EHCP requests, lower proportion of EHCPs, lower transport mileage and improved practitioner confidence.

3. Improve confidence of children, families and stakeholders

Through strengthened co-production, clearer pathways and better communication, families will feel listened to and confident in support. Governance will include stronger system oversight and transparent performance reporting. **Success measures:** qualitatively, families will report improved experiences and trust, and schools will feel better supported to meet need.

4. Stabilise finances and improve value for money

We will rebalance expenditure by investing earlier in mainstream inclusion and local provision, reducing reliance on costly out-of-area placements. Financial sustainability will improve as demand is managed more effectively. **Success measures:** increased mainstream spend, reduced high-cost placements, reduced transport costs, a balanced in-year High Needs Budget and better value for money.

5. Measuring success and future performance

We expect to move from below performance in the above measures to at least in line with statistical neighbours within three years. Children and families will experience a more responsive, inclusive system where they feel heard and supported.

We will deliver a whole-system shift to inclusion, early intervention, partnership and financial sustainability, ensuring every child can be the best version of themselves.

Section 1 – Vision and Goals

1. What the local area partnership is trying to achieve?

Please set out your goals for your local system. These should be clear, aligned to the vision set out in the Schools White Paper, small in number and measurable. These goals should include clear reference to:

- Outcomes for children
- Confidence of parents, carers and young people in the system
- Management of finances to secure value for money

Vision & Goals (250 Words)

Our vision for all children in South Gloucestershire is that every child has the best start in life.

We recognise that some children benefit from more individual support to enable them to achieve. Children with special educational needs and disabilities tell us that what is most important to them is that they have trusted relationships, that schools and services adopt flexible approaches and that they can access specialist support if they need it.

This strategy will help us deliver this vision for children in South Gloucestershire, with the following goals:

- Sustained improvement in inclusive practice across all Early Years, mainstream schools and post-16 settings measured by take up of inclusive provision, reduction in EHC referrals, improvement in attendance and reductions in exclusions
- Families report feeling listened to, involved in decisions about their child, and confident in the support provided by their setting as measured through regular feedback

- Re-balance spending on SEND, directing more funding into mainstream settings, while maintaining strong support for those with the most complex needs which will be measured by percentage of High Needs spend going directly into mainstream settings
- Reduce variability in outcomes for children and young people as measured by the gap between South Gloucestershire children with a SEND and those without, particularly in relation to attendance and exclusions, so that we are in line or better than the median for similar local authorities.

This means families, schools, communities and professionals work together to ensure every child can be the best version of themselves.

Section 2 – Strategy

2. Where the local area partnership expects to be in the next 3 years

A description of what your local system would look like in the next 3 years in line with the national vision set out in the Schools White Paper and set within the context of where you are starting from as a local system.

In particular, as commissioning system partners, you should reflect on and agree what your fully fledged **Experts At Hand Offer** model should be and how this will be deployed via mainstream settings and providers (including those not based in your area – e.g. further education colleges attended by your young people) to build their capacity as well as identify and meet the needs of children and young people earlier and without the need for a statutory assessment for Education, Health and Care.

To help you fully consider the scope and scale of change required, you may find it useful to structure your response using these 4 building blocks of an inclusive system, reflecting on what is working well in your system, what you are most worried about, what needs to change, and how the enablers will help you achieve your 3 year vision.

When summarising where your local area partnership currently is, please include an assessment of where you are in reference to the core minimum requirements above and how you bridge the gap, making reference to and attaching additional documents that provide underlying evidence for your summary.

Strengthening inclusion across education settings– organising places and provision to meet as many needs as possible, as close to home as possible, with all settings and providers moving towards a shared understanding and consistent practices around inclusion.

System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production – putting in place the enabling conditions across a local area that ensures planning and provision reflects the local area & is joined up, including strategic co-production with parent carers and children and young people.

Access to specialist support and local placements – improving collaboration between settings and deploying expertise from a range of specialist and expert sources, to support schools and settings to meet the needs of children and young people earlier and locally.

Encouraging inclusive culture & behaviours – using funding and shared accountability towards a system that works for children and families while achieving value for money.

South Gloucestershire Blueprint

Introduction

Strengths within our existing system as evidenced in the 2025 Area SEND and AP Inspection and reflected in the maturity assessment means South Gloucestershire is well placed to deliver the Reforms. Leadership and governance are strong, partnerships working is effective and schools are being increasingly inclusive through good collaborative working in clusters, planning and commissioning to meet need and strong collaboration with the LA.

Local Area Partnership governance arrangements to oversee and drive delivery of the post inspection plan are in place and will be strengthened further to oversee and drive delivery of the SEND Reform Plan (SRP) including the Director of Children's Services as Senior Responsible Officer (SRO), and with wider representation from EY and FE sectors. Reporting on progress will be extended to include progress on Expert at Hand delivery, capital programme delivery, and will include arrangements to provide a single view of how we are performing across the system in relation to inclusion of SEND children in mainstream, financial performance and qualitative measures for impact on the community. The Maturity Assessment identified the priorities for improvement including those to respond to inspection recommendations, and these are summarised under the appropriate building blocks below, **together with all the changes we will implement to deliver the reforms**. Therefore, the SEND reform plan includes activity already underway in our existing **SEN Strategic Action Plan (Appendix 1)** which addresses the reasons why

variability in experiences of children and young people exist, specifically addressing the typically poor experiences and outcomes of children and young people with social, emotional and health needs (SEMH). The plan, based on our **Theory of Change (Appendix 3)**, sets out ways in which we will improve the experiences of all children and, in the first years those with social, emotional and mental health needs especially through the following:

- how we will build capacity to meet needs in mainstream settings through experts at hand to ensure that needs are met earlier and do not escalate, resulting in high-cost placements.
- that we will coproduce an inclusion framework securing the commitment and collective responsibility of local area partners to creating the inclusive culture, leadership, and practice necessary for all children with SEND to benefit from inclusive environments in local mainstream schools
- a well-informed targeted capital investment strategy to develop high-quality places and provision for SEND children in each locality so that needs can be met close to home, reducing travel to school time and associated cost
- development of a co-produced Post 16 strategy to deliver effective arrangements for responding to the ambitions and interest of young people in the area. This will focus on developing the skills that young people need to access a diverse range of local education, employment, and training opportunities, and so that they benefit from positive experiences during school and beyond, achieving successful outcomes as young adults.
- improved effective co-production and engagement with children, young people and their families applied consistently across the local area, in developing the plans which affect their lives and enabling the voices of children and young people to be captured independently and in line with our **Young People Participation Strategy (Appendix 9)**. This will lead to increased confidence and trust by families that our reform plan has been designed with children's needs at its heart, and that our local mainstream education offer can effectively meet the needs of SEND children.

Through the above and building on existing strengths, for example **Effective Partnership Working (Appendix 5)** and strengthened through the Reform Plan as set out below, we will see children with special educational needs accessing high-quality specialist placements in their local mainstream schools, removing long waits for placements to be agreed, and providing great experiences, leading to good outcomes. There will be a reduction in requests from parents for special school places and a corresponding reduction in expenditure on special school places (maintained and independent).

Building Block	Where we are <i>(a short summary of where you are now including a reflection on what is working well, what needs to change and the status of the enablers that underpin your system)</i>	Where we will be in the next 3 years <i>(a short summary of the vision for your local system in the next 3 years including the system enablers, reflecting how your Experts At Hand Offer model will underpin this vision, helping you scale and enhance what is working well and change what is not working so well)</i>
Strengthening inclusion across education settings (Organising places and provision to meet as many needs as possible, as close to home as possible, with all settings and providers moving towards a shared understanding and consistent practices around inclusion) Enablers: • Digital • Workforce. Key Metrics & KPIs: • Improved attendance • Reduced suspensions • Reduced permanent For each of the above reduced variance in both the primary and secondary phase between schools: • Reduced level of referrals to LA to arrange off-site education.	Strengthening inclusion across education settings Current Universal Offer: See also Appendix 5 – Effective Partnership Working. Early years An annual sufficiency statement provides a clear picture of availability of early years places, and this year we have strengthened the survey which informs the statement, to include a focus on SEND and inclusion so that we can identify any barriers that providers are facing in meeting the needs of children with SEND and work to address them. This has identified that some families of children with SEND are not able to access their full childcare entitlement and this will be addressed through the Reform implementation process. One Family Hub opened in April at Patchway and Best Start Inclusion Practitioners are being recruited to provide support working with other services such as Speech and Language and Dingley’s Promise to meet need to support greater access to early years places where required.	Strengthening inclusion across education settings Strengthened Universal Offer: To support the delivery of a consistent universal offer, in year 1, a working group will be established by SEND and Inclusions lead officers with representatives from early years sector, schools (primary and secondary), post 16 providers to work on establishing the all-age partnership- wide Universal Inclusion Offer (UIO). This means that by year three we will have co-produced a partnership-wide all age offer (UIO) to enable a shared understanding of evidence-based, effective inclusive practice and provision for children and young people with SEND. The development of the UIO and group level support will involve examination of the reasons why children may currently be travelling out of the local area to access support. Focus will be on preventing escalation and meeting their needs locally, with the aim of ensuring access to appropriate provision in each locality. We will have focussed on all those experiencing barriers to learning across teaching and learning, environment and culture, and systems and workforce, aligning with the National Inclusion Standards, local priorities and the SEND Reform programme. The aim of the offer being to establish a consistent minimum level of inclusive practice, provision and support across all settings and

	We are also increasing capacity of our Portage team to enable additional capacity in the home and links to the Family Hubs. Two local special schools provide places for children with complex needs in the early years Warmley Park, in the South of the district takes children from age three and Two Bridges in the north takes children from age two. These two schools provide sufficient specialist provision in early years to meet need and therefore we have no plans to create additional nursery places in special schools. The schools also offer expertise to mainstream early years and school settings and are commissioned by the local authority for this purpose. Information sharing is in place but is extremely limited and doesn't effectively enable strategic planning and commissioning therefore we are exploring with partners in health, ways to develop integrated early years dashboards that help us to identify need and target support across our services and Family Hubs. Schools 5-16 Although we have a good quality universal offer available it is limited through capacity of settings to deliver, and dependence on trading with local authority services. In relation to universal health services, we have plans in place to improve support for Neurodiversity by	phases, reducing variation in practice and ensuring all children and young people can access timely, evidence-informed support within mainstream provision. The UIO will be developed and refreshed through our locality-based clusters, drawing on population need, school improvement intelligence, service activity data, attendance, suspension and exclusion data, and the views of children, young people and families. It will be formally endorsed by the Local Authority, Integrated Care Board (ICB), Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) representatives, Early Year settings, maintained school leaders, post-16 providers and the Parent Carer Forum (PCF). MAT representatives and the PCF will be directly involved in the design, implementation and review of the Universal Offer through: • Representation on strategic governance and programme boards. • Participation in co-production workshops and consultation activity. • Regular review of inclusion data and outcomes. • Feedback mechanisms linking cluster activity to local area priorities. • Joint evaluation of impact and continuous improvement planning. The Universal Offer will be strengthening early intervention, the graduated response and mainstream inclusion by providing a consistent, evidence-informed framework for inclusive practice and provision, supported by specialist expertise, enabling needs to be identified and met earlier within
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	• Expanding the needs-led neurodiversity model across South Gloucestershire to improve early identification and tailored support • Continued reduction of long waits for neurodevelopmental diagnostic assessments In relation to support for Mental Health we will continue to deliver our plans to expand coverage and access to Mental Health Support Teams (MHST) in schools. In response to the recommendation from the Area SEND Inspection we are working to establish a compliant digital Dynamic Support Register this year, with corresponding arrangements for partners to ensure the register is used for all children who should be included together with an appropriate rating of the risk for each child or young person which is regularly reviewed. The reliance on a traded offer for local authority services means it is not used consistently across the system and schools in particular make choices about what to access. This needs to change and our proposals show how we will develop this over the next three years to establish a shared understanding of evidence-based, effective inclusive practice and provision for children and young people with SEND. Over the next eighteen months, Multi Academy Trust representatives and the Parent Carer Forum (PCF)	mainstream settings. As a result, mainstream settings will be better equipped to meet a wider range of needs within their own provision, reducing escalation to more intensive interventions, statutory processes, alternative provision and specialist placements where needs can be effectively met locally. Through a strengthened Universal Offer, locality-based SEND Clusters and the deployment of Experts at Hand, schools will have earlier access to specialist advice, evidence-informed interventions and whole-setting improvement support through a strengthened graduated response. This will reduce variation in inclusive practice and improve outcomes for children and young people within their local communities. Plans to introduce our new needs-led Neuro Developmental Pathway Model will be well advanced and embedded in the system with children and young people waiting no longer than fifty-two weeks for a neurodevelopmental assessment by the end of year three (urgent assessment waits will be maintained below eighteen weeks). Coverage of mental health support teams will have extended from a position of 77% access by end of year one moving toward 100% coverage by end of year three. A compliant dynamic support register and corresponding arrangements will be fully operational and working as intended. The Expert at Hands offer will be jointly commissioned with partners and as the reach will extend to providers of services to South Gloucestershire children in placements out of area,
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	will be directly involved in the design, implementation and review of the Universal Offer through: • Representation on strategic governance and programme boards. • Participation in co-production workshops and consultation activity. • Regular review of inclusion data and outcomes. • Feedback mechanisms linking cluster activity to local area priorities. • Joint evaluation of impact and continuous improvement planning. Through our current ordinarily available provision utilised in schools via locality-based SEND Clusters we have been successful in reducing the rate of increase of EHC needs assessments for example and bringing South Glos schools in line with national average performance measures in many areas this is evident through impact reports to Schools Forum. However, through the development of a universal offer coupled with the deployment of Experts at Hand, schools will have earlier access to specialist advice, evidence-informed interventions and whole-setting improvement support through a strengthened graduated response. This will reduce variation in inclusive practice and improve outcomes for children and young people within their local communities. Offers from services commissioned by the council and NHS are predominantly referral-based and	this will involve cross border collaboration, with Gloucestershire, Bristol, Bath and North-East Somerset and Wiltshire Area Partnerships. Alongside Expert at Hand the local area will be continuing to invest in local specialist provision, inclusion bases, special school outreach and alternative provision pathways to ensure that specialist expertise is available closer to home, reducing dependence on out of area placements and positively impacting on travel requirements. This will have been achieved through: • Establishing a consistent expectation of Ordinarily Available Provision aligned to the National Inclusion Standards across and phases • Building workforce confidence, capability and consistency through training, coaching, professional development and access to specialist expertise. • Embedding evidence-informed approaches for the most commonly occurring areas of need, including speech, language and communication needs, neurodivergence, social, emotional and mental health and emotionally based school avoidance. Evidence-informed approaches will be embedded within the UIO, providing proactive access to specialist expertise through Experts at Hand to strengthen whole-setting inclusive practice, workforce capability and mainstream capacity before needs escalate. • Strengthening partnerships with families to ensure concerns are identified and addressed early. • Coproducing a UIO including
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	support individual children and young people, with less focus upon enabling whole school inclusion Current trading and Cluster commissioning data also demonstrates prioritisation by school commissioners of direct support for individual children and young people, and fewer group-based interventions. A significantly smaller proportion of time is allocated to leadership development, staff training or whole school inclusion audits. This creates a disconnect between SEND Support services and wider school improvement, limiting our ability to drive consistent, sustainable improvement in inclusive practice across all schools. Council-provided and NHS-commissioned services have extensive menus of systemic approaches, whole school training, strategies and interventions to support inclusion, and specialist expertise in school-based delivery. The current low baseline of free of charge services to schools represents a locally challenging position from which to scale Experts at Hand requirements to 40 days per average primary school and 160 per average secondary school (a total projected demand of approximately 6000 days and 30 WTE for South Gloucestershire). This needs to be managed through our plans outlined here. Baseline data on mainstream school inclusion in South Gloucestershire shows that, in 2024/2025: • Children and young people at SEND Support has an overall absence rate of 10.8, compared with a national rate of 9.8	○ Speech and language interventions and workforce development approaches such as ELSEC and NELI. ○ Neurodiversity-informed classroom practice and environmental adaptations. ○ Trauma-informed and relational approaches. ○ Whole-school approaches to emotional wellbeing and mental health. ○ Inclusive teaching, adaptive practice and graduated response frameworks. • Supporting SEND Clusters as locality-based inclusion partnerships to coordinate peer support, problem-solving, workforce development and the sharing of effective practice across settings. • Improving transitions and continuity of support between phases. • Using local needs and outcome data to target support and reduce variation in inclusive practice. Early years summary • An annual sufficiency statement provides a clear picture of availability of early years places. We have further strengthened with a focus on SEND and inclusion so that we can use information to identify barriers to access and work to address them. • Best Start Inclusion Practitioners will provide support working with other services such as Speech and Language and Dingley's Promise to meet need and ensure access to early years places as necessary. Portage staff who currently
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	• Children at SEND Support made up 46.35% of all fixed term exclusions, compared with a national rate of 34.05% • Children at SEND Support made up 0.53% of all permanent exclusions, compared with a national rate of 0.46% South Gloucestershire's existing SEND Cluster model achieves high levels of support for children and young people at SEND Support, through the commissioning of support services chosen by mainstream school Clusters to meet their specific needs • Approximately 856 children and young people at SEND Support have been supported through Clusters this year • Cluster offers include: ○ Outreach from Special Schools (29.5 days from 2 providers to 2 Clusters) ○ Outreach from Alternative Provision (141 days from 1 provider to 5 Clusters) ○ Speech and Language Therapy (305 days from 3 providers to 5 Clusters) ○ Occupational Therapy (2 providers to 5 Clusters) ○ Inclusion and Behaviour Support (250 days from 1 provider to 5 Clusters) ○ Mentoring (308 days from 3 providers to 3 Clusters) ○ Educational Psychology (66.5 days from 1 provider to 5 Clusters) Evidence shows the high impact of Cluster commissioning at SEND Support, and the support achieved for school leaders and SENCos through effective networking of schools within	support families in the home will connect with support available through Family Support Hubs. • The Family Support Hub offer will be expanded to encompass Early Bird to improve community access, OT support and SALT. An OT offer, available since March 2026, will be retained and include consultations and an advice line for early providers and parents. • Arrangements with health services will also enable consistent involvement from health partners with agreed information sharing arrangements for example, 2-year checks. • The processes enabling the flow of essential information between early years settings and schools will be strong, ensuring good transition to school. Early years clusters (which are aligned to school clusters) will consistently share information and adopt joined-up support for parents. We will establish a transition timeline that documents responsibilities of providers, schools and families throughout the pre-school year and into reception. This will have been rolled out through sessions with schools, SEND clusters, providers and families through the Family Support Hubs. • Our improved approach will mean that children's needs are identified earlier, and support and intervention can be put in place to prevent escalation as children approach school age.
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	geographical communities. Schools Forum voted unanimously to extend Cluster funding until 2028, securing them as a key feature of our SEND infrastructure as we develop Experts at Hand. The implementation of both Families First and Family Support Hubs have been planned on SEND Cluster footprints, to reflect local communities and context. The development of Experts at Hand will therefore be planned to integrate with, and enhance, our Cluster model. A limitation of the Cluster model is that choosing a bespoke set of services to best meet a school community's needs does not lead to a standardised, baseline offer of consistent inclusion support for all schools. Engagement in Cluster offers is also variable between schools, with 45% of schools accessing 1 to 5 services and 45% of schools accessing 6 to 10 services in 2025/2026. This absence of a standardised offer for all schools contributes to variation in inclusive practice between schools, which is typified by stronger engagement in primary schools than secondary schools, and some examples of poorer inclusive practice in some specific settings. The resulting inconsistency in experience for children, young people and families was reflected in our local area SEND inspection. Data at the end of Term 4 2025/2026, shows variance across schools on key inclusion success measures for children at SEND Support, for example: Primary Attendance – lowest primary: 79.8%, highest primary: 97.6%	Post 16: Through development of a new Post 16 strategy in 2026 involving young people, all post 16 providers and the local business community we will ensure that our offer provides the diverse range of opportunities for young people to meet the needs of our local community. Arrangements with education providers will ensure that the interests and ambitions of young people are considered as early as possible so that young people are then supported through an appropriate pathway to access the opportunity most suited to their ambitions. Consequently, young people will be securing opportunities which respond to their interests and capabilities, expenditure on high- cost repeated college placements will be avoided. The number of young people not in education, employment or training will be reduced. By the end of Year one we will have produced the strategy and commenced implementation of the corresponding action plan. We will have opened the new Post 16 AP technical centre in September 2026 and have a good understanding of how the improvements delivered have improved experiences of young people involved, so that we can consider developing a second provision for 2028/29. We will have established agreements with schools on the approaches required to establish pathways and have secured agreement from several more business to offer apprenticeships and supported internships. By year 3 we will have fully operational arrangements in place for new pathways for learners
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	Secondary Attendance – lowest secondary: 74.8%, highest secondary: 90% Primary Suspensions – lowest primary: 0 per 100, highest primary: 18.8 per 100 Secondary Suspensions – lowest secondary: 2.96 per 100, highest secondary: 29.17 per 100 Primary Permanent exclusions – lowest primary: 0 per 100, highest primary 2.86 per 100 Secondary Permanent exclusions – lowest secondary: 0 per 100, highest secondary: 1.94 per 100 Commissioning of alternative provision has alignment with the 3-tier model and aspects of best practice identified through Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce models. This includes: Tier 1 • All Clusters commission an Education Inclusion Officer as an outreach offer from our statutory, Ofsted-registered Alternative Provision provider (Pathways Learning Centre). This early intervention service provides single-professional consultation to mainstream school staff with the aim of reducing fixed and permanent exclusions. • Joint commissioning by the council and Clusters of an Educational Inclusion Project as an outreach offer from our Youth Justice Service. This service provides mentoring support within mainstream schools for children and young people at risk of exclusion and serious youth violence, to prevent entrance to the youth justice system. • A council-convened, multi-agency group for children and young people at high risk of exclusion from mainstream school. This provides	so that from year 9 all young people with an EHC plan have an identified pathway. We recognise that a strengthened and clearly articulated Post16 offer is central to improving outcomes for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in South Gloucestershire. Our ambition is to ensure that all young people whether on SEND Support or with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are supported to progress successfully into adulthood, with clear and meaningful pathways into education, employment, and independent living. The new strategy themes have been agreed as follows: 1. Understanding provision and identifying needs – this includes a provision map for Post 16 including provision for all young people with SEND. 2. Improving pathways for all – this includes planning additional provision to address gaps for young people with SEND, so that every SEND learner has a pathway to opportunity. 3. SEND and care leavers provision – increasing the level and diversity of opportunity to address gaps in provision including Alternative Provision, supported internships, apprenticeships and Level 1 and 2 progression routes. 4. Improved career guidance and support. Pathways into and out of Post 16 settings for young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan
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	mainstream school leaders with scheduled, rapid access to specialist professionals from education, mental health, social care and safeguarding to collectively problem-solve inclusion challenges for individual children and help schools to maintain their placements. The group has dedicated manager capacity and an annual budget of £150,000 to fund exclusion reducing interventions. Tier 2 - Children and young people who are excluded from mainstream schools receive a short-term, 12-week placements at Pathways Learning Centre before reintegration to another mainstream school. During their placement, Pathways Learning Centre provides access to a range of multi-agency professionals and therapeutic interventions, including a Primary Mental Health Specialist commissioned from our local CAMHS provider. - Children supported under Section 19 of the Education Act receive short-term, online, alternative provision placements until they are ready to reintegrate to mainstream school. Tier 3 - For children and young people who need longer-term specialist placements, these are available from both Pathways Learning Centre or commissioned from Alternative Provision providers on our Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Alternative Provision Framework. - For young people who are post-16 and unable to access South Gloucestershire and Stroud College or our Sixth Form Centres, we are partnering with an alternative provision provider to commission a	(EHCP) will be informed through person-centered annual reviews, robust transition planning, and multi-agency collaboration. From Year 9 onwards, preparation for adulthood outcomes will be embedded within the EHCP review process, supporting young people and families to consider aspirations relating to employment, independent living, community inclusion, and health. Transition planning will involve a range of partners (education providers, SEND casework teams, social care, health services, careers advisers) to ensure that placements and support arrangements are identified at the earliest opportunity. Consistent information sharing between partners, timely specialist advice, and effective progress monitoring help ensure young people are supported to move successfully between educational phases and into further education, training, supported internships, apprenticeships, employment, or adult services where appropriate. Pathways into and out of Post 16 settings for young people with SEND support are informed by Careers Information Advice and Guidance (CIAG) and progress tracking delivered in settings. Pre-NEET programmes delivered by South Gloucestershire teams support pupils most at risk of NEET and careers pathway events, for example, the SEND transition evening, support young people and their families to understand the offers and pathways open to them. The EET Forum and Post 16 Strategy will further strengthen these pathways through improved tracking, enhanced progression routes, and
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	Creative Digital Technologies Centre within South Gloucestershire, offering two-year placements from September 2026. The council has already committed to recruit an Alternative Provision Lead into the SEND and Inclusion Service to lead the development of an AP Strategy. This role will now work in close collaboration with the Experts at Hand Steering Group to align the emerging Experts at Hand offer with our existing three-tier Alternative Provision commissioning arrangements. Post 16 A more detailed description of our current offer is included in Effective Partnership Working - Appendix 5, and this is summarised below. We recognise the need to strengthen and clearly articulate a Post16 offer to our SEND community as currently the local offer is limited and children are travelling further than should be necessary to access appropriate provision. The need to address this was identified as priority area for improvement in the 2025 SEND and AP Inspection and we have plans in place to do this. Improvement work had commenced with the development of an Education Employment and Training Strategy and establishment of an Education, Employment and Training Forum which the inspection team had recognised was already having impact. We recognise that our current offer should be expanded to better meet need and this is being taken forward through the development of a new Post 16 Strategy, underway currently. Development of the strategy involves all local providers including those in neighbouring local authorities who are used	increased opportunities for young people with EHCPs to achieve positive outcomes in adulthood.
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	extensively (Bath College, Bristol of City College) by many of our learners for whom those provisions are their nearest local FE centre. Stakeholder engagement exercises are underway to gather inputs and enable contributions to support an effective coproduced and collaborative approach to development of the strategy and corresponding action plans. Input will also inform commissioning requirements of all providers of our local Expert at Hand offer. A key priority is to clarify and streamline pathways both into and out of Post 16 settings, and we are in the process of working with stakeholders across the local area to coproduce the South Gloucestershire Post 16 Strategy. From the first stage development of this strategy, we have a comprehensive map of Post 16 provision across South Gloucestershire that identifies the strengths and gaps across the local area. At the same time as developing the strategy we have already begun to address known gaps and have commissioned a Digital AP Skills Centre in the Kingswood area that will open in Autumn 2026 improving pathways for young people with SEND (EHCP/SEMH) living in the Kingswood area of South Gloucestershire. Pathways into and out of Post 16 settings for young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are informed through person-centered annual reviews, robust transition planning, and multi-agency collaboration. From Year 9 onwards, preparation for adulthood outcomes is embedded within the EHCP review process, supporting young people and families	
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	to consider aspirations relating to employment, independent living, community inclusion, and health. Transition planning involves a range of partners (education providers, SEND casework teams, social care, health services, careers advisers) to ensure that placements and support arrangements are identified at the earliest opportunity. Consistent information sharing between partners, timely specialist advice, and effective progress monitoring help ensure young people are supported to move successfully between educational phases and into further education, training, supported internships, apprenticeships, employment, or adult services where appropriate. Pathways into and out of Post 16 settings for young people with SEND support are informed by Careers Information Advice and Guidance (CIAG) and progress tracking delivered in settings. Pre-NEET programmes delivered by South Gloucestershire teams support pupils most at risk of NEET and careers pathway events, for example, the SEND transition evening, support young people and their families to understand the offers and pathways open to them.	
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Building Block	Where we are <i>(a short summary of where you are now including a reflection on what is working well, what needs to change and the status of the enablers that underpin your system)</i>	Where we will be in the next 3 years <i>(a short summary of the vision for your local system in the next 3 years including the system enablers, reflecting how your Experts At Hand Offer model will underpin this vision, helping you scale and enhance what is working well and change what is not working so well)</i>
Access to specialist support and local placements (Improving collaboration between settings and deploying expertise from a range of specialist and	Key priority for this building block from the maturity assessment: Children requiring specialist provision have opportunity to access that provision in mainstream schools in their local area.	We will have invested capital to create specialist mainstream inclusion bases in each cluster to meet the needs of the local SEND community addressing gaps in sufficiency of places. Children and families will be able to access specialist provision in each

expert sources, to support schools and settings to meet needs earlier and locally.) Enablers: Workforce Capital investment Digital Key Metrics & KPIs 1. ↓ Rate of EHCP requests per 1,000 pupils 2↑ Timeliness of early intervention support (e.g. for those on ND pathway) Waiting times for specialist assessment and support		local area which is able to meet children's needs close to home. We will start to see a reduction in wait time to access special school places and reduced expenditure on the use of independent special school places. There will be a corresponding reduction in home to school transport expenditure. By the end of year 1 we will have opened a new local Post 16 AP Skills Centre in Kingswood and commenced delivery of first phase specialist bases already in the pipeline with some opening in 2027/28 academic year. We will have worked with secondary schools to identify the locations of 11-18 specialist bases. By the end of year 3 we will have all those bases which require only remodelling of existing spaces open for the start of the 2029/30 academic year.
3↓ Exclusions and suspensions for pupils with SEND 4↑ Attendance rates for pupils with SEND in mainstream 5. Reduced NEETS	Key priority for this building block from the maturity assessment: Early and accurate identification of need with effective response and access to provision.	Using Expert at Hand through clusters reflecting local need, we will accelerate progress in building capability of workforce to accurately identify need and provide an effective response. This approach will ensure that practitioners are equipped with skills required to identify and meeting the needs of children with SEND early, improving parental confidence in and engagement with the offer and ultimately improving outcomes for children. It will also provide value for money by preventing escalation and the need for costly interventions later in children's lives. In year 1 we will see increased timely access to specialist support for staff, especially EPs, SaLT and specialist teachers.

		In year 3 we will see a reduction in the gap between the local position on EHC needs assessment (EHCNa) referrals for SEMH needs so that it is close to national.
	Collaboration and access to expert sources to allow needs to be met earlier and locally. South Gloucestershire's current SEND inclusion system is generally strong in early years and through collaborative school clusters, strategic planning and commissioning we are increasingly meeting the needs of children in their locality resulting in increasingly inclusive schools. But there are inconsistencies. Children with social, emotional and mental health needs are not well supported in mainstream. They typically have poor experiences of school and as they reach 16, they are unprepared for adulthood. A lack of appropriate provision means poor experiences continue. Our data indicates children disengaging in education, high dependency on off-site education, parents seeking specialist education, often provided out of area. Changing this involves action to build trust of parents that mainstream schools can effectively provide access to highly skilled workforce, support and inclusive environments. The step change we require will be enabled mainly through Expert at Hand. Early Years Strengths • Well-established, free and non-traded inclusion support offer to support providers in identifying and meeting need at SEN Support. • Access to EP, SLT, OT and specialist school	Collaboration and access to expert sources to allow needs to be met earlier and locally. We will have a fully established Experts at Hand model (Appendix 2) with development and implementation driven through a steering group of all partners (education, health, social care, PCF) and stakeholders representing early years, schools, FE (including out of area) to develop a local EAH model with arrangements for ensuring equitable access including monitoring uptake and establishing a core allocation. There will have been ongoing review following implementation to understand usefulness of the model to deliver what is required by our local system and to agree adaptations as necessary. Using the Expert at Hand model through clusters with an offer reflecting need of the locality, we will have accelerated progress in building capability of workforce to accurately identify need and provide an effective response. This approach will ensure that practitioners are equipped with skills required to identify and meeting the needs of children with SEND early, improving parental confidence in and engagement with the offer and ultimately improving outcomes for children. It will also provide value for money by preventing escalation and the need for costly interventions later in children's lives. By the end of year one we will start to see increased access to specialist support for staff, (EPs, SaLT and specialist teachers). By the end of year three we will see a reduction in the gap between the local position

	outreach • Increasing early identification and uptake of support. • Planned expansion of the offer already through Family Support Hubs with recruitment underway as necessary. Challenges Variability in uptake of the offer across the system Some limited understanding of the barriers that families face in taking up their entitlement for childcare. <u>Schools:</u> Strengths Through the current resources available and agreed by Schools Forum, and through trading arrangements with school clusters and individual schools, our current offer: • Is strong in terms of collaborative working between schools, supporting children at SEND Support which is having impact. • Enables local flexibility and shared practice • Supports professional networks across schools • LA-provided and NHS-commissioned services have extensive menus of systemic approaches, whole school training, strategies and interventions to support inclusion, and specialist expertise in school-based delivery Challenges Arising from low levels of funding at the LA and across schools, the key challenge with the current model is inadequate access to free support services for schools, leading to inequitable access, high reliance on traded services which is not	on EHC needs assessment (EHCNa) referrals for SEMH needs so that it is close to national and as well as a reduction against all other needs. Experts at Hand will mean we address inconsistencies and move from a reactive system to a proactive, equitable and inclusive model that builds capacity across all education settings. Our Core Model • A guaranteed, equitable baseline of specialist support for all schools (approx. 40 days primary / 160 days secondary) • Delivered through integrated, multi-agency teams (EPs, SLTs, OTs, specialist teachers and HLTAs) • Cluster-based delivery with a single point of access and allocation based on need and school size This will involve a key shift in approach: • Moving from individual, referral-based support to whole-school improvement • Focus on early intervention, prevention and workforce development • Emphasises coaching, training, modelling and inclusive practice rather than casework Focus of Support Support will prioritise common areas of need including neurodivergence, social and emotional needs, speech and language, and emotionally based school avoidance, while strengthening early
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	sustainable and can lead to variable access to specialist expertise. The services available include sensory support, council-provided EPs and specialist teachers/HLTAs, and NHS-commissioned SLT, OTs and mental health specialists. Strong expertise exists but is not optimally deployed, capacity of EPs, for example, is tied to statutory work and trading models and there is limited system-level impact. Although improving there is weak alignment with school improvement – i.e. some schools who would benefit from support are choosing not to participate, and this is influenced by the need to pay. This limits the ability to drive consistent, sustainable improvement in inclusive practice across all schools. Consequently, in performance data we see variation in attendance and exclusion rates with SEND pupils overrepresented in exclusions, high referrals from some schools to the LA to arrange off-site education, and inconsistency in experiences of children across schools. Post 16 Strengths Good quality provision at our local FE College, South Glos and Stroud College (SGS) but a limited offer means that young people with special educational needs able to participate at level two or below do not secure places at SGS. Children can access provision at out of area mainstream colleges, for example, Bristol City	identification, graduated response and inclusive classroom practice. Education Phase Approach • Early Years: Builds on a strong existing offer, expanding early identification and intervention through Family Support Hubs and inclusion practitioners • Schools: Core delivery focus, embedding inclusive leadership, teaching practice and implementation of National Inclusion Standards • Post-16: New offer to be developed (Year 2) and delivered (Year 3) to improve inclusion and reduce reliance on alternative provision System Integration Experts at Hand will act as a consistent, non-traded foundation aligned with SEND Clusters, NHS services, Neurodiversity Support Teams, Mental Health Support Teams and Alternative Provision, enabling better coordination and reducing opportunity for fragmentation. Workforce and Delivery Year 1 delivery is based on approximately 24.5 whole time equivalents across key professions, jointly delivered by council and health services, with cluster-based team deployment. Implementation Timeline • Year 1: Co-production, recruitment and mobilisation • Year 2: Embed, refine and develop post-16 and transition support • Year 3: Full delivery at scale and expansion of specialist outreach
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	College or Bath College, which for some communities is an easier option in terms of travel than SGS and both offer good quality mainstream provision. Challenges As can be seen from previous summary on strengths, whilst quality of provision may be good at Post 16 there is very limited specialist support in colleges and sixth forms, leading to a rise in alternative provision placements, and gaps in local provision and inclusion pathways. Capital investment has been used to enable access as much as possible to sufficient provision for SEND across our local area. The current position is set out below. Early Years Early years settings organised in clusters work alongside school clusters, and this is improving consistency of transition to school and enabling system-wide operational improvement. We have agreed to establish an Early Years Development Group with the sector to support strategic planning and commissioning relative to needs of the community and ensure a sustainable inclusive offer between settings and school-based nurseries. This EY development group will be represented through governance structures to ensure strategic planning and commissioning for EAH takes account of needs in EY sector. We have sufficient provision in the special school sector which meets demand with two good special schools offering nursery places and located in the north and south of the county as follows:	Intended Impact • Improved attendance, reduced exclusions and better outcomes for SEND learners • Increased staff confidence and reduced reliance on escalation • More consistent inclusion practice across schools • Increased participation in mainstream provision and reduced need for alternative provision In summary we have achieved our objectives for the three years: to establish a system-wide, preventative model in terms of escalation of need, with a consistent baseline of support, that standardises access to specialist expertise and enables a shift to early intervention and access to timely appropriate support, strengthens whole-school mainstream inclusion and workforce capability, reducing variation between schools and delivering more consistent outcomes for children and young people with SEND. Early Years The Early years Development Group will be established and developed system-wide sustainable plan for inclusive practice enabling access to inclusive provision in each locality. There will be no additional specialist provision, but we have completed exploration of benefit of mainstream school nursery places and identified an option to take forward if required. We have understood the key issues affecting inclusion in early years and implemented changes through Expert and Hand and Best Start Family Support Hubs to address priority issues.
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	Two Bridges from 2 years (north) Warmley from 3 years (south) Therefore, for the foreseeable future we do not intend to create any more places in special schools. We do not have any specialist provision in mainstream, and we will explore the benefits of developing a specialist nursery in a mainstream setting, possibly with support from a special school. We are aware that some parents of SEND struggle to access their entitlement to childcare. We understand this could be due to a range of factors (settings not being confident about meeting the needs of the child, settings being unable to sustain the cost of the additional specialist staffing required, parents not be confident about the ability of the setting to care for their child). We will seek to explore this fully through more detailed surveys. In the first instance we will ensure that all settings are at least equipped to care for SEND children with less complex needs. Schools (5-16) We have 6 special schools located across the county supporting a range of needs. 5 out of 6 schools offer a good quality offer and one school is improving showing progress to achieving expected standards soon. Improvement has been supported by the local Special Multi Academy Trust – Enable Trust. We have plans to expand one special school, New Horizons Special Schools (SEMH) as places are extremely limited (64) for a county of South Glos population especially as the school also serves Bristol.	Schools (5-16) The strategy for delivery of LA commissioned specialist bases is aligned with school plans. The position on LA specialist base delivery is that we have delivered Phase 1 of our strategy with improved access to places for SEMH in primary in cluster 2; and places for a wider range of needs in primary mainstream schools in clusters 3 and 6. We have created additional places in mainstream secondary in cluster 4.5. Phase 2 has achieved agreed design, ready for implementation and provision which involved remodelling of existing spaces will be further ahead. Our strategy ensures a match between the level of places available in primary to feed into an equivalent level at secondary. We will work alongside schools through a capital investment steering group with a developed specification for inclusion bases commissioned by schools and be ensuring they meet agreed quality standards through established local authority arrangements Inclusion bases commissioned by secondary schools, will all be in place aligned to Multi Academy Trust inclusion plans. If possible, unmet need in areas such as Thornbury, especially in secondary phase, may be close to being addressed by using the opportunity of surplus capacity at Marlwood School, subject to progress in developing workforce capacity through EAH. Existing resources bases which are subject to change will have been reviewed, we will have
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	The current level of specialist provision in mainstream school environments is as follows: 5-16 Schools (Please also refer to the Map of SEN School Clusters - Appendix 6) Primary – specialist resource bases at Charborough Road (cluster 2) • Woodlands (cluster 3) • Blackhorse (cluster 6) • Lyde Green (cluster 4.5) • Emerson Green (cluster 6) • No provision in mainstream in cluster 1, north. Secondary – specialist resource bases at Brimsham Green (cluster 3) • Yate (cluster 3) • Chipping Sodbury (cluster 3) • Hanham Woods (cluster 6) • Abbeywood (cluster 2) • No provision in mainstream clusters 1 or 4.5. Over the past four years, South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) has worked with Mastodon C, a specialist data science partner, to develop a robust evidence base on SEND need and provision, as set	concluded any necessary statutory consultations to support changes, and implementation of plans including workforce developments will be well advanced. The third phase, will have reached options phase at least as the new Capital Steering Group will have been established, ensuring appropriate sites and high-quality provision are aligned with demographic need and consider accessibility. Post 16 For post-16 learners, we will have agreed a range of options for learners to improve access in each locality, and this will include reviewing existing mainstream 11-16 specialist provision to extend to 11-18 if appropriate to support improved access. In partnership with SGS and secondary schools, consider opportunities to support collaborative arrangements between the college and schools operating in localities. Current offers at SGS and out of area colleges will have been reviewed to consider appropriate changes to improve access including through a new more diverse curriculum. The specialist post-16 alternative provision, which opened in September 2026 in Kingswood will have been operating for one full academic year and consideration given to developing a new similar provision in the north so that planning a second provision has commenced.
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	out in our SEND Sufficiency Strategy - Appendix 7. This analysis identified key priorities: 1. increasing specialist provision for children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs across primary and secondary phases and 2. ensuring appropriate provision for children with Communication and Interaction, Complex Learning, and Sensory and Physical needs within mainstream schools. Phase 1 of our strategy is underway, delivering 40 new places across three Specialist Inclusion Bases, developed collaboratively with MATs with the schemes now at RIBA Stage 1. An impact assessment model demonstrates the benefits of this investment, including reduced reliance on special schools, out-of-area placements, independent provision and Home to School Transport, alongside improvements in travel distance and journey times Capital Investment Costs and Benefits - Appendix 12. Since 2022, SGC has invested High Needs Capital funding to improve inclusivity in mainstream settings, including specialist toilets, ramps, hoists, and enhanced lighting and acoustics. This programme will continue through the 2026/27 SEND Capital allocation. We will also expand investment in assistive technology, building on our award-winning AT hub	At the same time use of assistive technology will have started to be applied to new environments wherever relevant, practicable, and possible.
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	To meet expectations of the SEND Reforms which for us involves ensuring access to specialist provision in mainstream in each cluster, we will target those clusters where there is little or no access currently, for example clusters 1 and 4.5. At the same time, we will be reviewing the level of places and primary needs met by existing resource bases so that as we develop specialist inclusion bases, they provide sufficient places with greater flexibility to meet the needs required. The strategy will be fully aligned with secondary school proposals to develop inclusion bases at secondary schools and meetings with MAT and secondary school leaders have commenced to agree how that will be achieved. Changes to existing resource bases will also require a focus on workforce development to ensure the school staff have appropriate skills to adapt to increased flexibility as necessary. Post 16 A Post 16 Strategic Lead officer post was established and filled in January this year and is now developing a new Post 16 strategy. The first stage involves comprehensive mapping of provision across South Gloucestershire to identify strengths and gaps across the local area. Strategy themes have been agreed as follows: 1) Understanding provision and identifying needs – this includes a provision map for Post 16 including provision for all young people with SEND.	
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	2) Improving pathways for all – this includes planning additional provision to address gaps for young people with SEND, so that every SEND learner has a pathway to opportunity. 3) SEND and care leavers provision – increasing the level and diversity of opportunity to address gaps in provision including Alternative Provision, supported internships, apprenticeships and Level 1 and 2 progression routes. 4) Improved career guidance and support. We know that transport is a key issue for accessing Post 16 provision in South Gloucestershire. Young people in Thornbury for example, even with independent travel training with struggle to navigate the transport system to access opportunity at SGS, in Filton. Some young people tell us that they want to be able to continue their education at their mainstream secondary school, whilst others will want to pursue a different pathway. Our plans would ensure access to a diverse range of local opportunities within local areas as much as possible. There is also significant cross-border movement from some communities given their nearest provision is in a neighbouring LA (for example, Bristol City College, or Bath College). Collaborative work with out of authority colleges and providers is strong but will be strengthened further through co-production in the development of our strategy.	
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Building Block	Where we are <i>(a short summary of where you are now including a reflection on what is working well, what needs to change and the status of the enablers that underpin your system)</i>	Where we will be in the next 3 years <i>(a short summary of the vision for your local system in the next 3 years including the system enablers, reflecting how your Experts At Hand Offer model will underpin this vision, helping you scale and enhance what is working well and change what is not working so well)</i>
System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production (Putting in place the enabling conditions across a local area that ensures planning and provision reflects the local area & is joined up, including strategic co-production with parent and carers and children and young people) Enablers: • Workforce • Digital Key Metrics & KPIs • ↑ Attendance and engagement at SEND & AP Partnership Board • ↑ Delivery against agreed reform milestones	Key priority for this building block from the maturity assessment: We will establish a coproduced inclusion framework for the local area which all partners agree to commit to, with agreed system inclusion targets and robust arrangements for monitoring inclusive practice, and ensuring that children have access to inclusive environments, adapted to meet their needs and support as necessary across all schools.	Children will feel that they belong, they will be able to engage in learning, and they will thrive and achieve. We will see a reduction in referrals for the local authority for off-site education, and requests from parents for specialist places. In year 1 we will have agreed an inclusion framework with a system target to apply from the start of the 2027/28 academic year. By year 3 we will start to see an improvement in inclusion performance measures (persistent absence, suspensions, section 19 referrals to LA).
	Key priority for this building block from the maturity assessment: Our families have confidence that our local arrangements can meet their child or young person's needs.	Delivery of new arrangements for effective engagement and co-production with children and families which apply consistently across the local area at strategic and operational levels, will build the confidence required that our local plan has been designed with children and family needs at the heart. More children, young people, and families will believe that local mainstream provision is equipped and designed to meet need. Through improved engagement between settings and families, the level of families seeking places in specialist provision will reduce and there will be a corresponding reduction in expenditure on specialist places and associated transport cost.

• Commitment to inclusion framework with system target • ↓ Escalations and disputes between partners • ↑ Family and CYP confidence scores in the SEND system • ↑ Evidence of co-production in service design and review		By the end of year 1 we will have agreed our new engagement and co-production arrangements, and these will have been introduced system-wide including through each of the Five school clusters. By the end of year 3 we will have operated the arrangements for at least one full year, and we will be able to review the impact and the difference that this has made to families. Through the annual PCF survey and other engagement exercises across the year we will be able to determine the difference in confidence levels that families have in the ability of their local mainstream school to meet their child's needs compared to an initial baseline. The qualitative information collected will enable us to see what more needs to happen to build confidence.
	System leadership, partnership collaboration The 2025 Area SEND Inspection identified strong leadership and shared accountability, which for some aspects lead to effective collaborative arrangement which going beyond statutory obligations. Examples include: - Shared responsibility for leading the work of the High Risk Group – a local authority coordinated panel, chaired by a MAT secondary school leader including school and AP leaders and other agencies (Health, Police), which exists to provide support and challenge to schools when children are at high risk of exclusion. The outcome of the work of the panel over the last two years is a significant reduction in permanent	System leadership, partnership collaboration Existing system leadership, partnership collaborative arrangements will be strengthened further. SEN clusters will have evolved from being SEN Support focussed to all levels of need. This means that cluster boards will have been reviewed to enable greater focus on all ages and improve participation at secondary especially. At individual locality and overall cluster board level, the expertise and strength of local special school and AP experts will be consistently informing commissioning priorities. The individual Boards will evolve to include consistent multi-agency involvement of health

	exclusions, hence the findings by the inspection team that South Gloucestershire schools are becoming increasing inclusive. -Shared responsibility for driving efficiencies and improving effectiveness through Schools Forum and especially the High Needs Working Group (HNWG), chaired by a senior MAT education leader and involving representatives from across the school sector working alongside officers to deliver the Safety Valve, now the Education Transformation Programme. Schools Forum includes representative of the EY sector and FE sector, although the HNWG focussing on an all-age programme, does not include sector representatives from Early Years and Further Education. Membership of HNWG will be extended to include EY and FE sector representatives. -School-led cluster arrangement which involve each cluster operating a cluster board led either by one school leader or jointly by one primary and one secondary school leader. The individual cluster boards include lead SENCOs from schools in the cluster. Operational delivery of the board is facilitated by a local authority employed finance officer and commissioning officer. Leaders from each individual cluster board come together to form an overall cluster board which is chaired by the local authority and provides opportunity for support and challenge, to apply system-wide learning, identify common themes and consider commissioning priorities which would be better managed through a local area rather than individual cluster approach.	partners and social care practitioners and FE partners. The early years clusters and reformed school 5-18 clusters will be working together in each locality area. Representation of the HNWG will have been extended to include EY and FE. To encourage and strengthen participation of all schools the involvement of MAT leaders will have been considered such that MAT CEOs act as co-sponsor alongside the LA for each individual cluster board and the overall Cluster Board. The South Gloucestershire Inclusion Framework will have been established for at least one full academic year, and the monitoring arrangements will be in place to enable an overview of contributions from schools and MATs. Data will be starting to be used to inform strategic planning and commissioning at the redesigned Cluster Board and issues being shared openly at the LA DCS/MAT CEO Strategic Conversation meetings which happen each term with actions agreed to respond to early indications of concerns. Partnership arrangements will be working effectively at all levels (individual locality cluster, local area cluster board, Local Area Partnership Board – i.e. Children's Outcomes Board) enabled through access to shared, high-quality data, including joint dashboards and use of a partnership maturity matrix to assess effectiveness and progress as reforms are implemented.
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	-System leadership between local authority and the ICB is strong with shared responsibility for driving changes and improvements as evidenced, for example in relation to strategic development and operational delivery of the new needs-led model for the Neuro Development Transformation Pathway. This significant change which involves all providers and services to embrace a new approach to support earliest identification of need. Promotion of the benefits of the new approach was led by local authority including with MAT leaders and all schools in partnership with health leaders. A limitation of the Cluster model is that choosing a bespoke set of services to best meet a school community's needs does not lead to a standardised, baseline offer of consistent inclusion support for all schools. Engagement in Cluster offers is also variable between schools, with 45% of schools accessing one to five services and 45% of schools accessing six to ten services in 2025/2026. The variation in participation and take-up of services leads to inconsistencies as explained previously. Through agreement with Multi Academy Trust (MAT) leaders we will increase participation in cluster arrangements so that all children benefit. Through discussions with MAT CEOs, so far, we have agreed that we will strengthen accountability and shared responsibility by introducing through the Reforms a South Gloucestershire Inclusion Framework which includes system-wide targets that we all work to. Monitoring arrangements will ensure that the contributions of individual schools and MATs will be evident enabling peer to peer challenge and support.	Strengthened dispute resolution and decision-making processes will have been agreed across the partnership so that all system partners can address issues early and consistently, supported by transparent escalation routes. Neighbourhood health will be an aligned and core organising principle for SEND delivery, with integrated, multi-agency teams working around children, young people and families in local communities. Services will be aligned to place, with strong links to education settings and community assets, enabling earlier identification of need, more coordinated support and a consistent experience for families. Co-production will be embedded at neighbourhood level, ensuring that provision is shaped by local need and reduces reliance on specialist and statutory services. Engagement and Co-production We will have strengthened arrangements as follows: 1) Strengthened early co-production at problem-definition stage where appropriate. 2) Implemented a clear co-production framework (governance, definitions and understanding, expectations, roles, review cycles, impact measures). 3) Broadened participation (early years, under-represented groups, complex needs). 4) Improved joint planning and coordination across partners (SEND redesign, commissioning, inclusion and attendance strategies etc). 5) Established agreed arrangements for co-production and engagement across education,
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	We will underpin effective partnership working at all levels (individual locality cluster, local area cluster board, Local Area Partnership Board – which will be the Children’s Outcomes Board), with access to shared, high-quality data, including joint dashboards and use of a partnership maturity matrix to assess effectiveness and progress as reforms are implemented. Local Authority arrangements with schools do not support timely resolution of disputes with families and this means that the local authority is often dealing with concerns which have then escalated and become difficult to resolve. To address this issue, we will review our current arrangements as a partnership to ensure improved arrangements are designed to support timely resolution with new arrangements published on the Local Offer and promoted across the partnership. Neighbourhood approaches are developing across health, local authority and community partners; however, they are not yet consistently embedded within SEND pathways or aligned to a shared model for children and young people. Engagement and Co-production We have strong relations with our Parent Carer Forum and good engagement with children and young people (Engagement and Co-Production - Appendix 8) The 2025 Area SEND and AP inspection identified the need for improved to ensure engagement and co-production is happening consistently strategically and operationally and the DfE approved post inspection SEN Strategic Action Plan - Appendix 1 sets out	health and social care services so that front line services create accessible opportunities for all families 6) Embedded consistent “You said, we did” approaches ensuring that there are a range of opportunities to capture the voice of children and young people independently of parents in addition to capturing parent carer voice. 7) Reviewed PCF capacity and commissioning. 8) Embedded co-production in QA and review processes to drive improvement. The partnership will have determined the investment required to ensure the PCF is properly resourced which will have include consideration of futures years investment by the ICB for core activities alongside any additional project funding required for activity in the SRP. Likewise South Gloucestershire Council will have determined the level of funding required to extend the PCF's capacity into early years, post-16 and cluster-level community engagement and this will have been provided each year so far together with funding to support a partnership communications plan for the SRP. The Young People’s Participation Strategy will be reviewed in 2028 in readiness for a new strategy from 2029. In the meantime, we will have strengthened direct involvement of young people into key strategic groups, for example the Childrens Partnership, Complex Needs and SEND workstream scheduling meetings across 26/27 academic year to enable participation. We will have reviewed the existing framework against the NHS England Co-Production Resource
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	the detail of how improvements are/will be delivered. The action we are taking to put improved arrangements in place will be delivered by year 3. South Gloucestershire's approach to capturing the voice of children and young people with SEND is set out in the Young People's Participation Strategy- Appendix 9, which is driven by the pledge developed by young people themselves: <i>Nothing About Us Without Us</i>. The strategy is explicit that participation means being involved from the start. The Youth Participation Manager has responsibility for ensuring CYP voice is captured and is also a member of the Engagement and Co-Production Steering Group. CYP coproduce through a range of established routes including council participation groups, Youth Empowerment Sessions and Health's Barnardo's HYPE, as well as the Youth Board, and the Youth Justice Panel. CYP also complete the Online Pupil Survey within their school. Evidence of influence is tracked and reported through a consistent 'You said, We did' format, so young people can see what changed as a result of their input. Young Ambassadors help hold the partnership accountable, asking hard questions when promises are not kept. Senior managers attend the quarterly Young People's Insights group and commit to clear actions in response to what they hear directly from young people. South Gloucestershire already has a coproduced local co-production framework: the SEND Co-Production Charter, the Co-Production Toolkit, the Young People's Participation Strategy, and the Engagement and Co-Production Steering Group	Guide to establish our minimum co-production benchmark. Taking the Charter-based framework as the right starting point, the review will have identified where we need to strengthen or formalise our approach. The review will have been completed by March 2027, with improvement actions identified and reported to the appropriate board so that it informs activity in 2027/28. The review will have been led by the Engagement and Co-Production Steering Group and delivered as a partnership, sitting alongside the Local Partnership Maturity Assessment as part of how the partnership assesses and improves co-production over time. Specific project activity with children and young people will have been ongoing since plan delivery commenced and young people will be reporting back through the relevant boards on how changes are impacting children and young people lives. Scheduling of board meetings will have been reviewed to ensure direct involvement of young people on the board. SENDIASS arrangements will be maintained as they exist currently until the end of the current 3-year contract. We will then consider requirements arising as appropriate from changes to the national legal framework. Mediation We will have determined ways to improve current arrangements to maintain local metrics for timeliness, resolution rates and effectiveness to support monitoring and accountability so that local
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	set out our shared principles, processes and accountability arrangements across the partnership. SENDIASS plays a key role in supporting children, young people and parent carers with free, confidential, impartial and accessible information, advice and support across education, health and social care. The service helps families understand their rights, navigate SEND processes and participate confidently in decision-making. The service has recently been recommissioned to deliver 3-year service against the Council for Disabled Children's SENDIASS Minimum Standards and Quality Standards. A clear performance framework, including co-produced Key Performance Indicators, will monitor accessibility, quality, independence and impact. Performance and service-user feedback will be reviewed regularly through SEND Partnership governance arrangements. The commissioned provider is required to operate independently of statutory decision-making processes and does not make decisions regarding assessments, EHC plans, placements or funding. To address any concerns about independence during mediation or disagreement resolution, families will receive clear information about the distinct role of SENDIASS and the separate independent mediation and disagreement resolution services available to them. Through robust contract management and ongoing engagement with children, young people and	mediation can be enhanced, and changes implemented in year 2.
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	parent carers, South Gloucestershire is committed to ensuring SENDIASS remains a trusted, high-quality and independent source of support. Mediation Across the Southwest region Global Mediation is used to support arrangements locally and a copy of their most recent report for the period 1 September 2025 to 28 February 2026 is included as South West Region Interim Global Medication Report - Appendix 10 and South Gloucestershire Analysis of the SW Region Interim Global Mediation Report - Appendix 11 and demonstrate how the voices of parents and children and young people are incorporated. The following is a summary of the findings in the report for our local area. 1. South Gloucestershire has a relatively high number of mediation referrals. South Gloucestershire recorded 143 referrals during the six-month period, placing it within the higher group of local authorities across the Southwest region. The report therefore suggests that South Gloucestershire is managing a substantial level of SEND disagreement activity and demand, although not at an unusually high level compared with authorities of a similar scale. 2. Refusal to assess/reassess disputes are the dominant issue The largest category of disputes in South Gloucestershire related to refusal to assess or reassess decisions. The authority recorded 121 refusal-to-assess referrals, compared with 25 EHCP content disputes and 45 EHCP amendment disputes. This mirrors the broader national picture	
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	where front-door threshold disputes continue to dominate SEND mediation activity. 3. South Gloucestershire has a very low Part 1 certificate rate South Gloucestershire recorded only 15 Part 1 certificates, representing approximately 10% of referrals. A Part 1 certificate is issued where parents or young people have received the required mediation information and advice session but decide not to proceed to formal mediation. The certificate then enables an appeal to be lodged with the SEND Tribunal. The report specifically identifies South Gloucestershire as one of the authorities with the lowest percentages of Part 1 certificates in the region. This may indicate that a comparatively high proportion of families are willing to engage in mediation rather than ending the process after receiving mediation advice. 4. Mediation activity is moderate to high South Gloucestershire held 43 mediation meetings during the reporting period. This places the authority above several neighbouring authorities. The data suggests an active mediation service with regular formal dispute activity. 5. Most outcomes are partial rather than full resolutions The report shows that South Gloucestershire achieved more partial resolutions than full resolutions. There were 18 full resolutions and 24 partial resolutions, with very few cases ending in impasse. This suggests that mediation is generally constructive and productive, although many cases	
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	are only partially resolved rather than fully concluded at mediation stage. 6. Timeliness is reasonable but not among the strongest in the region South Gloucestershire recorded 63 Part 3 certificates, with 48% of mediations taking place within 30 days. A Part 3 certificate is issued where mediation has been requested but does not take place within the statutory timescale, normally within 30 days. The certificate allows the parent or young person to proceed to SEND Tribunal without waiting any longer for mediation. Part 3 certificates can therefore provide an indication of operational timeliness and system pressures within mediation services. South Gloucestershire's position places the authority broadly in the middle of the regional picture — stronger than some authorities but not performing at the highest level for timeliness. Overall Analysis Overall, the report presents South Gloucestershire as having a relatively high demand SEND system with active mediation engagement and generally stable performance. Strengths appear to include constructive engagement in mediation, low impasse rates and low levels of families disengaging at the Part 1 stage. Areas for further improvement include the volume of refusal-to-assess disputes, the balance between partial and full resolutions, and improving mediation timeliness. We will explore ways to improve current arrangements to maintain local metrics for	
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	timeliness, resolution rates and effectiveness to support monitoring and accountability so that local mediation can be enhanced.	
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Building Block	Where we are <i>(a short summary of where you are now including a reflection on what is working well, what needs to change and the status of the enablers that underpin your system)</i>	Where we will be in the next 3 years <i>(a short summary of the vision for your local system in the next 3 years including the system enablers, reflecting how your Experts At Hand Offer model will underpin this vision, helping you scale and enhance what is working well and change what is not working so well)</i>
Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours (Using funding and shared accountability towards a system that works for children and families while achieving value for money) Enablers: • Workforce • Digital	Key priority for this building block from the maturity assessment: We will establish a coproduced inclusion framework for the local area which all partners agree to commit to, with agreed system inclusion targets and robust arrangements for monitoring inclusive practice, and ensuring that children have access to inclusive environments, adapted to meet their needs and support as necessary across all schools.	Children will feel that they belong, they will be able to engage in learning, and they will thrive and achieve. We will see a reduction in referrals for the local authority to arrange for off-site education, and requests from parents for specialist places. In year 1 we will have agreed an inclusion framework with a system target to apply from the start of the 2027/28 academic year. By year 3 we will start to see an improvement in inclusion performance measures (persistent absence, suspensions, section 19 referrals to LA).
Key Metrics & KPIs • ↑ Workforce participation in SEND / inclusion training (i.e. increased percentage of schools participating in clusters) • ↑ Staff confidence and capability survey scores	Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours Being the lowest funded local authority for schools with relatively low levels of government funding for the local authority requires relentless focus on using the resources that we do have efficiently and effectively. As shown in the maturity assessment (pillar 7), this has resulted in leaders across the system working collaboratively with	All enabling capacity and additional enabling digital resources will be in place. We will have strengthened the arrangements for shared accountability as follows: The Terms of Reference of the Childrens Outcome Board will have been reviewed in year 1 with extended representation to cover senior leader representatives from all partner organisations (LA, ICB, local MATs,

• ↓ Parental complaints linked to individual schools, process or communication • ↑ Positive feedback from families and young people	shared accountability and pooled resources to deliver improvements through innovative solutions. Between officers and school leaders we have developed a programme of work which demonstrate a continuous shift to more efficient approaches, whilst at the same time improving effectiveness. We have been able to secure agreement from Schools Forum each year, for the last 4/5 years, to invest in the programme by demonstrating through the agree reporting cycle that the investment is having the desired impact and represents values for money to the system. Successful programme management and delivery require collective ownership, and this is how we have approached the high needs deficit recovery plan, the safety valve programme (now education transformation programme) and will be a similar but strengthened approach for the SEND Reforms. The programme of work is developed by the High Needs Working Group, a subgroup of Schools Forum, chaired by a senior MAT education leader and involving representatives from across the school sector working alongside LA officers. The programme enables improved approaches to early intervention (e.g. in early years and across schools via SEN School Clusters), “invest to save” capacity to deliver strategic and inclusive approaches to sustain placements in mainstream	FE, EY, PCF) to oversee delivery of the Reforms locally. The Board will include local elected member representatives, Chief Executives of the Council and ICB, Senior Responsibility Officer (Director of Children Services), with reporting from the Reform Programme Manager, Finance Director, leaders for each workstream (e.g.EAH Programme Manager, Capital Investment Strategic Lead) and senior leaders from the LA/system responsible for driving inclusive practice. Robust arrangements will ensure actions agreed at the Board are delivered at pace as agreed. The Board will be meeting every six weeks during school term time, and they will be using the central SEND Performance Dashboard, which is providing a single, integrated view of operational, financial and outcome data across the 0–25 SEND system, to monitor progress and highlight risks. Qualitative information from the local community will sit alongside the dashboard to demonstrate impact and progress in building confidence and trust. The communications lead officer, children’s participation officer and PCF will agree at each board key messages to share with the local community to highlight successful delivery and impact. Clusters will be operating with the extended remit, with co-sponsor/co-leadership arrangements of the cluster board by LA and MAT senior system leaders. The cluster board will be meeting regularly to drive improvements in inclusion across schools utilising the now fully developed local EAH model. Progress in year 2 will have informed whether modifications to EAH are required to sustain or
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	schools (e.g. in AP, Education Inclusion Project), and to build capacity to meet needs locally. The school-led cluster arrangement involves each cluster operating a cluster board led either by one school leader or jointly by one primary and one secondary school leader. The individual cluster boards include lead SENCOs from schools in the cluster. Operational delivery of the board is facilitated by a local authority employed finance officer and commissioning officer. Leaders from each individual cluster board come together to form an overall cluster board which is chaired by the local authority and provides opportunity for support, challenge, to apply system-wide learning, identify common themes and consider commissioning priorities which would be better managed through a local area rather than individual cluster approach. As stated previously, a limitation of the cluster model is that choosing a bespoke set of services to best meet a school community's needs does not lead to a standardised, baseline offer of consistent inclusion support for all schools. Engagement in the cluster offer is also variable between schools, with 45% of schools accessing 1 to 5 services and 45% of schools accessing 6 to 10 services in 2025/2026. The absence of a standardised offer for all schools contributes to variation in inclusive practice, we see stronger engagement in primary schools (more LA maintained) than secondary schools (mainly academy), and some examples of poorer inclusive practice in some specific settings.	accelerate progress and this will be informing discussions at Schools Forum on investment across decisions across the system.
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	This is where we need to strengthen our approach and encourage participation of all schools and for MAT CEOs to be system-leaders for inclusion alongside the LA. We intend to develop the cluster board to include senior MAT leaders encouraging greater participation by their schools and commitment to using the model; for local MAT CEOs to be co-sponsors of the locally agreed arrangements alongside the LA; to establish a local area Inclusion Framework with agreed system targets. Performance management arrangements will be established with regular meetings between the MAT CEOs/LA education leadership team to review a digital data dashboard which shows where we are as a system, by MAT, and by school against a series of measures so that we can see progress toward target and contribution by individual organisation to achieving the target. Analysis of data will enable support and challenge between organisations, and feed into strategic planning and commissioning cycles for the new cluster arrangements. Digital Enabler: A central Digital SEND Performance Dashboard is in development currently for the purposes of driving delivery of Reforms and enabling a single, integrated view of operational, financial and outcome data across the 0–25 SEND system. A Childrens Outcomes Board (CoB) has been established to oversee and drive delivery of the post inspection SEND Strategic Action Plan which is jointly chaired by the chief executives of the	
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	council and the ICB, includes cross party elected member representatives for children's services and education, the Director of Children's Services (DCS), senior LA and ICB officers, education senior leaders from primary and secondary MATs, and the chair of the local Parent Carer Forum. It has been agreed that the Childrens Outcomes Board will take on responsibility for the overseeing and driving delivery of the SRP with the DCS as the Single Responsible Officer. Enabler: Workforce required to deliver the Reforms are set out as follows. To enable the pace of delivery required to implement the changes and realise the benefits of the reforms – improved outcomes and financial efficiency will require additional capacity. Utilising the SEND Reform funding allocations so far announced we have identified the need for new key posts including a dedicated SEND Reforms Programme Manager, additional data and finance capacity and EAH delivery and commissioning capacity. Once the decision on the Plan is announced we will need to be communicating the local response to Government SEND Reforms including key details and benefits to our local community. Although we can start planning this now, over the next three months we will recruit additional capacity to coordinate the co-production of a communications plan. As a low funded local authority central enabling capacity is lean and what we have is fully committed to local authority core business and	
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	the transformation programmes being implemented currently. Therefore, we will review and ensure, that our key enabling functions such as Legal, Property, ITD, and HR have the capacity to support continuous rapid change.	
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Local blueprint for the next 3 years	Where we are	Where we will be in the next 3 years
Success measures <i>Drawing on metrics from the accompanying data template E.g.</i> <i>Improve attendance of pupils in all maintained schools (mainstream and special) with SEN</i> <i>Reduce reliance on independent special school places</i> <i>Mainstream settings with increased access to Education Psychologists/SaLT/OT</i> <i>Reduced NEET rates for SEND YP at age 16</i>	Baseline <i>(outline the baseline for your success measures reflecting where you are now – these should be drawn from the metrics in the data template)</i>	Target Metrics <i>(outline the target metrics that will demonstrate you have achieved the vision summarized above – these should be drawn from the metrics in the data template)</i>
The priority area of focus for South Gloucestershire is addressing the reason why variability in outcomes exists between children with special educational needs generally and those with social, emotional and mental health needs. We have an impactful collaborative cluster model and associated arrangements in place, and these are making a positive difference, such that South Gloucestershire	Attendance/Suspensions/Permanent Exclusions Baseline data on mainstream school inclusion in South Gloucestershire shows that, in 2024/2025: - Children and young people at SEND Support has an overall absence rate of 10.8, compared with a national rate of 9.8 - Children at SEND Support made up 46.35% of all fixed term exclusions, compared with a national rate of 34.05% - Children at SEND Support made up 0.53% of all permanent exclusions, compared with a national rate of 0.46% Specialist Places in Mainstream schools	Attendance/Suspensions/Permanent Exclusions Target metrics for this would be to improve the position on attendance, suspensions and permanent exclusions so that the position reflected in our local data is at least as good as national within three years and our aspiration will be to be better than the national position across all metrics. Specialist Places in Mainstream schools The plan is to increase the level of specialist places within mainstream schools so that there are: 2027: 230 places 2028: 318 places 2029: 333 places

schools are becoming increasingly inclusive.

However, there is variability between schools in relation to attendance, suspension rates and referrals to the LA from schools for off-site provision. This is partly due to the variability in participation rates in the clusters and variability in inclusive culture and leadership. Our proposed new Inclusion Framework will seek to address this.

Our focus in the first three years will be on delivering improved arrangements for SEMH in mainstream schools and progress will be evident:
-improved attendance, reduced suspensions (fixed-term exclusions), increase in number of specialist inclusion base places, reduced rate of growth in expenditure of INMSS, reduced rate of growth in expenditure on Alternative Provision.
Improved access across clusters for children without Education Health and Care Plans to educational psychology (EP) teams and to mental health support teams (MHST).

The current position on specialist places in mainstream schools (primary and secondary) is that we have a total of **175 places** in 2026.

Expenditure on INMSS, and Alternative Provision

In 25/26 expenditure is as follows:

INMSS: £13,510m

AP: £10,024m.

Access to EP/MHST (25/26)

Number of CYP without EHCP or specialist placement accessing:

- Educational Psychology: 498
- Current cover across system to mental health support teams: 70%

Reduced rate of growth in expenditure on INMSS, and Alternative Provision

We are projecting expenditure to be as follows:

INMSS (27/28): £16,279m which means we will be seeing a slowing in the rate of growth in expenditure compared to position so far.

AP: (27/28): £14,509m which would represent a slowing in the rate of growth in expenditure compared to the position so far.

Access to EP/MHST (28/29)

Number of CYP without EHCP or specialist placement accessing:

- Educational Psychology: 593
- Cover across system to mental health support teams: 100%



Arrangements will be strengthened to include a focus on all levels of SEND through implementation of the local Experts at Hand proposal
Experts at Hand – [Appendix 2](#)

3. What is the local area partnership's strategy for delivering on the above?

A brief summary of your local system's theory of change or reform strategy. Reflect on the output of your **Local Partnership Maturity Assessment Tool**, particularly your *Local System 'change story.'*

Strategy (250 Words)

Building on strengths to sustain an improving position, our focus is addressing the reasons why variability exists as explained in our **Theory of change – [Appendix 3](#)** Children with social, emotional, mental health needs have mixed experiences and outcomes in South Gloucestershire current lack of appropriate provision means mixed experiences continue through school into adulthood. Data indicates children disengaging in education, high dependency on off-site education, parents seeking specialist education, often provided out of area. For success we must build parent's trust that mainstream schools can effectively meet need, with access to highly skilled workforce, support and inclusive environments and appropriate opportunities Post 16.

We will:

- Deliver an Expert at Hand offer reflecting the needs of our children, enabling a shift to early intervention by building workforce skills and capability to identify needs and provide effective support in their local school.
- Coproduce an inclusion framework with collective responsibility to achieving agreed system targets, promoting inclusive culture and practice, and providing all children with access to inclusive mainstream environments.
- Create access to sufficient local mainstream provision, so that children's needs are met close to home.
- Implement a Post 16 Strategy ensuring earliest consideration of young people's interests and ambitions, with pathways to a diverse range of accessible, responsive local opportunities.

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- Ensure effective engagement and co-production with children and families is embedded system-wide, building confidence that our plan is designed with children's needs at its core.
 - Monitor progress robustly, delivering at pace so that benefits of the reforms are realised quickly.

4. Please upload a completed copy of the Local Partnership Maturity Assessment Tool.

Local Partnership Maturity Matrix - [Appendix 4](#)

5. What is the local area partnership roadmap for the next 3 years?

Reflecting on the broad timescales and expectation for deliverables set out in the Schools White Paper, key documents and core minimum requirements set out in this document, please provide a high-level roadmap for the next 3 years. Please highlight key milestones and a trajectory to the target metrics identified above, including leading indicators.

In the 2026-27 column, in particular, please reference how you plan to meet the core minimum requirements in your narrative, including details and evidence in supporting documents.

You can insert or upload supporting documents including graphics/visuals that illustrate your data trajectory.

Roadmap for three years

Element	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
<i>Building Blocks</i>			
<i>Strengthening inclusion across education settings</i> (Organising places and provision to meet as many needs as possible, as close to home as possible, with all settings and providers moving towards a shared understanding and consistent	- We will establish a Universal Inclusion Offer (UIO) working group to identify changes required to achieve a UIO which meets requirements of the reforms. A plan will be agreed with implementation commencing in year 1 toward a fully formed UIO in year 2. - Agreements will be in place with partners (EY, Schools/MATs, FE, PCF) on how the UIO will be developed and refreshed through cluster arrangements. - Health universal offer: Expand the needs-led neurodiversity model across South Gloucestershire to improve early identification and tailored support - Continue reduction of long waits for neurodevelopmental diagnostic assessments - Continue to expand coverage and access to mental health support teams (MHSTs)	- Fully formed UIO implementation commences with review of implementation at end of year – modifications agreed as necessary. - Continue implementation of needs-led neurodiversity model and reduction of neurodevelopmental assessment waits - Continue to extend coverage and access to MHSTs in schools - Review and evaluate the impact of the Universal Inclusion Offer across early years, schools and post-16 settings, identifying strengths, gaps and areas requiring further development. - Refresh and adapt the Universal Inclusion Offer in response to feedback from children and young people, families, practitioners and outcome data. - Agree and implement a minimum inclusion entitlement for all settings, ensuring consistent access to the	- Continued delivery of UIO implementation including modifications agreed in year 2. - Continue implementation of needs-led neurodiversity model and reduction of neurodevelopmental assessment waits - Complete expansion of MHST coverage across the area - Complete a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of the Universal Inclusion Offer on inclusion outcomes, attendance, exclusions, parental confidence and demand for specialist provision. - Refresh the Universal Inclusion Offer based on evaluation findings and emerging national reform requirements. - Achieve full implementation of the Universal Inclusion Offer across all early years settings, schools and post-16 providers.

practices around inclusion)	• Analysis of the survey for the early years' sufficiency statement 2026/27 will have identified barriers to access for SEND families and a plan will be developed to address issues commencing in year 2. • Best Start Inclusion Practitioners recruited and working across the system including Patchway Family Support Hub. • Early Years Development Group including representation from each of the five early years clusters and covering all types of settings (including school- based nurseries) will have been established. • Improved arrangements for information sharing about children in early years with health will have been agreed and ready for implementation. • Strengthened arrangements for information flow between early years and schools will be agreed and implementation plans agreed between EY and School clusters. • Co-produced Post 16 Strategy will be published with detailed plan for the next two years to improve arrangements for Post 16 students.	Universal Inclusion Offer across South Gloucestershire. • Develop and implement inclusion quality indicators and self-evaluation tools aligned to the South Gloucestershire Inclusion Framework. • Evaluate the effectiveness of strengthened information-sharing arrangements between education and health and implement improvements as required. • Review implementation of cluster-based arrangements and agree modifications to strengthen consistency of practice and equitable access to support. • Increase the reach of the Universal Inclusion Offer so that all clusters are actively participating and demonstrating implementation of agreed inclusive practices. • The Universal Inclusion Offer will be implemented across all clusters, with monitoring of consistency, reach and impact. • Monitor implementation of the Universal Inclusion Standard across settings and identify areas requiring additional support.	• Establish an annual cycle of review, quality assurance and continuous improvement for the Universal Inclusion Offer. • Use inclusion metrics and cluster-level data to identify variation in practice and target support where needed. • Demonstrate measurable improvements in inclusive practice through the South Gloucestershire Inclusion Framework. • Publish and share examples of effective inclusive practice to support system-wide learning and sustainability. • The Universal Inclusion Offer will be embedded across all early years settings, schools and post-16 providers, with arrangements in place for ongoing review, refresh and quality assurance. • Universal Inclusion Standards and evidence-informed approaches embedded across all settings, supported by an annual cycle of review, quality assurance and continuous improvement.
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	- Enhanced cross border collaborative arrangements with neighbouring local authorities (Gloucestershire, Bristol, B&NES, Wiltshire) agreed with implementation commencing from start of year 2. - Co-produce and agree a South Gloucestershire Universal Inclusion Standard setting out minimum expectations for ordinarily available provision. - Develop a common framework of evidence-informed approaches to support the most prevalent areas of need across all s, for example school, alternative provision, colleges. - Produce universal guidance, training and resources aligned to identified common needs, i.e. currently SEMH, Neurodiverse.	- Review and refine the Universal Inclusion Standard based on feedback, impact and emerging national guidance. - Review implementation of the Universal Inclusion Standard and evidence-informed practice framework. - Monitor consistency of delivery across clusters and provide targeted support where variation is identified. - Develop and publish exemplification of effective inclusive practice, enabling settings to understand what meeting the Universal Inclusion Standard looks like in practice.	
<i>Access specialist support and local placements</i>	- To support integration of the proposed EAH model with other services (existing school facing services): - Review existing school-facing services and agree how they will align within the Experts at Hand model, including Educational Psychology, SEND Advisory Teachers, Behaviour	- Continue delivery and monitoring of Early Years inclusion plans in Family Support Hubs, aligned with Experts at Hand. - Ensure that all plans co-produced in Year 1 to secure access to multi-agency Experts at Hand teams in schools cover all Clusters, are consistently delivered, embedded	- Continue delivery and monitoring of Early Years inclusion plans in Family Support Hubs, aligned with Experts at Hand. - Continuous, iterative improvement of Experts at Hand service in response to monitoring of success measures.

	Support, Inclusion Services, Early Years Inclusion, School Nursing and therapies. ○ Detailed modelling and co-production of school offer to confirm interfaces and integration with Cluster offers, Tier 1 AP offers, NHS referral-based services and universal health teams in schools. • Creation of Experts at Hand Steering Group and alignment with SEND system governance. • Co-production of the details of delivery of EAH will take place with the Experts at Hand Steering group which will include representatives from early years, schools, alternative provision, the FE sector. Representatives will be expected to canvas and reflect the views of their sector as the model is developed. • Council recruitment of Experts at Hand programme manager from Transformation Grant funding. • Recruitment of SLT Advance Practitioner, in partnership with ICB, Sirona and North Somerset Council. • Recruitment of council-based Alternative Provision Lead and	into system practice and routinely quality assured. • Continuous, iterative improvement of Experts at Hand service in response to monitoring of success measures. • Co-produce plans for Experts at Hand to support consistent and inclusive transition practice between primary and secondary schools with Cluster leads and parent carer representatives. • Scope the extension of Experts at Hand to include commissioning of specialist outreach offers for potential inclusion framework implementation and specialist placements in mainstream. • Co-produce Experts at Hand Post-16 offer with key stakeholders. • Identify opportunities to increase best practice in Alternative Provision commissioning and implement the full recommendations of the AP Taskforce through Experts at Hand, including through the recommission of the BNSSG AP Framework. • Develop targeted support pathways for pupils at risk of suspension, exclusion or placement breakdown.	• Deliver Year 2 plans for Experts at Hand Post-16 offer. • Deliver Year 2 plans for Experts at Hand contribution to consistent and inclusive transition practice between primary and secondary schools. • Deliver Year 2 plans for commissioning of specialist outreach offers for potential inclusion framework implementation and specialist placements in mainstream. • Deliver opportunities to increase best practice in Alternative Provision commissioning and implement the full recommendations of the AP Taskforce through Experts at Hand. • Continue delivery and monitoring of early years inclusion plans aligned with Family Hubs. • Use learning from the Dynamic Support Register to improve early intervention pathways and shape future service planning. • Possible opening of second Post 16 AP Centre. • Phase 1 specialist bases opening in 2028/29 latest.
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	development of new coproduced AP strategy, strengthening 3 tier model with greater emphasis on AP expertise being used in schools and support children on-site, use of off-site short-term provision for those with higher needs and longer-term off-site provision for most complex. In collaboration with LA develop use of on-line learning in school (e.g. extended use of TUTE) alongside classroom learning as a means of earlier support for, e.g. EBSA, rather than a section 19 referral to LA once CYP is persistently absent. • Alignment of Experts at Hand leadership and governance with exiting Early Years plans for oversight of development of inclusion offer to providers and through Family Hubs. • Detailed modelling and co-production of schools offer to confirm: ○ menu of support available from each specialist group ○ final configuration of professionals ○ routes for schools to access the service with agreed access time standards ○ interfaces and integration of Experts at Hand with Cluster offers, Tier 1 AP offers, NHS referral-based services and	• Continue measurement and monitoring of target metrics. • Establish consistent multi-agency use of the Dynamic Support Register to support oversight, timely review and coordinated action. • Evaluation at the end of first year of new AP technical centre completed to inform decision on second provision in the county. • Agreements on LA commissioned specialist bases in place for Phase 2 and Phase 3 proposals. These will be programmed with projects prioritised according to needs of the local area. • All secondary inclusion bases opened, where current accommodation enables remodelling projects. • Proposals agreed with secondary schools to create specialist 11-18 provision in each locality. • Implement priority environmental improvement projects identified through the audit process. • Monitor impact through termly reporting on access, attendance, exclusions, placement stability and parent/carers feedback.	• Implementation of Assistive Technology proposals wherever possible. • Targeted support for general improvements to support inclusive environments implemented/continued. • Demonstrate sustained compliance with agreed response times and access standards across all localities. • Demonstrate equitable access to Experts at Hand services across all sectors and geographic areas. • Evaluate effectiveness of arrangements supporting young people in out-of-area post-16 provision. • Demonstrate improved local sufficiency, reduced travel distances and equitable access to provision. • Evaluate the impact and quality of inclusion bases and support bases and refresh plans based on need. • Complete evaluation of environmental improvement programme. • Refresh inclusion environment standards and future investment
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	universal health teams in schools ○ mechanism for assessing need in schools and equitably allocating Experts at Hand resource across schools within Cluster footprints ○ physical location of service, include estate and IT access • System approval of Year 1 full service specification for multi-agency Experts at Hand teams. • Issue Sirona contract variation for commissioning of SLT and OT elements of offer. • Develop aligned job descriptions for each specialist group. • Recruitment of Experts at Hand staff from key specialist groups In the event of recruitment shortfall: • agree approach to balancing Experts at Hand delivery with maintaining current support arrangements, prioritising schools who are outliers on key inclusion success measures • accelerate plans for special school outreach to address recruitment and delivery shortfalls	• Review implementation and refine prioritisation criteria where required. • Targeted support for improvements to support inclusive environments implemented. • Review workforce sufficiency, recruitment and retention. • Increase capacity where demand exceeds agreed service standards. • Monitor utilisation and access patterns across settings and localities. • Address any inequalities in access identified through monitoring. • Review sufficiency data and adjust provision plans accordingly. • Implement quality assurance arrangements for inclusion bases. • Use geographic and travel impact analysis to inform Phase 2 and Phase 3 provision developments.	priorities based on evidence of impact. • Continue targeted improvements informed by updated sufficiency and inclusion data.
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	• Experts and Hand communication strategy for all schools, including publishing access times. • Development of system-wide processes for measuring, reporting and oversight of Experts at Hand success measures and wider system/service metrics on inclusion for Early Years, schools and post-16 • Development of multi-agency policies and procedures for Experts at Hand team and arrangements for operational working • ≥80% service staffing in post or under recruitment mitigation actions accelerated, including special school outreach. • Mobilisation of Experts at Hand service. • Service actively supporting equitably prioritised schools across clusters. • Commence routine monitoring of process and success measures through Experts at Hand Working Group. • Review co-ordination of commissioning responsibility for Tier 1 Alternative Provision offers		
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	(outreach) between council, health and Clusters. • Complete an inclusion environment audit across all education phases to establish a baseline of accessibility, sensory and environmental needs. • Develop a prioritisation framework for environmental improvements aligned to SEND sufficiency planning and inclusion outcomes. • Agree funding routes and governance arrangements for targeted improvements. • As referenced above and following recruitment of AP lead officer, commence development of new coproduced AP Strategy in partnership with stakeholders and aligned with all elements of existing SEND Strategy to create one single SEND and AP Strategy. • Review and align AP offer with existing UIO and SEND. • Create a single point of access and coproduce a single diagnostic pathway for neurodiversity. • Launch digital Dynamic Support Register (DSR) and move interim DSRs to the new platform.		
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	• Evaluate effectiveness of integrated delivery arrangements and refine roles, pathways and interfaces between services. • Develop arrangements for supporting young people attending out-of-area post-16 placements. • Agreed strategy for delivering Phase 1 proposals for capital investment will continue to be implemented. • New Post 16 AP Technical Centre opened in September 2026. • Agree a partnership framework between the Local Authority, MATs and maintained schools for the planning, delivery and governance of inclusion bases and support bases, ensuring provision developments are aligned to local sufficiency needs and inclusion priorities. • Complete a 0–25 SEND sufficiency assessment, including analysis of need, geographic variation, travel impact and future demand. • Develop a quality framework for inclusion bases and support bases.		
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<i>System leadership, local partnership collaboration and coproduction</i>	• The current model for school clusters reviewed with changes agreed for implementation commencing from end of this year includes co-sponsor role of MATs. • Early Years and Further Education representatives will be fully integrated into the High Needs Working Group, ensuring Schools Forum receives advice informed by a comprehensive 0–25 perspective and that SEND reform projects reflect the needs of children and young people across all phases of education. • The co-produced South Gloucestershire Inclusion Framework will be drafted with system targets, partner targets, cluster targets and monitoring arrangements for measuring progress and individual contributions agreed. • Terms of reference for the Children's Outcomes Board (highest level governance board) will be reviewed and member extended. • Changes to strengthen dispute resolution and decision-making processes identified and implementation plan agreed.	• Partnership arrangements at all levels monitored to ensure working effectively, supported at all levels (individual locality cluster, local area cluster board, Local Area Partnership Board – i.e. Children's Outcomes Board) enabled through access to shared, high-quality data, including joint dashboards and use of a partnership maturity matrix to assess effectiveness and progress as reforms are implemented. • Implementation of changes to strengthen dispute resolution and decision-making processes. • Existing framework against the NHS England Co-Production Resource Guide to establish minimum co-production benchmark reviewed. • The 3-year reform co-production and engagement plan agreed with PCF and Childrens Participation will commence implementation. • Commence implementation of improvements to current arrangements to maintain local metrics for timeliness, resolution rates and effectiveness to support monitoring and accountability so that local mediation can be enhanced – determine difference	• Partnership arrangements at all levels will be monitored to ensure working effectively, supported at all levels (individual locality cluster, local area cluster board, Local Area Partnership Board – i.e. Children's Outcomes Board) enabled through access to shared, high-quality data, including joint dashboards and use of a partnership maturity matrix to assess effectiveness and progress as reforms are implemented. • Embed the neighbourhood health model and agree future priorities with the Health and Wellbeing Board and system partners. • SENDIASS arrangements will be nearing the end of the 3-year contract proving opportunity to review and to consider requirements arising as appropriate from changes to the national legal framework. • Year 2 of the 3-year reform co-production and engagement plan agreed with PCF and Childrens Participation will commence. • Continue implementation with modifications as necessary, of improvements to current arrangements to maintain local metrics for timeliness, resolution rates and effectiveness to support
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	• Co-production: develop and publish a Memorandum of Understanding describing how partners will work together on engagement, participation and co-production. • Complete an assessment of existing co-production arrangements against the NHS England Co-Production Resource Guide and agree a minimum co-production benchmark for implementation across the local area. • An agreed 3-year co-production and engagement plan agreed with PCF and CYP Participation Manager. • Capacity of Parent Carer Forum to deliver local expectations reviewed and funding allocated as necessary to ensure properly resourced. • PCF will have commenced engagement with providers across the partnership to raise awareness of expectations of co-production charter. • Identified and agreed ways to improve current arrangements to maintain local metrics for timeliness, resolution rates and effectiveness to support monitoring and accountability so that local	made at end of year and whether further modifications are required. • Continue strategic development of neighbourhood health with the Health and Wellbeing Board and system partners	monitoring and accountability so that local mediation can be enhanced.
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	mediation can be enhanced, and changes implemented in year 2. • Scope the neighbourhood health model and alignment with SEND reform with the South Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board.		
<i>Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours</i>	• The Terms of Reference of the Childrens Outcome Board reviewed with extended representation to cover senior leader representatives from all partner organisations (LA, ICB, local MATs, FE, EY, PCF) to oversee delivery of the Reforms locally. • The Board will include local elected member representatives, Chief Executives of the Council and ICB, Senior Responsibility Officer (Director of Children Services), with reporting from the Reform Programme Manager, Finance Director, leaders for each workstream (e.g.EAH Programme Manager, Capital Investment Strategic Lead) and senior leaders from the LA/system responsible for driving inclusive practice. • Robust arrangements will ensure actions agreed at the Board are delivered at pace as agreed.	• Childrens Outcomes Board fully operational and digital dashboard being used. • New cluster arrangements fully operational and regular monitoring back to Schools Forum on financial impact. • Agreed communications plan for the year implemented.	• Childrens Outcomes Board fully operational and digital dashboard being used. • New cluster arrangements fully operational and regular monitoring back to Schools Forum on financial impact. Progress in year 2 will have informed whether modifications to resourcing are required to sustain or accelerate progress and this will be informing discussions at Schools Forum on investment across decisions across the system. • Agreed communications Plan for the year implemented.

	• Capacity to support programme delivery will be created including recruitment of: ○ SEND Reform Programme Manager ○ EAH Programme Manager ○ Communications lead officer ○ Central SEND Performance Dashboard providing a single, integrated view of operational, financial and outcome data across the 0–25 SEND system, to monitor progress and highlight risks developed. • Arrangements for gathering qualitative information from the local community to sit alongside the dashboard to demonstrate impact and progress in building confidence and trust. • Communications lead officer recruited (as above) and communications for local area plan agreed. • Clusters ready to commence operating with the extended remit with co-sponsor/co-leadership arrangements of the cluster board by LA and MAT senior system leaders.		
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Local roadmap for the next 3 years	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Success measures	Attendance/Suspensions/Permanent Exclusions	Attendance/Suspensions/Permanent Exclusions	Attendance/Suspensions/Permanent Exclusions
The priority area of focus for South Gloucestershire is addressing the reason why variability in outcomes exists between children with special educational needs generally and those with social, emotional and mental health needs. We have an impactful collaborative cluster model and associated arrangements in place, and these are making a positive difference, such that South Gloucestershire schools are becoming increasingly inclusive. However, there is variability between schools in relation to attendance, suspension rates and referrals to the LA from schools for off-site provision. This is partly due to the variability in participation rates in the clusters and variability in inclusive culture and leadership. Our proposed new	- Children and young people at SEND Support has an overall absence rate of 10.5 est., compared with a national rate of 9.8 est. - Children at SEND Support made up 44% of all fixed term exclusions, compared with a national rate of 34.05% - Children at SEND Support made up 0.5% of all permanent exclusions, compared with a national rate of 0.46% Specialist Places in Mainstream schools The plan is to increase the level of specialist places within mainstream schools so that there are: 2026: 175 places	- Children and young people at SEND Support has an overall absence rate of 10.0, compared with a national rate of 9.8 - Children at SEND Support made up 39% of all fixed term exclusions, compared with a national rate of 34.05% - Children at SEND Support made up 0.48% of all permanent exclusions, compared with a national rate of 0.46% Specialist Places in Mainstream schools The plan is to increase the level of specialist places within mainstream schools so that there are: 2027: 230 places	- Children and young people at SEND Support has an overall absence rate of 9.8 or better, compared with a national rate of 9.8 - Children at SEND Support made up 34% of all fixed term exclusions, compared with a national rate of 34.05% - Children at SEND Support made up 0.46% of all permanent exclusions, compared with a national rate of 0.46% Specialist Places in Mainstream schools The plan is to increase the level of specialist places within mainstream schools so that there are: 2028: 318 places

Inclusion Framework will seek to address this. Our focus in the first three years will be on delivering improved arrangements for SEMH in mainstream schools and progress will be evident: -improved attendance, reduced suspensions (fixed-term exclusions), increase in number of specialist inclusion base places, reduced rate of growth in expenditure of INMSS, reduced rate of growth in expenditure on Alternative Provision. Improved access across clusters to educational psychology teams and to mental health support teams.	Reduced rate of growth in expenditure on INMSS, and Alternative Provision We are projecting expenditure to be as follows: INMSS: £15,049m which means we will be seeing a slowing in the rate of growth in expenditure compared to position so far. AP: £12,883m which would represent a slowing in the rate of growth in expenditure compared to the position so far. Access to EP/MHST Number of CYP without EHCP or specialist placement accessing: • Educational Psychology: 528 • Cover across system to mental health support teams: 77%	Reduced rate of growth in expenditure on INMSS, and Alternative Provision We are projecting expenditure to be as follows: INMSS: £16,279m which means we will be seeing a slowing in the rate of growth in expenditure compared to position so far. AP: £14.509m which would represent a slowing in the rate of growth in expenditure compared to the position so far. Access to EP/MHST Number of CYP without EHCP or specialist placement accessing: • Educational Psychology: 560 • Cover across system to mental health support teams: 88%	Reduced rate of growth in expenditure on INMSS, and Alternative Provision We are projecting expenditure to be as follows: INMSS: £17.3m which means we will be seeing a slowing in the rate of growth in expenditure compared to position so far. AP: £15.2m which would represent a slowing in the rate of growth in expenditure compared to the position so far. Access to EP/MHST Number of CYP without EHCP or specialist placement accessing: • Educational Psychology: 593 • Cover across system to mental health support teams: 100%
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6. What will the local area partnership deliver in the first year?

Please outline the key workstreams, milestones and trajectory your local area partnership will deliver and achieve in 2026-27 as well as how you plan to spend the investment allocation that will help fund this year's delivery. Please share key milestones and anticipated dates, success measures, cost breakdown and category. These should incorporate the core minimum requirements, be mapped to the building blocks above and should reflect a more detailed trajectory to the narrative, milestones and target metrics outlined in the 2026-27 column above.

2026-27 South Gloucestershire SRP Year 1 Delivery Plan		Q2		Q3		Q4	
Workstream outline – mapped to building block	Responsible lead per workstream – accountable for the delivery of the workstream and the identified outcome.	Milestones per workstream What key milestones will enable you achieve your targeted trajectory	Target trajectory per workstream Where do you expect your data to be?	Milestones per workstream What key milestones will enable you achieve your targeted trajectory	Target trajectory per workstream Where do you expect your data to be?	Milestones per workstream What key milestones will enable you achieve your targeted trajectory	Target trajectory per workstream Where do you expect your data to be?
Outcome - what you want to achieve with this workstream Success measures – how you measure progress drawing on metrics from the accompanying data template							
Strengthening inclusion across education settings Workstream1: Universal Inclusion Offer-Schools The local area will deliver a strengthened Universal Inclusion Offer and SEND Cluster model that increases mainstream capacity to meet need earlier and more effectively, improving outcomes for children and young people while reducing unnecessary escalation to specialist and out-of-area provision. Outcome A fully operational Universal Inclusion Offer and SEND Cluster model is embedded across the local area, improving consistency of inclusive practice, strengthening mainstream capacity and reducing the need for escalation to specialist provision. Success Measures - Improved attendance for children and young people with SEND. - Reduction in suspensions and exclusions for pupils with SEND. - Reduction in persistent absence related to EBSA. - Increased parental confidence in mainstream provision. - Reduced escalation to alternative off-site provision arranged by LA where needs can be met in	Will Pritchard, LA SEND and Inclusion Lead Julia Chapman LA School Effectiveness (SEND) lead officer.	Update SEND Cluster governance arrangements and locality leadership structures. This will include Best Start for Children with Complex Needs and SEND, Children's Outcomes Board, Schools Forum, High Needs Working Group, a Universal Inclusion and Cluster Delivery Group and Cluster Inclusion Panels and co-sponsor arrangements with MAT CEOs. Confirm cluster membership, including schools, MATs, early years settings, post-16 providers, health partners, MAT senior leader representatives, and Parent Carer Forum representatives Establish programme governance and reporting	100% of localities represented within SEND Clusters. 90% settings contribute to baseline audit. Minimum of 3 co-production events completed. 100% of clusters establish a baseline for graduated response activity and early intervention support. 75% of schools access graduated response training and development activity. 100% of clusters utilise graduated response processes through inclusion review arrangements. 5% increase in CYP accessing graduated response support	Finalise and launch Universal Inclusion Offer. Agree partnership wide Ordinarily Available Provision expectations. Introduce cluster-based inclusion review processes. Launch Experts at Hand consultation and advice model. Begin workforce development programme to support implementation of the Universal Inclusion Offer and Ordinarily Available Provision expectations, focusing on: Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) Neurodiversity and autism SEMH and relational practice	75% settings accessing workforce development. 50% settings accessing Experts at Hand. At least 75% of settings engaged in launch and awareness activity. Minimum of one workforce development programme delivered in each locality. 75% of schools access at least one training offer. 100% clusters complete first inclusion review cycle. 100% clusters accessing Experts at Hand support. 75% settings implementing	Embed Universal Inclusion Offer expectations across settings. Deliver targeted support through Experts at Hand based on identified local needs. Implement evidence-informed approaches including ELSEC, NELI, neurodiversity-informed practice and relational approaches. Graduated response embedded within Universal Inclusion Offer implementation. Evaluation completed on impact of graduated response activity on inclusion and escalation. Examples of successful early	90% settings accessing Experts at Hand where required. 90% of settings implementing agreed Universal Inclusion Offer standards. 90% of settings participating in at least three cluster-led inclusion activities annually, including one inclusion review activity and one workforce development or peer support activity. 90% of EAH requests responded to within agreed timescales. 15% improvement in workforce confidence from baseline survey. 10% improvement in parent

mainstream with school based AP support when appropriate. • Slowing growth in requests for specialist and out-of-area placements. • Increased use of local inclusive provision and outreach support.		arrangements e.g. approve governance structure, agree Terms of reference for all groups, agree programme dashboard and KPIs, establish baseline measures and risk and issue register is operational. Complete baseline analysis of local need, attendance, suspension, exclusion, EHCP and placement data. Undertake co-production workshops with MATs, schools, early years settings, post-16 providers, CYP and PCF. Coproduce Universal Inclusion Offer framework aligned to National Inclusion Standards and Ordinarily Available Provision expectations. Map existing early intervention services, specialist support and outreach provision. Baseline audit of Universal Inclusion Offer standards completed. Baseline staff confidence survey completed.	compared with baseline.	Effective implementation of the graduated response, including Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycles, early intervention, outcome-focused planning and appropriate use of specialist advice through Experts at Hand. Schools implement agreed graduated response approaches and access specialist consultation where required. Cluster-based problem-solving supports CYP before escalation to specialist provision. Graduated response activity monitored through cluster dashboards. Establish cluster-based peer support and problem-solving forums. Develop local inclusion dashboards for each cluster. Create and share first quarterly performance reports.	agreed National Inclusion Standards. Increase in CYP receiving early intervention support. 85% settings implementing agreed standards. 75% settings accessing EAH where required. 100% clusters operating peer support and problem-solving forums. 80% settings actively participating in cluster activity. Parent Carer Forum feedback demonstrates increased awareness of UIO and EAH. 80% of settings evidence effective implementation of graduated response processes through inclusion review activity. 10% increase in CYP accessing graduated response support compared with baseline.	intervention and avoided escalation shared across clusters. Including, for example successful use of existing AP expertise to maintain placements on site and reduce need for LA to arrange off-site learning. Facilitate cluster-based sharing of effective practice. Review transition arrangements across phases. Undertake evaluation of implementation and workforce confidence. Parent Carer Forum and CYP feedback incorporated into review process. Complete full programme review, and benefits assessment. Year 2 implementation plan agreed. .	confidence from baseline survey. 100% of clusters completing an annual inclusion review cycle. 90% of settings implement at least one improvement action arising from inclusion review activity. 80% of settings implementing at least one agreed evidence-informed approach. 20% reduction in referrals to LA to make arrangements for offsite education. 10% reduction in variation between clusters in implementation of Universal Inclusion Offer standards, as measured through annual cluster inclusion audits. 15% increase in CYP supported through graduated response without escalation to specialist placement or AP. 1–2 percentage point increase in attendance for the SEND cohort.
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		<i>Baseline participation in cluster activity established.</i> <i>Baseline established for use of graduated response support across schools and clusters e.g. targeted interventions, specialist consultation, outreach support and multi-agency planning delivered through the Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle to meet needs at the earliest opportunity and reduce escalation to specialist provision.</i> <i>Graduated response expectations incorporated into the Universal Inclusion Offer and Ordinarily Available Provision framework.</i> <i>Existing early intervention and graduated response pathways mapped.</i> <i>Workforce development programme includes graduated response training.</i> <i>Cluster Inclusion Panels begin reviewing CYP requiring additional support through</i>			<i>10% increase in CYP receiving specialist consultation or outreach support through Experts at Hand as part of the graduated response.</i>		<i>20% reduction in suspensions for the SEND cohort.</i> <i>5% reduction in persistent absence for the SEND cohort.</i> <i>5% reduction in placement breakdowns, managed moves and emergency placement requests for CYP with SEND compared to baseline.</i> <i>15% increase in CYP accessing graduated response support compared with baseline.</i> <i>10% reduction in referrals progressing directly to specialist support without evidence of graduated response activity.</i> <i>80% of schools report increased confidence in implementing graduated response approaches.</i>	
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		<i>graduated response processes.</i> <i>Experts at Hand consultation pathways aligned to graduated response expectations.</i> <i>Parent confidence baseline established. Agree Year 1 workforce development priorities.</i>					
Strengthening inclusion across education settings Workstream 2: Universal Inclusion Offer- Early Years Outcome Improved partnership universal inclusion offer to early years settings and support for families in place through SEND Reform/Best Start, with corresponding arrangements between LA&ICB in place. Plan in place to address findings of sufficiency survey. Success measures • Reduction in EHC needs assessment in early years settings and schools. • Increased numbers of families and settings supported • Increased confidence of EY providers to identify and meet need • Uptake of training on inclusion toolkits • Utilisation of Inclusive Early Years funding show this is targeted towards improving mainstream provision and utilising toolkits. • Numbers of settings accessing additional support through OT and SALT offer increased.	<i>Jo Briscoe</i> <i>LA Early Years/Best Start lead officer</i>	<i>Best Start Inclusion Practitioners recruited and commence working out of Patchway Hub and outreach process established.</i> <i>Settings engaged in programmes to improve universal inclusion – Ordinarily Available Provision, Dingley's Mark of Achievement and SEMH toolkits</i> <i>Sufficiency survey redrafted for circulation to early years providers</i> <i>Best Start Network organisations mapped to consider early years providers and schools who could provide / host support for families</i>	<i>100% Inclusion Practitioners recruited</i> <i>60% trained</i> <i>100% EY providers respond to sufficiency survey</i> <i>Increase in responses from parents.</i>	<i>Best Start Practitioner providing support to Staple Hill Family Hub and surrounding area. Process for identifying and targeting families agreed and piloted.</i> <i>Settings utilising strategies from Ordinarily Available Provision and SEMH toolkits</i> <i>Analysis of sufficiency survey data 2026 identifying barriers for families with SEND and report drafted</i> <i>Early Years Development Group including representation from each of the 5 EY clusters and covering all types of settings (including school-</i>	<i>Best Start Practitioners each working with caseload of 10 families and settings where relevant</i> <i>80% trained</i> <i>35% utilising resources</i>	<i>Best Start Practitioner providing support to Yate Family Hub and surrounding area. Targeting process rolled out to all Family Hubs.</i> <i>Additional support planned and beginning to be rolled out to those not engaging</i> <i>Report published and plan developed to address issues commencing in year 2.</i> <i>Strengthened arrangements for information flow between early years and schools will be agreed and implementation plans agreed between EY and School clusters.</i>	<i>Best Start Practitioners working with caseload of 25 families and settings where relevant</i> <i>60% providers utilising resources.</i>

• Best Start network expanding to include additional support for SEND for families and for settings. • Increased confidence of families to support needs at home		<i>re early identification and meeting need.</i> <i>Network mapped and SEND provision and outreach planned to meet need in Patchway.</i>		<i>based nurseries) will have been established. Improvements to arrangements for information sharing with health will have been agreed and ready for implementation in year 2.</i> <i>Early Years Development Group including representation from each of the 5 EY clusters and covering all types of settings (including school-based nurseries) will have been established. Improvements to arrangements for information sharing with health will have been agreed and ready for implementation in year 2.</i> <i>Network mapped and SEND provision and outreach planned to meet need in Staple Hill. EY clusters provide mechanism for engagement 2-to-2.5-year check information supporting identification of children / families who may need support including</i>		<i>Network mapped and SEND provision and outreach planned to meet need in Yate.</i>	
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				those not in childcare			
Strengthening inclusion across education settings Workstream 3 - Post 16 Universal Offer – Post 16 <i>Development of system-wide Post 16 strategy and action plan, to establish universal inclusion offer.</i> Outcome <i>Strategy agreed and published with action plan in place including arrangements for local, cross border, and out of area provision.</i> Success measures - Improved attendance - Reduced NEET - Reduction in independent special provision and corresponding expenditure. - Reduced travel distances	Joy Mounter LA Post 16 Lead Officer	Engagement and co-production of strategy which includes engagement with local and out of area providers and cross border collaboration. Stakeholder views meetings take place with: - identified council colleagues, - careers leads and Post 16 leads in secondary schools, - colleges including out of area – City of Bristol, St Brendan's, Bath College - young people, - parents and carers.	No change	Engagement and co-production of strategy ongoing, with development of action plan for year 2 agreed. Identify partners to work on the detail actions to implement the plan. Monthly workstream meetings held with partners to co-produce the plan. Detailed Post 16 action plan with universal inclusion offer shared with Council leaders for sign off.	No change	Action Plan and Universal Inclusion Offer agreed with all partners. Cross border collaborative ways of working agreed with Gloucestershire, Bristol, B&NES, Wiltshire ready for commencement in year 2.	No change
Strengthening inclusion across education settings Workstream 4 – Creation of a single point of access and coproduced single diagnostic pathway for neurodiversity Outcome <i>Expanded needs-led neurodiversity model implemented across South Gloucestershire to improve early identification and tailored support</i> - Continue reduction of long waits for neurodevelopmental diagnostic assessments Success measure - Needs of ND CYP identified at earliest opportunity, improved experience evident through	Lorraine McMullen ND Transformation Lead	Communication and engagement plan and materials coproduced with Parent Carer Forums and system partners Single point of access and co-produce a single neurodevelopmental diagnostic pathway with Parent Carer Forums and system partners	No change	Communication and engagement: - In person engagement sessions with parents, carers and partners to explain the new needs-led model - Clear, regular updates for families on waiting lists, including information about Right to Choose Expanded Neurodiversity Support Team:	c.1852 letters sent to families on Autism and ADHD assessment waiting lists	Continue Neurodiversity Support Team development to: - Training and support for schools not yet using Neurodiversity Profiling - Completed profiling for children not in education settings and home educated - Resources and ongoing support - Increased awareness of profiling across the system	Website Hub: 75% of the Neurodiversity Website Hub users, who provide feedback via the site feedback form, will report improvement in their understanding of available neurodiversity support. 25% of schools will have received neuro-profiling training

reduced EBSA/improved attendance. Reduced wait times for assessment.				- Invitations to schools for neuro-profiling training - Completed profiling for children not in education settings and home educated		Increase in neuro-developmental service capacity through increasing Sirona ADHD capacity and use of outsourcing provider to address Autism waiting list through a needs-led model	330 additional CYP will have received support from Sirona or outsourced Neurodevelopmental services
Strengthening inclusion across education settings Workstream 5: Improved access across schools to Mental Health Support. Continue to expand coverage of Mental Health Support Teams (MHST) to ward 100% Outcome Improved access achieves 77% cover by end of year Success measure Improved attendance	Heather Kapeluch MHST Provider Lead	MHSTs open to self-referral for parent groups and offering weekly parent/carer support webinars Transition Roadshows for primary schools and Year 6 students. Networking events with system partners	No change	MHSTs Provider Transformation programme focused on productivity and sharing areas of good practice Developing an annual report with Multi-Academy Trusts to report on referrals numbers, demographics and other work completed.	No change	Mental Health Support Teams bespoke recruitment drive.	MHST coverage will achieve target of 77% of schools.
Strengthening inclusion across education settings Workstream 6: DSR Establish a fully compliant digital Dynamic Support Register for the local area including associated system-wide arrangements for monitoring risk. Outcome DSR in place and arrangements operational Success measure All children who should be identified included on register with appropriate risk rating.	Neil Turney ICB DSR Lead	BNSSG Dynamic Support Register Delivery Group established to fully develop existing multi-agency procedures and processes. Co-production workshops with system partners	No change	Digitise multi-agency procedures and procedures ready for implementation of digital DSR.	No change	Launch digital DSR and move interim DSRs arrangements to platform.	No change

Access to specialist support and local placements Workstream 1 - Establish High Quality Expert at Hand Provision across the local the local Outcome A fully mobilised, multi-agency Experts at Hand service aligned to SEND governance, delivering early intervention and inclusion support to schools through a clear, equitable and integrated model Success Measures • Increase towards national Experts at Hand requirements in the number of days of specialist teachers and HLTAs/EP/SLTs/OTs offered free of charge to all schools • Increase in the number of systemic, whole school approaches and cohort-based interventions provided to schools by specialist teachers and HLTAs/EPs/SLTs/OTs • School leaders report increased confidence in leading inclusive improvement and reduced reliance on individual escalation routes • Classroom practitioners report increased confidence in supporting pupils with a range of SEND needs • Early evidence of reduced variation between South Gloucestershire Schools on key SEND metrics	EAH Programme Manager (being recruited)	Creation of Experts at Hand Working Group and align with SEND system governance • Confirm SEND system membership and chair of Working Group • Confirm arrangements for group administration and agree dates and times • At first meeting, co-produce Working Group Terms of Reference including reporting arrangements withing SEND system • At first meeting, confirm Year 1 Delivery Plan and identify immediate actions Recruitment of Experts at Hand programme manager from Transformation Grant funding • SEND Reforms Steering Group to produce job description and banding	100% of monthly Year 1 Experts at Hand Working Group meetings scheduled ≥50% of Experts at Hand leadership roles in post 100% Experts at Hand service posts advertised 50% of total service staffing in post	Complete co-production of Experts at Hand schools offer (menu, access routes and equitable resource allocation, service integration) • Co-production partners to recommend final model based upon data and intelligence System approval of final Year 1 service specification for multi-agency Experts at Hand teams • Experts at Hand Programme Manager to draft multi-agency Experts at Hand Service Specification based upon final, co-produced model • Experts at Hand Working Group to recommend Year 1 Service Specification	100% Experts at Hand leadership roles in post 70% of total service staffing in place	Mobilisation of Experts at Hand service • Recruited staff allocated to prioritised schools across 5 Clusters • Begin delivery in line with multi-agency Service Specification Routine monitoring through Working Group in place • Experts at Hand Programme Manager reports success measures monthly to Experts at Hand Working Group against thresholds for improvement agreed in Q3 Ongoing optimisation of delivery model based on early performance Review of Tier 1 Alternative Provision commissioning coordination • AP Lead to identify and convene key	≥80% service staffing in post or under recruitment mitigation actions accelerated, including special school outreach 100% of schools have access to a county-wide Experts at Hand service, free at the point of use 5 SEND Clusters receive equitable access advisory support through Experts at Hand
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		- Recruitment through council HR service - Agree partnership induction plan - Prioritise membership of Experts at Hand Working Group following induction Recruitment of SLT Advance Practitioner, in partnership with ICB, Sirona and North Somerset Council - Experts at Hand Steering Group to co-produce job description, engaging partners as required - External recruitment through Sirona HR service - Multi-agency interview panel to select and appoint - Agree partnership induction plan - Prioritise membership of Experts at hand Working		to SEND Reforms Steering Group for approval Multi-agency policies and procedures agreed Multi-agency training and induction of Experts at Hand staff Communication strategy delivered to all schools Data, reporting and performance - Experts at Hand Programme Manages establishes baseline data for all success measures, including surveying school leaders and classroom practitioners for measures of confidence in supporting SEND - Thresholds for improvement agreed by		review partners AP Lead to identify and source data required for review	
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		<i>Group following induction</i> Recruitment of council-based Alternative Provision Lead <i>SEND and Inclusion team to produce job description</i> <i>External recruitment through council HR service</i> <i>Multi-agency interview panel to select and appoint</i> <i>Agree partnership induction plan</i> <i>Prioritise membership of Experts at Hand Working Group following induction</i> Alignment of Experts at Hand leadership and governance with exiting Early Years plans for oversight of development of inclusion offer to providers and through Family Hubs <i>Membership of Strategic Lead for Early Years</i>		<i>Working Group</i>				
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		at Experts at Hand Working Group - Embed reporting of key Early Years Success Metrics through Working Group Issue Sirona contract variation for delivery of SLT and OT elements of offer - ICB to vary CCHP contract to enable recruitment of SLTs and OTs Develop aligned job descriptions for each specialist group and commence service staffing recruitment commences - Recruitment via existing specialist teacher, EP, OT and SLT services Commence co-production of final Experts at Hand schools offer (menu, access routes and equity, service integration)						
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		• <i>Experts at Hand Programme Manager to identify and regularly convene key co-production partners</i> • <i>Experts at Hand Programme Manager to identify and source data required for accurate modelling of need and supply at school, Cluster and system level</i> • <i>Experts at Hand Programme Manager to collate evidence-base of effective whole-school and group interventions across SEND primary need categories</i> • <i>Co-production partners to review data and intelligence to inform development of model</i>						
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		Commence co-production of equitable resource allocation methodology • Experts at Hand Programme Manager to identify and source data required for accurate modelling of need and supply at school, Cluster and system level • Co-production partners to review data and intelligence to inform resource allocation methodology Strengthen cross border collaborative arrangements with neighbouring local authorities in relation to Experts at Hand school access • Experts at Hand Programme Manager to agree cross-border protocol for access to Experts at Hand within schools						
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Access to specialist support and local placements Workstream 2 - Specialist Advisory Teacher offer for EAH 1.4 FTE BSS will transition across to EAH away from a traded service. BSS traded service to be closed and become a county wide referral service which is free to schools as part of the Experts at Hand offer. Service model will also include 5 Specialist Advisory Teachers and 3 Outreach Specialist Teachers. Outcome Mainstream settings have equitable access to timely specialist advice, consultation and outreach support through Experts at Hand, resulting in increased confidence and capacity to meet needs within mainstream provision. Success measure 100% school engagement via clusters Improved attendance Reduced exclusions	<i>Julia Chapman</i> <i>School Effectiveness Lead (SEND & AP)</i>	<i>Launch recruitment campaign and begin discussions with AP and special schools regarding outreach capacity.</i> <i>Recruitment of 1 additional FTE BSS Adviser, 5 Specialist Advisory Teachers and 3 FTE Outreach Specialist Teachers (from AP and special schools).</i>	<i>100% approved posts advertised</i> <i>50 – 60% of total planned WTE posts filled.</i>	<i>Complete recruitment for most posts.</i> <i>Outreach service level agreements agreed with AP and special schools.</i> <i>Confirm cluster allocations and deployment plans.</i> <i>Launch first phase of EAH Specialist Teacher support.</i> <i>Begin induction and training.</i> <i>Agree referral and consultation pathways.</i> <i>Establish service standards and response times.</i> <i>Cluster deployment model implemented.</i> <i>Initial consultations and outreach support delivered.</i> <i>Data collection and impact reporting arrangements established.</i>	<i>80–90% of total planned FTE posts filled.</i> <i>50% of specialist teachers allocated to clusters.</i>	<i>All recruitment completed.</i> <i>BSS traded service formally closed.</i> <i>Full outreach capacity operational.</i> <i>Workforce induction and training completed.</i>	<i>100% of planned workforce recruited</i> <i>100% of schools have access to a county-wide EAH service, free at the point of use.</i> <i>100% of SEND Clusters access advisory and outreach support through Experts at Hand during Year 1.</i> <i>100% of SEND Clusters allocated named advisory and outreach support.</i> <i>100% of schools have access to EAH support free at the point of use.</i> <i>100% of Specialist Advisory Teachers complete induction and core training.</i>
Access to specialist support and local placements. Workstream 3 – Local Area SEND&AP Strategy. Outcome A co-produced, evidence-informed SEND and AP Strategy is agreed, providing a single strategic framework	<i>Julia Chapman</i> <i>School Effectiveness Lead (SEND)</i> <i>AP Strategic Lead in post.</i> <i>Draft integrated SEND & AP Strategy developed.</i>	<i>Role profile for LA AP Strategic Lead agreed and post advertised.</i> <i>Confirm interim governance and accountability arrangements for AP</i>	<i>100% of AP providers and key stakeholders identified and invited to participate.</i> <i>100% of agreed baseline indicators</i>	<i>AP Strategic Lead in post.</i> <i>Draft integrated SEND & AP Strategy developed.</i>	<i>100% stakeholder groups represented in strategy development activity.</i> <i>≥75% attendance at co-production</i>	<i>AP Lead embedded within the local area leadership structure.</i> <i>Integrated SEND & AP Strategy co-produced with schools, AP</i>	<i>100% of relevant governance bodies approve the integrated SEND & AP Strategy.</i> <i>100% of identified stakeholder groups represented in</i>

for inclusion, alternative provision, outreach and specialist support across the local area. Success Improved attendance Reduced exclusions Reduced expenditure on ISS/AP	<i>Consultation undertaken with stakeholders. Future AP operating model agreed. Draft Year 2 implementation priorities identified. Performance framework and outcome measures developed.</i>	<i>and SEND&AP delivery.</i> <i>Complete baseline analysis of AP use, exclusions, attendance, placement pathways, ISS/AP expenditure and post-16 provision.</i> <i>Map existing AP pathways, outreach support and commissioned provision. Identify key stakeholders for co-production, including schools, AP providers, CYP and Parent Carer Forum.</i> <i>LA interim arrangements continue to meet recommendations of 2025 SEND&AP inspection. e.g. new 20 place Post 16 provision, Kingswood.</i>	<i>established and reported, including attendance, exclusions, AP placements, reintegration outcomes, expenditure and sufficiency.</i> <i>100% of existing AP pathways and commissioned provision mapped.</i> <i>100% of agreed governance groups established, with terms of reference approved and reporting arrangements operational.</i> <i>100% of relevant SEND & AP inspection recommendations maintained through interim arrangements.</i>	<i>Consultation undertaken with stakeholders.</i> <i>Future AP operating model agreed.</i> <i>Draft Year 2 implementation priorities identified.</i> <i>Performance framework and outcome measures developed. Interim arrangements continue to meet SEND & AP inspection recommendations, including opening of the Kingswood Post-16 provision.</i>	<i>events by invited stakeholders.</i> <i>100% completion of AP demand, capacity and sufficiency modelling.</i> <i>100% governance groups contributing to strategy development.</i> <i>100% of agreed AP performance indicators included in first quarterly report.</i>	<i>providers, CYP, Parent Carer Forum and partners.</i> <i>Future AP operating model agreed, including pathways, outreach, reintegration and commissioning principles.</i> <i>AP demand, capacity and sufficiency analysis completed and used to inform strategic priorities.</i> <i>Performance framework established, including attendance, exclusion, reintegration, expenditure and sufficiency measures.</i> <i>Integrated SEND & AP Strategy approved through all relevant governance arrangements.</i> <i>Year 2 implementation plan agreed, including identified leads, milestones and performance measures.</i> <i>Annual review of interim arrangements completed, and recommendations</i>	<i>strategy development and consultation activity.</i> <i>100% completion of AP demand, capacity and sufficiency modelling informing strategic priorities.</i> <i>100% of existing AP pathways, outreach support and commissioned provision reviewed and incorporated into strategy development.</i> <i>100% of governance groups contribute to strategy development and endorse Year 2 priorities.</i> <i>100% of strategic priorities supported by an agreed implementation plan with identified leads, milestones and performance measures.</i> <i>100% of strategic priorities linked to agreed outcome measures and benefits realisation indicators.</i> <i>100% of agreed AP performance indicators reported through termly performance</i>
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						<i>incorporated into future planning.</i> <i>Interim arrangements continue to meet SEND & AP inspection recommendations, including operation of the Kingswood Post-16 provision.</i>	<i>reporting arrangements.</i> <i>≥75% attendance by invited stakeholders across co-production and consultation activities.</i> <i>100% compliance with relevant SEND & AP inspection recommendations through interim arrangements.</i> <i>100% completion of annual strategy review, with recommendations informing Year 2 delivery.</i>
Access to specialist support and local placements Workstream 4 - Recruitment of Educational Psychology Team for EAH. Outcome <i>Mainstream settings have access to EAH EP support</i> Success measure <i>Increased number of Schools/%Pupils accessing support</i>	<i>Andrews Mears</i> <i>LA Principal Educational Psychologist</i>	<i>Commenced recruitment of 5.6FTE main grades and one Senior EP matched to EAH funding.</i> <i>Finalise role profiles, recruitment materials and appointment processes</i> <i>Agree deployment arrangements aligned to SEND Clusters and the Experts at Hand model</i>	<i>100% posts advertised</i>	<i>Complete recruitment and onboarding arrangements</i>	<i>Senior EP x 1FTE</i> <i>EP x 5.6FTE recruited</i>	<i>New capacity in post and delivery of EAH commencing.</i>	<i>Senior EP x 1FTE</i> <i>EP x 5.6FTE recruited</i> <i>100% of clusters benefitting from improved EP support</i>
Access to specialist support and local placements Workstream 5 - Improving access to support and local places through	<i>Mustafa Salih – LA</i> <i>Capital Strategy Lead</i>	Phase 1 (40 new places): LA Specialist Bases:	Discussions have taken place with 100% of MATs and Secondary SLT	Phase 1 (40 new places): Agreeing Project Brief Derogations	62% of secondary schools where there is an agreed plan to develop an Inclusion base	Phase 1(40 new places): Initial Project Brief into the final Project Brief	100% of secondary schools where there is an agreed plan to

creation of Inclusion Bases across the local area (schools). Outcome Phase 1 - 40 new Specialist Base places in mainstream Specialist Inclusion Bases opening in Sept 2027 Phase 2: 80 new mainstream Specialist Base places opening in Sept 2028 and building plan towards delivering an IB in every Secondary and equivalent Primary places. Phase 3: Developing final phase of plan to deliver an Inclusion base in every secondary school and equivalent places in primary. Co-producing with MAT CEOs Maintained school leaders PCF and schools Forum overall strategy to plan, deliver, specify, quality assure and measure impact (financial and outcomes based) of Capital Strategy Success measure Sufficient mainstream places in each local area to meet need of community. • Reduced expenditure on ISS • Reduced travel time • New Inclusion Base places in mainstream schools • Quality measures for Inclusion Bases met		Preparing Architectural Concept Prepare and Incorporating Strategic Engineering requirements Aligning the design to the Cost Plan, Project Strategies and Outline Specification Phase 2 (80 new places): 1 to1 engagement with every MAT and Secondary SLT to agree Phase 2 and agree approach to developing Phase 3		Undertaking Design Reviews Preparing the Stage Design Programme Preparing the Architectural Concept Phase 2 (80 new places): Capital Steering Group established involving CEOs Heads and Schools Forum to codesign Phase 2, which will specifically identify schools to build 80 new mainstream specialist base places by Sept 2028. Phase 3: Through Capital Steering Group, starting to Co-produce with MATs a list of all mainstream schools for Inclusion Base development to close the remaining gap towards ensuring an Inclusion base in every secondary and equivalent places in primary. Also co-produce a strategic partnership framework between the Local Authority, MATs and maintained schools for the planning, delivery	20% of schools where inclusion environment audit has been undertaken	Procurement & Construction Strategies Phase 2(80 new places): Agreeing Project Brief Derogations Undertaking Design Reviews Preparing the Stage Design Programme Phase 3: Finalise and publish co-produced Phase 3 of the Capital Strategy which will finalise plans to establish an IB in every secondary school and equivalent places in primary (each school identified with type of Inclusion Base, No. of places, timelines, category of need catered for etc). Update sufficiency strategy: Complete a review of current 0–25 SEND sufficiency assessment, including analysis of need, geographic variation, travel impact and future demand. Using latest SEN2 data and forecasts.	develop an Inclusion Base 50% of primary schools where there is an agreed plan to develop an Inclusion Base. 30% of schools where inclusion environment audit has been undertaken	
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				<i>and governance of inclusion bases and support bases, ensuring provision developments are aligned to local sufficiency needs and inclusion priorities, supported by data and local needs.</i> <i>Develop a quality framework for inclusion bases and support bases.</i> <i>Complete an inclusion environment audit across all education phases to establish a baseline of accessibility, sensory and environmental needs for school inclusion bases.</i> <i>Develop a prioritisation framework for environmental improvements aligned to SEND sufficiency planning and inclusion outcomes.</i> <i>Agree funding routes and governance arrangements for targeted improvements</i>				
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Access to specialist support and local placements Workstream 6 - Local Post 16 Alternative Provision – 20 place Specialist AP Technical Centre, Kingswood Outcome 20 place provision open and operating from September 2026 with intake building to 20 places by end of year Success Improved access to places Improved attendance Increased % of SEN young people in education, employment or training. Reduced % of SEN young people not in education, employment or training	Joy Mounter LA Strategic Lead Post 16	Contracts with new provider agreed to enable refurbishment work to be completed during summer and placements offered from September. Refurbishment work of Kingswood Centre completed, Young People and Parents engaged with new provider on their offer	First 7 (at least) Post 16 young people identified for placements in September and placement agreed. EET May 26: SEN Support =87.6% EHC = 96.8% NEET May 26: SEN Support =8.8% EHC = 2.2%	Provision open with first 7 Post 16 students attending. Provision monitored against agreed KPIs. Further students identified for placement and consultations happen ready to start in Q4. Provider actively engaged in EET Forum and working with local businesses/VCSE etc to establish pathways to opportunities – work placements, apprenticeships.	First 7 young people taking up placements Further 7 young people and their parents engaged with the new provider for placement this year	Provision fully operational and working towards 20 placements filled across the year with further 6 young people and their parents engaged with the new provider for placement this year. Explore opportunities for a second additional Post 16 AP provision in line with needs identified in Post 16 strategy.	20 placements filled, and 100% secure (no risk of placement change for students taking up provision). Attendance of YP taking places improves by at least 5% compared to position in placement previously. EET May 26: SEN Support =89% EHC = 97% NEET May 26: SEN Support =7.5% EHC = 2.0%
System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production Workstream 1 – Improved systemwide arrangements for co-production and engagement Outcome All agreed arrangements in place Success Measures Improved parent carer and CYP confidence in new arrangements against baseline.	Hilary Smith/Catherine Boyce: LA Service Director Education and LA Service Director Commissioning In partnership with Rachel Trueman SGPCF Director	PCF will have commenced engagement with providers across the partnership to raise awareness of expectations of co-production charter.	100% of existing school clusters advised of expectations and planned approach.	Co-production: develop and publish a Memorandum of Understanding describing how partners will work together on engagement, participation and co-production Complete an assessment of existing co-production arrangements against the NHS England Co-Production Resource Guide and agree a minimum co-production	50% of service leaders engaged in discussion on approach to creating accessible opportunities for families	An agreed 3-year co-production and engagement plan agreed with PCF and CYP Participation Manager Capacity of Parent Carer Forum reviewed against requirements to deliver year 2 and year 3 with funding confirmed for year 2, to ensure properly resourced in year 2. Commitment to review again in Q3 year 2 to confirm funding for year 3.	100% of service leaders engaged in discussions on approach to creating accessible opportunities for families.

				benchmark for implementation across the local area. Undertake a workshop with system leaders – social care and health services and other key services, to agree approaches to providing inclusive opportunities for all families supported by those services.			
System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production Workstream 2 – Mediation & Dispute Resolution Outcome Strengthen resolution for mediation and dispute resolution that promote early resolution, improved parent and carer confidence and reduce escalation to formal appeal processes. Success Measures Reduced SEND Tribunal appeal rate Increased proportion of disputes resolved through mediation Reduced number of cases progressing from mediation to Tribunal. Improved parent/carers confidence in local decision-making Improved timeliness of mediation processes Short-term success measures: Reduction in parental complaints progressing to Stage 2 and to Ombudsman	Will Pritchard – LA Lead Officer SEND&AP	Review current mediation and dispute resolution arrangements Analyse local mediation, complaint and Tribunal data, including LAIT measures Identify opportunities to strengthen early resolution and decision-making processes. Agree an implementation plan with partners Baseline data established Baseline Parental survey in July 2026: percentage of parents/carers agreeing that they feel listened to, informed and	Complaints 25/26 – from 01.09.2025 to end June Stage 1 = 65 Stage 2 = 6 Ombudsman = 3 The SEND tribunal appeal rate was 3.6% in South Gloucestershire, this compares to the average for All English unitary authorities of 2.7%	Introduce strengthened early resolution and restorative approaches. Implement revised communication and dispute resolution pathways Share learning from complaints and Tribunal decisions across the partnership Quarterly performance reporting established Improved consistency in decision-making processes. Increased use of early resolution approaches	Dispute resolution baseline maintained. New complaints – academic year 26/27: Stage 1 = 15 Stage 2 = 2 Ombudsman = 1	Publish revised mediation and dispute resolution arrangements Evaluate impact and identify priorities for Year 2 Embed learning into SEND governance and quality assurance arrangements. Agree ongoing monitoring arrangements expect to see -Improved parent and carer confidence -Reduced escalation to Tribunal -Reduced concessions before hearing. Year 2 improvement plan agreed	Dispute resolution baseline maintained at least – target 10% increase New complaints – academic year 26/27: Stage 1 = 25 Stage 2 = 3 Ombudsman = 2 Improved parent and carer confidence. Increase by 5% Reduced escalation to Tribunal. Reduce by 5% Reduced concessions before hearing. Reduce to below 20%

		<i>involved in decisions about their child.</i> <i>Improvement actions agreed</i> <i>Governance and reporting arrangements in place</i>					
System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production Workstream 3 – Children's Neighbourhood Health alignment with SEND Reform Scope the neighbourhood health model and alignment with SEND reform with the South Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board Outcome Alignment of staffing and plans across reforms relating to children, including SEND and Children's Neighbourhood Health Success measures Agreed system measures across programmes in place and being achieved.	<i>Chris Sivers SRO & Rosi Shepherd ICB</i>	<i>Locality Partnership Board and Health and Wellbeing Board hold workshop to begin to frame how policy initiatives will align in neighbourhoods</i> <i>Preparations for release of Children's Neighbourhood Health guidance, the NHS Modern Service Framework (MSF) for Children and the guidance on changes to be made to Health and Wellbeing Boards to ensure they are increasingly neighbourhood focused.</i>		Neighbourhood health ICB outline Neighbourhood Health resources and arrangements <i>Sub-regional workshop to frame an ICB/LA children's strategy</i> <i>Sub-group of Locality Board established with LA, SEND, Primary Care and ICB to develop children's neighbourhood health in South Gloucestershire</i>	No change	<i>Scoping of neighbourhood health model and alignment with SEND reform with the South Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board with Sub-group of Locality Board members (see Q3)</i> <i>South Gloucestershire Council make constitutional changes regarding Health and Wellbeing Board to reflect Neighbourhood Health arrangements and other new requirements</i> <i>Sub-regional Children's Strategy scoped and endorsed at HCIG</i>	No change
System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production Workstream 4 – Commitment to sustainable inclusive cluster, leadership and practice.	<i>Hilary Smith LA Service Director Education Learning and Skills</i> <i>Mustafa Salih</i>	<i>Meeting with Multi Academy Trust CEOs to discuss baseline performance across attendance,</i>		<i>The current model for school clusters reviewed with changes agreed for implementation commencing from</i>		<i>Early Years and Further Education representatives will be fully integrated into the High Needs Working Group,</i>	100% of HN working group meetings attended by representatives from EY and FE

Establish system-wide arrangements which demonstrate shared responsibility and accountability for inclusive practice. Success Arrangements in place and agreed by all Outcome 4 System Success Measures Improved attendance Reduced Suspensions Reduced expenditure on ISS Improved Parent Carer Confidence	<i>LA Service Director Resources, Business and Performance.</i>	<i>exclusions, NEET, referrals to LA for section 19 support, referrals to LA for EHC Needs Assessments, and variability between schools.</i> <i>Consider improvements delivered so far from existing measures and opportunity to accelerate progress through additionality of EAH and inclusion funding.</i> <i>Consider and agree priority areas of focus through the redeveloped school cluster model</i>		<i>end of this year includes co-sponsor role of MATs to increase participation of all schools.</i> <i>Report to Schools Forum on planned changes to arrangements including High Needs Working Group, School Clusters, Early Years Clusters, Post 16 and AP.</i>		<i>ensuring Schools Forum receives advice informed by a comprehensive 0–25 perspective and that SEND reform projects reflect the needs of children and young people across all phases of education</i> <i>The South Gloucestershire Inclusion Framework will be drafted with system targets and monitoring arrangements agreed.</i>	
Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours Workstream 1 - Leadership and Governance Outcome All necessary leadership and governance arrangements in place for delivery commencing in year 1. Success measure Improved attendance Reduced suspensions and exclusions Reduction in children waiting for specialist placements Slowing of rate of increase in expenditure on independent specialist and AP placements.	<i>Chris Sivers SRO</i>	<i>Terms of reference for the Children's Outcomes Board (local highest level governance board) will be reviewed, and membership extended</i> <i>SEND and AP Reforms Steering Group established, along with working groups focused on different elements of reforms (see Governance section Q 14)</i>	No change	<i>School clusters ready to commence operating with the extended remit with co-sponsor/co-leadership arrangements of the cluster board by LA and MAT senior system leaders.</i> <i>First Children's Outcomes Board meetings with extended membership and changes made</i> <i>Children's Partnership workshops begin, to review the range of change in this</i>	No change	<i>First Cluster Board meetings scheduled with extended membership and changes made as necessary and ready to commence delivery.</i> <i>Final proposals arising from Children's Partnership Review for agreement; progressing for full implementation from 1 April 2027</i> <i>Training for election candidates to South Gloucestershire Council begin</i> <i>SEND and AP Reforms Steering Group and working</i>	100% of cluster board meetings take place with extended membership

				policy area, and the required partnership arrangements Full SEND and AP Reform Plan to South Gloucestershire Council's Cabinet for approval Request for Scrutiny Committee approval submitted SEND and AP Reforms Steering Group and working groups delivering the plan		groups continue to deliver the plan	
Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours Workstream 2 – Creating enabling capacity to deliver SEND&AP Reform Plan Outcome All identified enabling workforce required for local SEND&AP Reform Plan in place ready to commence delivery in year 1. Success measure All 5 success measures required for the plan	Mustafa Salih – LA Resources and Performance Lead Officer	Complete review of all corporate enabling capacity (property, legal, IT, HR). Commence recruitment of all enabling capacity: -SEND Reform Programme Manager -EAH Programme Manager	No change	Embed newly recruited posts: -SEND Reform Programme Manager -EAH Programme Manager Recruit new posts: communications lead officer Agree and create central enabling capacity as necessary	33% of new posts recruited to	Enabling capacity in place. Communications lead officer recruited (as above) and communications for local area plan agreed.	100% of new posts recruited to
Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours Workstream 3 - Establishing a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework Outcome Framework in place such that all system partners are aware of progress against the Plan and corrective actions can be initiated as needed Success Measures	Mustafa Salih - LA Resources and Performance Lead Officer	Central SEND Performance Dashboard providing a single, integrated view of operational, financial and outcome data across the 0-25 SEND system, to monitor progress and highlight risks developed.	No change	Proposed Central SEND Performance Dashboard presented for approval by SEND Reform Board	50 new qualitative data sets identified to be developed into tiered data dashboards	Building from Central SEND Performance dashboard, Development of Lower tier Dashboards in to show key metrics at operational, Cluster level	4 tiers of data dashboards finalised and presented covering all programme tiers from workstreams up to SEND Reform Partnership Board.

All 5 success measures required for the plan		Arrangements for gathering qualitative information from the local community to sit alongside the dashboard to demonstrate impact and progress in building confidence and trust.					
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Our investment plan over 2026/27 maximises use of the two main funding sources: Experts at Hand & Local Authority SEND Transformation Fund and High Needs Provision Capital Allocations as follows:

SEND Transformation/EAH Funding										
2026/27						2026/27				
	EAH Direct	EAH Set-Up/Admin	SEND Reform Set-Up /Admin	Total		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000		£000	£000		£000	£000
SEND Reform Grant Allocation	1,651	206	206	2,063		516	516	516	516	2,063
Utilisation:										
Programme oversight/additional leadership capacity.										
Programme Manager			80	80		20	20	20	20	80
Data/Digital /Finance Capacity			120	120		30	30	30	30	120
EAH Management Capacity Including SLT Adv. Practitioner		150		150		0	20	30	100	150
EAH Model: Direct				0						0
SLTs 5FTE	355			355			59	118	178	355
OTs 3FTE	213			213			36	71	107	213
EPs 6.5fte	578			578			96	193	289	578
Specialist Teachers/HLTAs/Tas 10FTE	505			505			84	168	253	505
PCF Capacity: Engagement, data etc		50		50			50			50
										0
Total Utilised	1,651	200	200	2,051		50	395	630	976	2,051
Remaining	0	6	6	12		466	121	-115	-460	12

SEND Capital Grant Investment Plan (£4.611m):

High Needs Provision Capital Allocations					
2026/27					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
High Needs Provision Capital Allocations	1,153	1,153	1,153	1,153	4,611
Utilisation: Delivering 3 new Inclusion Bases by September 2027					
Preparing the Architectural Concept	600	200	100		
Prepare and Coordinate: Responsibility Matrix for design team members	150				
Incorporating Strategic Engineering requirements	750	300	125	20	445
Aligning the design to the Cost Plan, Project Strategies and Outline Specification	460			30	30
Agreeing Project Brief Derogations		650	500	100	1,250
Undertaking Design Reviews		730	340	100	1,170
Preparing the Stage Design Programme		500	600	600	1,700
Initial Project Brief into the final Project Brief				500	
Procurement and Construction Strategies					
Project Execution Plan and Health and Safety Strategy					
Prepare and Coordinate: Responsibility Matrix for design team members					0
					0
Total Utilised	1,960	2,380	1,665	1,350	4,595
Remaining	-807	-1,227	-512	-197	16

7. How will the local area partnership deliver the first-year plan?

Please set out how you will ensure the required capacity and capability is in place from organisational corporate functions to support implementation of the plan. This could include reference to how you plan to build or bring in project delivery capability to manage delivery against the plan, support prioritisation, and effective use of resources; and how you plan to build the capacity and capability in data and analytics to support effective tracking against the measures in the plan and reporting that informs decision making.

250 Words

We have made strong early progress since the SEND Reforms were announced, supported by strong council-wide commitment and partner engagement. This has enabled us to begin operational delivery at pace, including reaching RIBA Stage 1 for three Inclusion Bases and recruiting to key new posts. Departments including Finance, Legal, Property, Planning, Place and IT, alongside partners such as the ICB, schools, Schools Forum and parent carers, have been central to this progress.

To sustain and accelerate delivery, we are strengthening capacity across four key areas.

Project and programme delivery: We are recruiting a dedicated SEND Reforms Programme Manager and expanding delivery and commissioning capacity. These roles will be embedded within our established Programme Management Office, ensuring robust planning, risk management and demonstrable delivery.

Data and analytics: We are increasing specialist data and finance capacity to improve forecasting, demand modelling, performance tracking and support evidence-based decision making.

Corporate enabling support: We have reviewed Legal, Property, IT and HR functions to confirm sufficient capacity and capability to support rapid transformation, including workforce redesign and capital delivery.

Monitoring and reporting: Through our strong Programme Management Office, we are enhancing governance through strengthened performance reporting, clear milestones and regular oversight via programme boards and strategic partnerships, ensuring transparency and accountability.

Further capacity is being developed for engagement and co-production, working closely with the Parent Carers Forum to support effective communication and responsiveness to families. Together, these measures will move us from a strong start to sustained, high-quality delivery at scale.

8. Other funding **Local Authorities**.

Block Transfers: If you have made a block transfer (Schools Block to High Needs Block) for 26-27, please set out how your plans for this funding align with the activities outlined above.

250 Words

Since 2018, our SEND financial planning has focused on early intervention in mainstream schools through an annual block transfer of £2.2m. Our SEND Reform Plan continues this approach to 2028/29. This funding supports Cluster Funds, enabling local Cluster Boards of school representatives to target early intervention based on identified needs. This approach has contributed to improved outcomes, with Ofsted (July 2025) noting that “underpinned by the strength of the cluster model, children and young people are experiencing an increasingly inclusive education system.”

The block transfer has also strengthened SEND support in early years by ensuring more children access provision earlier and start school better supported. It has increased the identification of needs prior to school entry, reducing pressures on reception teachers and SENCos. Earlier intervention also enables access to specialist support sooner, preventing escalation of need and



reducing long-term costs. As a result, more children with SEND achieve a good level of development. South Gloucestershire's early years SEND partnership arrangements are recognised as a local strength.

Looking ahead, this investment creates a foundation for evolving the block transfer into a pooled funding approach with mainstream schools to further enhance inclusion. This aligns with national SEND reform priorities. Our plan includes continued engagement with schools to co-produce this transition, ensuring funding is used collaboratively and effectively to meet children's needs.

Capital: We have announced at least £3 billion in high needs capital between 2026-27 and 2029-30 to support children and young people (CYP) with SEND, or those requiring alternative provision (AP). This funding is intended to support place delivery across the full 0-25 age range, including early years and post-16. We expect funding to support the following outcomes:

- a. Inclusion at the core of high needs sufficiency strategy, resulting in more children and young people with SEND accessing suitable places in mainstream settings, across all phases of education
- b. Every child or young person who needs a place in an inclusion base can access one
- c. Fewer children and young people with SEND needing to travel a long way to access a suitable placement
- d. Improved suitability of the mainstream estate to support children and young people with SEND, with adaptations to improve inclusivity and accessibility of the physical environment

We also welcome innovative uses of high needs capital to drive inclusion, for example, investment in assistive technology for use in mainstream settings.



Please outline your strategy for how this funding will meet the outcomes above, with reference to the core minimum requirements and other workstreams in this reform plan where appropriate. We would like to see detail around your plans to increase capacity for inclusion bases (formerly known as SEN units, resourced provision and pupil support units – SU/RP/PSUs), such as schools, colleges or early years providers identified, engagement with relevant settings and trusts, and target cohort of needs.

If your plans include increases to places in special schools or specialist post-16 institutions, please include a clear rationale, showing the need that is being met, and why it cannot be met through other types of provision, such as inclusion bases.

If you are receiving additional capital funding to replace one or more planned special or AP free schools, please set out how this funding will meet need in your area, and plans for engaging relevant trusts in your sufficiency planning.

500 words

Over the past four years, South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) has worked with Mastodon C, a specialist data science partner, to develop a robust evidence base on SEND need and provision, as set out in our [SEND Sufficiency Strategy- Appendix 7](#). This identified key priorities:

1. increasing specialist provision for children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs across primary and secondary phases.
2. ensuring appropriate provision for children with Communication and Interaction, Complex Learning, and Sensory and Physical needs within mainstream schools.

Phase 1 of our strategy is underway, delivering 40 new places across three Specialist Inclusion Bases, developed collaboratively with MATs with the schemes now at RIBA Stage 1. An impact assessment model demonstrates the benefits of this investment, including reduced reliance on special schools, out-of-area placements, independent provision and Home to School Transport, alongside improvements in travel distance and journey times [Capital Investment Costs and Benefits - Appendix 12](#)



Phase 2 will deliver a further 80 Specialist Base places across four mainstream secondary schools, ensuring each locality cluster has access to at least one Inclusion Base. This will enable more children to access support locally within mainstream settings, while supporting schools to expand enhanced provision. It will also address unmet need in areas such as Thornbury and improve alignment between primary and secondary capacity, supporting continuity and enabling more children to remain in mainstream education.

This phase is being co-produced with MATs through individual engagement and a new Capital Steering Group to ensure appropriate sites and high-quality provision are aligned with demographic need. Our approach also considers falling rolls and opportunities to utilise surplus capacity where appropriate.

Future development (Phase 3) will be co-produced with MATs, early years and post-16 providers during 2026/27, with the ambition that it will achieve every secondary school having an Inclusion Base with the equivalent inclusion capacity being available across primary schools.

Our SEND Reform Capital Strategy does not include plans for additional special school places at this stage. This position will be reviewed annually through updates to the Sufficiency Plan, with any future proposals requiring strong justification and approval by the SEND Partnership Board.

For post-16 learners, SGC is working with SGS to expand inclusive pathways. However, travel to existing campuses remains a challenge, particularly for those who could otherwise travel independently. Our strategy therefore includes developing sustainable, locally accessible specialist post-16 provision. This builds on an existing project to expand specialist post-16 alternative provision, opening in September 2026 using revenue funding.

“Inclusion by design” underpins our capital approach. Drawing on delivery experience and national guidance, Inclusion Bases will prioritise good acoustics, flexible layouts, quiet and breakout spaces, natural light, biophilic design, therapeutic areas, full accessibility, and effective ventilation and temperature control.

Since 2022, SGC has invested High Needs Capital funding to improve inclusivity in mainstream settings, including specialist toilets, ramps, hoists, and enhanced lighting and acoustics. This programme will continue through the 2026/27 SEND Capital allocation. We will also expand investment in assistive technology, building on our award-winning AT hub.

9. **System partner and stakeholder engagement, and co-production.**

Please outline how the local area partnership plans to engage system partners and stakeholders to develop and implement the plan – include planned engagement with schools and early years settings, alternative providers, FE and post-16 providers (including those your young people attend that are not within your local area), Parents and Carers and children and young people with SEND, with reference to the core minimum requirements. Consider changing roles and responsibilities in the context of the Schools White Paper and how you work collaboratively to manage the transition. Please indicate where additional support is required to engage partners or stakeholders - senior officials at the Department for Education will be available to contribute to summer term events with education leaders and parent carer forum leaders.

500 words

In readiness for plan delivery we have undertaken significant groundwork, with details of the extensive engagement of stakeholders across the local area so far included in **Engagement and Co-Production - Appendix 8**. Once the maturity assessment toolkit was received, work commenced on engagement with partners and stakeholders to explain as much as was known about SEND Reforms at that time; complete the maturity assessment; and start to develop the understanding of possible changes required for local SEND Reform Plan delivery. Following publication of SEND Reform proposals we used all available opportunities, Schools Forum, Children and Young People's Partnership (SEND & Complex Need), Headteacher Briefings sessions, SEN School Cluster Board, individual meetings with system leaders, and arranged sessions focussed specifically on SEND Reform (PCF, Early Years Settings). We



highlighted details about SEND Reforms and the relationship with other Reform programmes (e.g. Family First Partnership and Best Start) and what changes would mean for South Gloucestershire.

We will continue to use existing arrangements to engage stakeholders in the first year of delivery to support successful delivery the Plan. Engagement with local and out of authority providers will focus on strengthening inclusion across all education settings which deliver services to our children and young people. Through arrangements with our local early years and school clusters and local FE providers, focussing on improving access to specialist support and local placements in localities.

To support access across the local area to inclusive environments we will need roles to change, including system leaders throughout governance arrangements, alongside the LA, to foster accountability and ensure transparency and regular communication. Multi Academy Trust leaders, playing a lead role in ensuring full participation of schools in local arrangements to improve inclusive practice.

Proposed co-production and engagement arrangements and the Young People Participation Strategy ([Appendix 8 and 9](#) respectively) set expectations for co-production and engagement with families by all providers delivering services in early years through to age 25 and:

- demonstrate commitment to ensuring that the parent carer forum is properly resourced and consistently engaged in shaping decisions.
- Summarise how we capture the voice of children and young people directly and distinctly from parent voice and provides clear evidence of how their views influence decisions, referencing the Young People's Participation Strategy (2025-2028).
- Explain how SENDIASS provides support to parent carers through provision of high quality, independent information and guidance, addressing variability in service quality where it exists, with reference to minimum service standards. Included is mitigation to any parental concerns about the perceived independence of SENDIASS within mediation processes.

- Confirm adoption of a minimum co-production benchmark (based on NHSE guidance) and to self-assess against it in year one, with a corresponding improvement plan agreed as necessary.

Enabling effective co-production and engagement system leadership and collaborative working for this will be strengthened across the partnership so that service leaders in children's services and health will ensure creation of more accessible opportunities for children and families through delivery of all the service they provided.

10. Risks and Mitigations

What are the key risks that could affect the successful implementation of your Local SEND Reform Plan, and what mitigation strategies are in place to manage these risks? Please include a maximum of 5 risks with impact and likelihood RAG for each risk. See Annex C for suggested risk matrix.

Risk	Impact (1 to 5)	Likelihood (1 to 5)	RAG	Mitigation	Residual RAG
1. Insufficient Capacity in Specialist Provision in Mainstream Schools: Arising from: A mismatch between demand for SEND places and available provision (special schools, resourced bases, AP, therapies). Arising from failure to build/arrange sufficient extra places in mainstream schools.	4	4	Red	Robust planning and Strategy adherence: • 3–5-year sufficiency strategy is in place • Mobilising fully, the capabilities and capacity of key enablers: planning, property, CEOs. • Ongoing capital funding	Green: 2 x 2

Workforce shortages (EPs, SALT, SEND teachers) restrict scaling even where space exists. Insufficient Headteacher/CEO capacity arising from retention and recruitment challenges and overburdened workforce. Increasing demand on services reduces capacity to engage productively and shift to early intervention.				delivery from the DfE - Accelerate short-term capacity (e.g. expand resource bases within mainstream schools, use temporary modular solutions where appropriate, Strengthen special school outreach, EPs, - Workforce pipeline strategy (Grow local workforce (training, grow-your-own models) Joint commissioning with health (e.g. SALT, OT)) What good looks like: Demand for specialist placements outside of mainstream schools plateaus despite population growth.	
2. Financial Unsustainability (High Needs Block Pressure and lack of long-term funding announcements) Arising from: The inability to deliver reforms within existing Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) high needs funding and announced funding streams (which are all short-term announcements)	4	4	Red	Establish Whole-system financial model - Model demand, placements, and cost trajectories over 5+ years - Track “invest-to-save” assumptions explicitly Front-load inclusion investment - Fund ordinarily available provision (OAP) properly - Invest in SEN support to prevent EHCP escalation	Amber: 3 x 3 (difficult to mitigate to better than Amber without long term funding announcements)

				Tight commissioning and placement control - Strengthen panel decisions and value-for-money scrutiny - Reduce reliance on high-cost independent placements Deliver DSG recovery plan alongside reform - Align savings to specific reforms (not generic targets) - Phase savings realistically (avoid over-optimistic assumptions) Ensuring our Theory of Change delivers: - More inclusion, reduced reliance on EHCPs, etc Ongoing funding announcements and clarification from the DfE. What good looks like: Reduction in unit cost per pupil and slowed EHCP growth over time	
3. Operational Delivery & Programme Complexity Arising from: Failure to effectively coordinate the multiple workstreams and partners required (education, health, care, workforce, data, commissioning). Impacted	4	5	Red	Establish strong programme governance - Clear governance structure at all levels (LA, health, schools) - Clear accountability and decision-making structures - Joined up and pro-active comms and messaging	Green 2 x 2

by multiple large-scale reforms over the same time frame (Health Restructure, Social Care, Best Start, Neighbourhood Health etc), Lack of coherence as individual MATs could develop plans in isolation of LAP.				Integrated delivery plan • One roadmap covering: • EHCP reform • Inclusion/OAP • Sufficiency • Workforce • Data and QA Dedicated programme capacity • Programme director + PMO support • Defined workstream leads across education, health, care Benefits realisation framework • Track outcomes (not just activity) • Link delivery milestones to financial and service impact Data and performance infrastructure • Real-time dashboards (EHCP timeliness, demand, placement trends) • Consistent KPIs across agencies What good looks like: Delivery stays on track, with visible progress and early correction of issues.	
4. Stakeholder Confidence & Legal Challenge Arising from:	4	4	Red	Build trust through co-production, transparency, and consistency • Co-production embedded	Amber: 3 x 3 (difficult to mitigate to better)

Loss of trust from parents/carers, schools, or advocacy groups, leading to complaints and tribunals. SEND is highly visible and sensitive, Changes (e.g. thresholds, pathways, OAP expectations) may be perceived as reducing entitlement Increase in SEND tribunals and complaints				from the start • Parents/carers and young people involved in design • Ongoing engagement, not one-off consultation Clear communication strategy • Explain what is changing, why, and what it means in practice • Be explicit about what support is available without an EHCP Consistency in decision-making • Strengthen panels and QA to reduce variability • Ensure thresholds are applied fairly Proactive tribunal reduction strategy • Early resolution conversations • Mediation and casework quality improvement Visible leadership and accountability • Senior leaders actively engaged and accessible • Regular public reporting on progress What good looks like: Reduced complaints/tribunals and improved parent satisfaction.	than Amber using our own actions as the national picture and the DfE's role in navigating this challenge successfully is a critical factor (e.g. current legal challenge by parents against the DfE's Consultation)
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5, System-wide Inclusion Failure (Schools & Partners) Arising from: Mainstream schools and partners not consistently delivering inclusive practice required by the reforms. Inclusion relies on collective system behaviour, not just LA control • Pressures on schools (attainment, funding, workforce) may reduce willingness/ability to include • Variation across MATs, academies, and maintained schools	3	3	Amber	Create a shared, enforceable inclusion framework • Define and mandate Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) • Clear expectations for all schools • Linked to funding and accountability Align incentives across the system • Use funding formulas, bandings, and top-ups to support inclusion • Reduce perverse incentives to seek EHCPs Strengthen partnership with schools • Formal inclusion charter with MATs and maintained sector • Regular engagement through heads forums and SEND partnerships Targeted support and challenge • Identify outliers (high exclusions, low inclusion) • Provide support + escalate	Green: 2 x 2
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				where needed Leverage inspection frameworks • Align with Ofsted/SEND expectations • Use QA frameworks to drive consistency What good looks like: Reduced variation between schools and fewer children needing EHCPs to access support.	
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11. Dependencies

Please detail the key areas of the local area partnership's proposed SEND future state and roadmap that may be impacted by wider reforms nationally and locally and outline how you will manage these. We expect these will include but not be limited to:

- NHS reforms
- Local Government Re-organisation
- Reforms to Children's Social Care
- Best Start in Life, including Family Hubs
- Best Start in Life Strategy
- Curriculum and Assessment Review

500 Words

Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG) Integrated Care Board (ICB) is entering into Clustering arrangements with Gloucestershire ICB, with a significantly reduced funding envelope for ICB's running costs and workforce. This brings risks relating to loss of impactful individuals and reduced capacity. The new ICB has committed to maintain focus on children, executive ownership of SEND and AP, and key programmes relating to neurodevelopmental pathway and improvement of the dynamic support register, which were Areas for Improvement in our SEND Area Inspection in 2025. Continued delivery of these is critical to delivery of Roadmap actions relating to access to specialist support. To mitigate risks, regular monitoring of these improvement areas is being undertaken both by the ICB and through the Children's Outcomes Board partnership governance.

South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership has already begun to review governance arrangements following significant changes to national policy, to mitigate a risk of confusion about accountability and therefore slower decision making across Roadmap actions. We are aligning multi-agency safeguarding arrangements to the requirements in the *Working Together* update, along with requirements for SEND and AP reform, to provide clarity and transparency in governance. This work is being undertaken and monitored by the Children's Executive and continues through the Autumn.

Children's Social Care reform through Families First is bringing greater focus on early help for struggling families. We have developed our Best Start in Life Strategy and opened our first Family Hub, with further Hub openings through 2026/27. These initiatives could present a risk to capacity but are also an opportunity to enhance delivery of SEND and AP reforms, through improved early family support and local access to advice and support. Both are essential elements of our Roadmap sections on inclusive culture and access to support. South Gloucestershire LAP has a workshop in October planned with other local authorities in the area to develop a joint Children's Strategy, to align activities into a single transformation to provide clarity and ensure partner engagement in change. Monitoring is through the Children's Health and Care Improvement Group on the ICB footprint, and by the SEND and AP Reforms Steering Group locally.

The curriculum review provides an opportunity to offer a varied and engaging curriculum across our schools and college, to help to address the poor outcomes that we see for our SEMH cohort, especially those at SEN support. This focus on outcomes is one of the Goals identified in our Vision and supports delivery of our Roadmap in relation to strengthening inclusion in mainstream settings. This will be monitored through the SEND and AP Steering Group.

South Gloucestershire Council is not subject of Local Government Reorganisation. It will be subject to all-out local elections in May 2027, where there could be a risk of newly elected officials changing policy and/or budget that could impact on all aspects of delivery and governance. To mitigate this, plans are being prepared by the LA SRO to brief candidates at an early stage, as well as strengthen Scrutiny Committee processes.

Section 3 – Monitoring and Evaluation

12. How will the local area partnership know delivery is on track?

Please set out how you will monitor and track progress referencing:

- **Monitoring tools and processes** - the specific tools, systems, and data you will use to track delivery milestones and measure the impact on outcomes.

Some Local Area Partnerships hold data in a central SEND operational dashboard. This is used by teams on a weekly basis to identify trends in demand or inform conversations with local school or setting leaders.

In some Local Area Partnerships, a view of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) is reviewed monthly by a SEND Board to take decisions on prioritisation, resourcing and delivery of services informed by regular data.

Please set out how you will use data to track demand (e.g., EHCP applications for assessment), Service delivery (e.g., Speech and Language Specialists deployment; places created), Service quality (e.g., parental satisfaction) and outputs (e.g., pupil attendance; pupil exclusions)

- **Feedback and adaptation mechanisms** - what feedback loops and stakeholder input you will use to review progress and adjust your approach.

500 Words

We have established a robust data-driven monitoring and evaluation framework through our previous SEND Transformation Programme, now refined to support delivery of the SEND Reform Plan. Aligned to our governance arrangements, this framework enables timely decision-making, accountability, transparency and continuous improvement.

A central SEND Performance Dashboard is being refreshed and will be jointly owned by the local area partnership, including the Local Authority, ICB, schools and parent carer representatives. It will provide a single, integrated view of operational, financial and outcome data across the 0–25 SEND system, drawing on education, health and social care sources. Updated monthly, it will support tiered governance: detailed indicators will be reviewed at workstream level, with strategic summaries presented at Partnership Board. This will enable early identification of emerging trends, pressures and areas requiring intervention across workstreams, localities and the wider partnership, supporting improved outcomes for children and young people with SEND.



Monitoring will build on DfE datasets and returns, complemented by local intelligence. A balanced suite of quantitative and qualitative measures will be applied. Demand indicators will include EHCP requests, statutory assessments and timeliness, mediation and tribunal activity, and demand for specialist placements. Service delivery measures will include the reach and utilisation of the Experts at Hand offer, access to therapy and educational psychology services, waiting times, outreach activity, and inclusion base sufficiency and occupancy. Outcome measures will include attendance, persistent absence, exclusions, attainment, preparation for adulthood outcomes, NEET rates, parental confidence, placement stability, and reductions in out-of-area placements and transport reliance.

Data will be disaggregated by age, phase, locality, type of need and protected characteristics to support equality monitoring and identify variation in access, experience and outcomes. Performance will be benchmarked against regional and national comparators, including DfE datasets and Area SEND inspection findings, to inform prioritisation and continuous improvement.

Delivery will be supported through monthly workstream meetings across Inclusion, Sufficiency, Early Years, Post-16 and Experts at Hand. These will monitor progress against milestones, financial performance, workforce capacity, and risks and mitigations. Clear escalation routes will operate through the SEND Partnership Board. A consolidated quarterly performance report will track progress against agreed measures set out in the reform plan.

The partnership will undertake an annual Local Partnership Maturity Assessment to evaluate joint working, co-production and system leadership, with findings informing updates to delivery priorities and the reform roadmap.

Stakeholder engagement will be integral. Parent Carer Forums, SENDIASS, children and young people, and education providers will contribute feedback through surveys, focus groups and co-production activity. This will be triangulated with performance data to ensure lived experience informs service improvement and strategic decision-making.

We recognise that effective reform requires continuous learning and adaptation. Monitoring will therefore focus on both delivery and impact, enabling identification and scaling of effective practice and ensuring timely corrective action where outcomes are not improving as expected. This approach strengthens accountability, supports partnership ownership, and ensures resources are



directed to areas of greatest need, delivering sustainable system change and improved experiences for children, young people and their families over time.

13. Reporting to DfE

Using the attached data template, the local area partnership is required to provide quarterly data returns to DfE against selected key metrics. DfE will, in turn, provide quarterly data reports with visualised analysis and benchmarking that will support your local delivery, monitoring and evaluation. This will include data the department holds on **Attendance**, **Exclusions**, and **Unauthorised absence**.

Please use the attached data template to upload your initial data return to DfE.

Data Return - Appendix 13

Section 4 – Governance

14. How will the local area partnership ensure delivery of plans remain on track?

Please outline the governance structures in place to oversee delivery. Clearly set out who is responsible for overseeing reform delivery, what each governance group or individual is accountable for, and how these arrangements ensure progress is monitored and decisions are made transparently. Please identify where the named SRO for the Local SEND Reform Plan sits within the governance structure and ensure your response incorporates the core minimum requirements.

Governance Mechanism <i>This may be a governance group, or an individual (e.g. SRO).</i>	Purpose/ Responsibilities <i>What is the function of this governance mechanism? What are they accountable for overseeing? What information is reported to this governance mechanism?</i>	Membership <i>Who does this governance mechanism comprise of? [should include health and PCF representation] What stakeholders are represented at this governance mechanism? Please indicate who chairs this. (Include n/a if an individual).</i>	Cadence <i>How regularly does this governance mechanism meet?</i>	Decision Rights <i>What decisions can this governance mechanism make?</i>	Escalation Route <i>Where can this governance mechanism escalate issues or decision to?</i>
SEND Partnership Board/Best Start in Life for Children with Complex Needs	Provides strategic direction, assurance and system oversight for the Best Start for Children with Complex Needs and SEND workstream, supporting partners to meet statutory duties (including the Children and Families Act 2014 and SEND Code of Practice) and improve outcomes for children and young people (0–25). Oversees delivery of system-wide strategies, co-production, multi-agency improvement, quality assurance, learning from reviews, inspection readiness and improvement planning, and the annual business plan, with performance and assurance reported quarterly to the Children's Partnership Senior	• Chair- Deputy Director of Nursing BNSSG ICB • Vice Chair- Service Director Education Learning and Skills SGC • Local Strategic SEND Partnership Lead and Head of Children's Performance & Delivery, BNSSG ICB • CEO Parent Carers Forum • Head of Children's Therapies and SEND, Sirona Care & Health (representing the SHAS team as part of role in this group) • Head Teacher representatives of school-led SEN Support Clusters	The Board meets every six weeks. Meetings should happen six weeks before the Executive Board to ensure effective and timely reporting.	Partnership recommendations to advise statutory partners. Powers to endorse plans. Make decisions about monitoring, risk management, and remedial action.	Children's Partnership Executive Board

	Officers Group and Executive.	• Special School Head Teacher Representative • Public Health Lead Officer • Strategic Lead Inclusion and SEND (SGC) • Early Years Service Manager (SGC) • Service Manager 0-25 Service (SGC Social Care) • A representative from CAMHS • Commissioning Lead Officer (SGC) • Communication Officer (SGC) • Designated Clinical Officer • Service Manager – Children in care SG			
Children's Outcomes Board (COB)	The South Gloucestershire Children's Outcomes Board is an executive level partnership board responsible for providing strategic oversight and governance for improving outcomes for children and	• Joint chairing arrangements between South Gloucestershire Council CEO and ICB CEO • SGC Co-Chair and Chief Executive	• The Board meet every six weeks, with a primary focus on monitoring progress against the SEND inspection	Provides accountability for delivery and monitoring of the SEND and AP Strategic Action Plan. When approved, will play a similar role in relation to the SEND and AP Reform Plan.	This is the highest-level partnership in South Gloucestershire.

	young people across all services. Its primary focus is on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP), with six-weekly meetings dedicated to monitoring progress against the July 2025 area SEND inspection recommendations and strategic action plan, undertaking risk assessment and identifying remedial action.	• Co-Chair and ICB Chief Executive • Council Executive Member for Children and Young People (Liberal Democrat Group) • Lead Member for Children and Young People (Labour Group) • Representative of opposition (Conservative Group) political group on South Gloucestershire Council • Executive Member for Education and Co-leader of South Gloucestershire Council (Labour Group) • Lead Member for Education (Liberal Democrat Group) • Chief Clinical and Delivery Officer (Nursing) (ICB) • Director of Nursing/Deputy Chief Nurse (ICB)	recommendations and associated action plans.			
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		• Executive Director – Department for People (SGC) • Executive Director - Resources and Business Change (SGC) • Service Director – Children Social Care and Preventative Services (SGC) • Service Director - Education, Learning and Skills (SGC) • Schools Forum Chair • Multi-Academy Trust CEO (Primary) • Multi-Academy Trust CEO (Secondary) • School Cluster Lead • Parent/Carer Forum CEO • DfE SEND Adviser				
BNSSG Children's Health and Care	• A strategic group responsible for instructing and overseeing improvement activity	Chair: South Gloucestershire Executive Director of People • LA Directors of Children's Services	The HCIG meets monthly. Additional meetings may be convened on an	Powers to convene partners across health and care and to coordinate activity across LA areas.	Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Integrated Care	

Improvement Group (HCIG)	to achieve the objectives defined by the Integrated Care System Executive Group. - Co-ordination of ICS partner organisations activity and resources, including the adoption of an improvement mindset and methodologies. - Ensuring ICS partners are working together well. - Defining Operational Delivery Group objectives and hold them to account for delivery. - Management and escalation of ICS risks or risks associated with proposed decision-making in accordance with the ICBs Risk-Management Policy	- ICB Operational Leads: ICB Heads of Services/Heads of SDU - ICB Clinical/Professional Lead: ICB Chief Medical Officer or Chief Nursing Officer - ICS Clinical/Professional ICS Partner(s) Health & Care Professional(s) - Local Authority Lead Director of Public Health - ICS Finance Lead: ICS Partner Director of Finance - Community Voices Lead: Health & Care Improvement Group specific - ICS Partner Leads: Health & Care Improvement Group specific - ICB Enablers Functions: Representatives from all ICB enabler functions	exceptional basis at the discretion of the Chair.	Powers to endorse policy that is considered by the ICB and the System Executive Group (SEG) partnership. Identifies potential risks for the health and care system to escalate to the SEG. Primarily an advisory board.	System Executive Group
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High Needs Working Group (HNWG)	The HNWG will monitor the delivery of South Gloucestershire's High Needs SEND Strategy through the eight themes identified in the DSG Deficit Recovery Programme Ensure improving outcomes for Children and Young People (CYP) with Special Educational Needs The HNWG will identify lead officers to provide regular updates on progress of workstream delivery through monitoring and reporting arrangements.	Chair – Susie Weaver, Executive Principal, Cabot Learning Federation Executive leadership & representation from MATs Executive leadership representation from Primary Head's Alternative and Special Needs Provision Governor Representative SGC Service Director Education, Learning and Skills SGC Service Director, Resources and Business SGC Strategic Lead for Inclusion & SEND SGC School Effectiveness Officer (SEND) SGC Strategic Lead Early Years and Childcare SGC Post 16 School Effectiveness Lead SGC Strategic Lead – Statutory Education SGC Commissioning Manager	Eight meetings per school year, aligned to Schools Forum	Powers to offer advice and recommendations that enable decisions to be made by the Chair to the Schools Forum. Primarily an advisory board.	Schools Forum
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		SGC Programme & Project Management To be added: Early Years providers and Further Education providers			
South Gloucestershire Council's Cabinet	The highest executive decision-making body for the local authority. Reports on any key decisions that impact on the LA. This is the public face of accountability and transparency for South Gloucestershire Council.	Chair: Co-Leaders of South Gloucestershire Council Executive Member for Education, Skills, Employment and Business Executive Member for Children and Young People Executive Member for Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure Executive Member for Cost of Living, Equalities and Public Health Executive Member for Corporate Resources Executive Member for Adults and Homes Executive Member for Communities and Local Place Executive Member for Climate and Nature Emergency	Meet regularly nine times per year, with meetings open to the public and webcast arrangements via the Council's website.	As outlined in the Council's constitution, to develop, approve and monitor policy delivery for the local area. This is a statutory board.	This is the highest executive decision-making body for the local authority.

ICB Board	The Integrated Care Board is an executive level board, bringing together the wider partnership of health and care organisations to plan and deliver joined up services and improve the health and wellbeing of people who live within Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.	The board is composed of the following members: a) Chair - Independent b) ICB Chief Executive c) Partner members (3): NHS and Foundation Trusts d) Partner member: Primary medical services e) Partner members: Local Authority CEOs f) 5 Jointly appointed Non-Executive Members (one of which, but not the Audit Committee Chair, will be appointed Deputy Chair; and one of which, who may be the Deputy Chair or the Audit Committee Chair, will be appointed the Senior Non-executive member g) 6 Jointly appointed Executive roles h) 1 Other Member – Community Services	Monthly	The Functions and Decision Map is published on the ICB website: www.bnssg.icb.nhs.net This is a statutory board.	This is the highest decision-making body for the ICB in the area.
	South Gloucestershire's Children's Joint		Monthly	Partnership recommendations to advise statutory partners.	SEND Partnership Board/Best Start

Children's Joint Commissioning Group	Commissioning Group collaboratively reviews the needs of children and young people, and co-ordinates the operational planning, procurement, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of all commissioned pathways, services, programmes and projects for them and their families. This covers services and support relating to education, children's social care, public health and NHS commissioned health services	<u>SGC Children's Commissioning Service:</u> Service Director of Quality Assurance, Strategic Safeguarding and Children's Commissioning (Chair) Lead Commissioner for Children Children's Commissioning Manager <u>SGC Education Service:</u> Strategic Lead for SEND and Inclusion Strategic Lead for Early Years <u>Council Social Care Service:</u> Service Manager for 0-25 (Social Care) Disability Team <u>Council Public Health Service:</u> Strategic Lead for Mental Health, Inequalities and Communities Strategic Lead for Healthy Foundations <u>BNSSG ICB:</u> Head of Children's Services		Powers to endorse commissioning plans. Make decisions about monitoring, risk management, and remedial action.	in Life for Children with Complex Needs, depending upon the nature of the service being delivered.
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		Children's Commissioning Manager <u>Co-production Partner:</u> Parent Voice and Co-Production Manager, South Gloucestershire Parent Carer Forum			
LA SRO	This is the statutory Director of Children's Services, with duties as outlined by DfE guidance 2013 and Children's Act 2004. This is the overall SRO for the SEND and AP Reform Plan.	This role is held by the Executive Director – Services for People at South Gloucestershire Council, Chris Sivers	n/a	This is a statutory role with statutory powers. Decision making powers and accountabilities for all children in South Gloucestershire, their education, safeguarding and wellbeing as outlined in Children's Act 2004. Decision making as delegated from South Gloucestershire Council in its Constitution 2025, Section B1 and Section B4.	The Council's Chief Executive is directly responsible for individual performance and delivery as line manager. Accountable to the Children's Outcomes Board for delivery.
ICB SRO	Chief Clinical and Delivery Officer (Nursing)	This role is held by the ICB Executive Director - Rosi Shepherd	n/a	This is a statutory role with statutory powers. Decision making powers as delegated in statute and in the ICB's constitution Single lead from the ICB	The ICB's Chief Executive is accountable for performance of the individual and the service they head.
Additional Task and Finish Groups to be	This group of senior officers will drive the work		Monthly		

established to ensure effective delivery of the SEND and AP Reform Plan: SEND and AP Reforms Steering Group	of the individual Plan workstreams (listed below) at pace. This will be a strategic partnership, monitoring operational delivery of the Plan. Ensuring coordination and joined up approaches across all the Reform workstreams and ensuring accurate and timely reporting to the Children's Outcomes Board through a strategic dashboard showing: progress, risks, dependencies, financial impact. Responsible for ensuring risk mitigation and any remedial action required.	• Exec. Director Department for People (SGC) • Service Director Education Learning and Skills (SGC) • Service Director Resources and Business (SGC) • Service Director Quality Assurance, Strategic Safeguarding and Commissioning (SGC) • ICB Head of Children's Services (ICB) • CEO of PCF • SEND Reforms Programme Manager (SGC, PMO)		Powers to develop, monitor and evaluate delivery of the SEND and AP Reforms Plan.	To the Children's Outcomes Board
Additional Task and Finish Groups to be established to ensure effective delivery of the plan:	This working group would be responsible for ensuring effectively delivery of the following elements of the reforms:	Yet to be determined and agreed by partners but likely to include: • Early years strategic lead • Family Hubs strategic lead	Yet to be determined and agreed by partners but likely to be no less than monthly	Responsible for ensuring timely and effective delivery of the reforms Responsible for reporting on and escalating to the SEND and AP Reforms Steering Group where off target	SEND and AP Reforms Steering Group

Strengthening Inclusion across Education Settings	• Early Years (inc. Family Hub Integration) • Universal Offer (Ordinarily Available Provision) • Graduated Response • Post 16 Pathways • Alternative Provision	• Sirona (community health) • Representatives from schools, early years and post-16 settings • Parent Carer Forum • SEND programme staff		Effective decision making in relation to service design and alignment of resourcing	
Additional Task and Finish Groups to be established to ensure effective delivery of the plan: Access to Specialist Support and Local Placements	This working group would be responsible for ensuring effective delivery of the following elements of the reforms: • Experts at Hand, including oversight of the EaH Steering Group • EHCP Reform • Sufficiency, Commissioning & Local Provision, including capital developments • Systems and Digital (SEND System Redesign, Referral Pathways)	Yet to be determined and agreed by partners but likely to include: • LA commissioning • ICB commissioning • ICB Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) • Parent Carer Forum • SEND Strategic Lead and EHC team • LA Finance and capital projects • LA Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO) • Representatives of schools and settings • Digital team • EAH programme staff	Yet to be determined and agreed by partners but likely to be no less than monthly	Responsible for ensuring timely and effective delivery of the reforms Responsible for reporting on and escalating to the SEND and AP Reforms Steering Group where off target Effective decision making in relation to service design and alignment of resourcing	SEND and AP Reforms Steering Group

Additional Task and Finish Groups to be established to ensure effective delivery of the plan: System Leadership, Partnership, Collaboration and Co-production	This working group would be responsible for ensuring effective delivery of the following elements of the reforms: • Governance, Partnership & Leadership arrangements • Co-Production and Participation, including the Engagement, Participation and Co-production Steering Group	Yet to be determined and agreed by partners but likely to include: • LA SRO • ICB SRO • Parent Carer Forum • Comms staff from LA and ICB • LA participation team, and ICB contractors delivering participation • Schools' Forum representatives • Representatives of schools and settings • SEND programme staff	Yet to be determined and agreed by partners but likely to be no less than monthly	Responsible for ensuring timely and effective delivery of the reforms Responsible for reporting on and escalating to the SEND and AP Reforms Steering Group where off target Effective decision making in relation to service design and alignment of resourcing Responsible for alignment to reviews across all of children's partnership arrangements	SEND and AP Reforms Steering Group
Additional Task and Finish Groups to be established to ensure effective delivery of the plan: Encouraging Inclusive Culture	This working group would be responsible for ensuring effectively delivery of the following elements of the reforms: • Communications and Culture Change • Workforce Change, Culture and practice • Financial Framework for Inclusion	Yet to be determined and agreed by partners but likely to include: • LA and ICB comms staff • Senior leaders across health, social care, education, schools and settings • Senior finance leaders across the LA and schools and settings • Parent Carer Forum • SEND programme staff • ICB and LA human resources teams	Yet to be determined and agreed by partners but likely to be no less than monthly	Responsible for ensuring timely and effective delivery of the reforms Responsible for reporting on and escalating to the SEND and AP Reforms Steering Group where off target Effective decision making in relation to service design and alignment of resourcing	SEND and AP Reforms Steering Group

Additional Task and Finish Groups to be established to ensure effective delivery of the plan: Reform Plan Enablers	This working group would be responsible for ensuring the effective deliver of the following elements of the reforms: • Finance and Sustainability • Workforce Development • Data, Performance and Intelligence	Yet to be determined and agreed by partners but likely to include: • Senior finance staff from LA and schools • Data and performance leads across the LA and ICB • SEND programme staff • Parent Carer Forum • HR managers from LA and ICB	Yet to be determined and agreed by partners but likely to be no less than monthly	Responsible for ensuring timely and effective delivery of the reforms Responsible for reporting on and escalating to the SEND and AP Reforms Steering Group where off target Effective decision making in relation to service design and alignment of resourcing	SEND and AP Reforms Steering Group
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How we anticipate partnership arrangements will change through the implementation of reforms process:

- It will reflect the need for rapid system development and delivery of this plan, overseen by the Children's Outcomes Board
- Will develop task and finish groups to deliver on key aspects of the Reform Plan (see proposed arrangements above) reporting through a Steering Group which can escalate to the Children's Outcomes Board
- It will reflect the national changes being proposed in relation to the roles and responsibilities of Health and Wellbeing Boards
- Health-led partnership arrangements are likely to change with the introduction of Neighbourhood Health partnership working arrangements and as the ICB implements the reform changes
- Health and care system partners have arranged a workshop in the Autumn to develop a regional (South Gloucestershire, Bristol, North Somerset and Gloucestershire) Children's Strategy, with a full review of needs analyses for each area. This will lead to closer joint working and potential changes to some of the partnership arrangements listed above.

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- Families First Partnership will be introducing the new social care arrangements in early autumn 2026, and there will also be the roll out of the remainder of the Best Start Family Hubs. We will review and integrate our governance arrangements as these programmes become BAU. We review our partnership arrangements at the annual partnership review in February 2027, ready for full implementation April 2027. Workshops to shape this are arranged in September.

If you have a diagram to show the relationship between these governance mechanisms, please upload this here.

[Appendix 14 – Governance Map](#)

Section 5 – Central Government Support

15. How can we help you?

Please outline any practical support you need from central government to implement your plan effectively.

This may include:

- Access to specialist expertise or advisory support
- Help with workforce development or recruitment challenges
- Tools or templates to support data collection, reporting, or evaluation
- Facilitation of peer learning or regional collaboration
- Support with system-level coordination across education, health, and care
- Guidance on navigating regulatory or policy barriers

250 Words

Based on the currently available Department for Education (DfE) information, our Plan is robust and well positioned to successfully deliver the SEND reforms. Continued success will depend on key DfE deliverables that will support effective and sustainable implementation as we move from planning into delivery.

1. Timely and detailed guidance:

Further timely information from the DfE will be critical to enable refinement of the Plan. This includes clarity on future funding allocations (2026/27, 2027/28, 2028/29 etc) across the DSG, High Needs Block, SEND capital, inclusion funding and reform-related funding streams. In addition, guidance and templates for School Inclusion Plans, along with clear advice on physical adaptations and the effective use of assistive technology in mainstream schools, will be essential.

2. Consistent communication and messaging:

Clear, timely and consistent DfE messaging on the reforms and expectations should be communicated uniformly across all stakeholders, including local authorities, ICBs, schools and parents/carers, to support shared understanding and confidence.

3. Realistic timelines for future phases:

The initial phase highlighted challenges linked to limited time for full co-production. As delivery progresses, it will be important for the DfE to allow realistic timescales, particularly to enable meaningful co-production.

4. Sharing best practice:

The DfE could support delivery by facilitating regular regional workshops to share best practice, identify emerging risks and highlight opportunities across local authorities.

5. A joined-up system approach:

As system owner, the DfE has a vital role in reinforcing a joined-up, strategic approach, ensuring all partners deliver reforms through the Local Authority Area Partnership.

Appendix 15 – SGC Glossary of Key Terms for the Local SEND Reform Plan



Annex B - Supporting Documents

Document	Link
The Schools White Paper	Every Child Achieving and Thriving
SEND Consultation Document	SEND reform: putting children and young people first.
LA and Schools Budget 2026-27	Schools Operational Guide 2026-27
Local Partnership Maturity Assessment Guidance and Tool	Included in commission pack –
Local SEND Reform Plan – Data template	Included in commission pack
Local SEND Reform Plan Quality Assessment Framework	Included in commission pack
Local Inclusion Partnership Grant 2026-27	To be published Spring 2026
Experts at Hand Guidance	To be published Spring 2026
High Needs Capital Allocations 2026-27	To be published Spring 2026
Guidance on Inclusion bases	To be published Spring 2026

Annex C – Risk Matrix

IMPACT DESCRIPTION	IMPACT LEVEL	PROBABILITY/LIKELIHOOD				
		< 10%	>10% - <30%	>30% - <60%	>60% - <90%	>90%
		Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Very Likely
Cannot deliver Reform Plan; Failure of mission critical activity.	Crisis					
Significant impact to objectives; Significant and sustained disruption to activity.	Critical					
Delivery targets are compromised; Project delay / budget overrun.	Moderate					
Limited impact on delivery targets; Deviations from project resource, timescale or targets.	Marginal					
Minimal impact on delivery targets; Minimal impacts to project / programme efficiency.	Negligible					

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Appendix 6 – Map of SEN School Clusters
Appendix 7 – SEND Sufficiency Strategy
Appendix 8 – Engagement and Co-Production
Appendix 9 – Young Peoples Participation Strategy
Appendix 10 – South West Region Interim Global Mediation Report
Appendix 11 – South Gloucestershire Analysis of the SW Region Interim Global Mediation Report
Appendix 12 – Capital Investment Costs and Benefits
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Appendix 14 – Governance Map
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