Appendix A

The 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: Gloucestershire County Council (GCC)

Name of Integrated Care Board: BNSSG-G

Local SEND Reform Plan SRO: Ann James

Signatories

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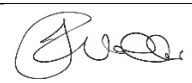
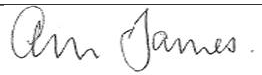
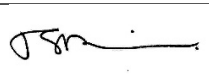
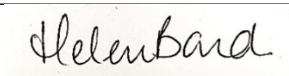
Chief Executive Officer (GCC)	Joanne Walker		Jo.Walker@gloucestershire.gov.uk	15.6.26
Exec Director of Children's Services - SRO	Ann James		Ann.James@gloucestershire.gov.uk	15.6.26
Chief Executive Officer (ICB)	Shane Devlin		shane.devlin@nhs.net	15.6.26
Director of Parent Carer Forum	Helen Bond		helen@glospcf.org.uk	15.6.26
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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*

Gloucestershire County Council and its partners are committed to building a system where children and young people achieve the best possible outcomes through inclusive settings and strong local partnerships. Good progress has already been made through sustained activity and intervention, and the partnership remains committed to working with parents, carers, children, and families to deliver this ambition over the next three years.

This SEND Reform Plan represents the first stage of Gloucestershire's three-year reform journey. It provides an honest assessment of system maturity, identifying where national core minimum expectations are already met and where Year 1 activity will focus on closing key gaps. Priorities for 2026–27 centre on establishing stable governance, including reducing fragmentation resulting from academisation and mitigations of local education system risk factors, ensuring commitment and continuity through ICB and LGR changes, consistent inclusion standards, strengthened data and assurance, and mobilising the Experts at Hand model. The plan will be refreshed formally annually, and as national policy develops and local implementation evidence emerges.

Where we are now

Demand for statutory support has risen significantly. EHCP rates increased from 36 per 1,000 in January 2025 to 41.9 per 1,000 in January 2026, reaching 43 per 1,000 (7,806 children and young people) by March 2026.

In response, Gloucestershire has delivered a broad programme of activity to strengthen mainstream inclusion, including:

- Development of a common Inclusion Framework and Toolkit
- A piloted and reviewed a Whole School Inclusion Programme and a forthcoming SEND and Inclusion training offer
- Investment in Educational Psychology and retention of an Advisory Teaching Service providing free whole-school support
- Early Language Support for Every Child pilot
- Transformation of Alternative Provision and introduction of a Specialist Task Force
- Targeted SEND funding for schools with the highest proportions of EHCPs

These actions have contributed to stronger inclusion outcomes. A higher proportion of pupils with EHCPs are educated in Gloucestershire mainstream schools (45.8%) compared to national (38.6%) and statistical neighbours (40.4%).

To meet rising need, the Local Area is also expanding specialist capacity through two new special schools, creating 400 additional places, twin-tracked with inclusion base development on mainstream sites.

However, challenges remain. Parental confidence continues to be a priority, with parental requests for EHC needs assessments increasing from 25.4% to 45.5%, alongside growth in elective home education from 1,880 children (2021/22) to 2,370 (2024/25).

The partnership recognises further system pressures, including variability in inclusion practice, inconsistent access to early help and specialist advice, workforce capacity challenges, and the need to rebuild parental confidence.

Where we want to get to

Demand is projected to continue rising, with EHCP rates anticipated to reach 57.1 per 1,000 by 2029.

Over the next three years, Gloucestershire will build on its foundations through the Experts at Hand model and delivery of local inclusion bases. The aim is to strengthen mainstream inclusion, reduce reliance on specialist and independent placements, and improve parental confidence.

Achieving financial sustainability depends on reducing demand for high-cost provision. Over time, funding will shift towards mainstream and early years systems to support earlier identification, timely intervention, and increased confidence among both families and the workforce.

This plan reflects current system maturity and evidence.

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

The Gloucestershire Local Area Partnership will measure success using five headline indicators, aligned to the DfE data template. These measures provide a clear line of sight between system reform activity, outcomes for children and young people, and financial sustainability:

1. **Reduction in demand for statutory assessment**
   - EHCP rate per 10,000 population
   - Number of requests for EHC Needs Assessment
2. I**ncreased inclusion in mainstream provision**
   - Percentage of children and young people with EHCPs educated in mainstream settings
   - Reduction in reliance on independent and out-of-area placements (441 in 2025 to 253 in 2029)
   - Reduction in parents electing for EHE, EOTAS and ETOSIC
3. **Improved attendance and reduced exclusions for CYP with SEND**
   - Persistent absence rates for pupils with SEND
   - Fixed term and permanent exclusion rates, with a particular focus on primary EHCP exclusions
4. **Improved parental confidence in the system**
   - Annual Parent Carer Survey confidence index
   - Reduction in complaints, mediation cases, and tribunal appeals
   - Co production with children, young people, and families as experts by experience, shaping priorities, design, and evaluation of services
5. **Improved financial sustainability of the SEND system**

- Reduction in spend on high-cost independent specialist provision
- Increased proportional investment in early years and mainstream inclusion

Working with the parent carer forum, to maximise the use of ‘Experts by Experience (EbE)’ to support transformation of the system.

Baselines and targets

Baseline (2025–26), Year 1 trajectory and 3-year target metrics are set out in the accompanying data return template and will be reported quarterly to DfE.

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.

Local blueprint for the next 3 years **This section sets out the partnership's three-year strategy, demonstrating a clear line of sight from the vision and goals outlined in Section 1, through to the future system state, roadmap, and first-year delivery plan.**	**Where we are**	**Where we will be in the next 3 years**
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	Gloucestershire has had a strong focus on mainstream inclusion for a number of years. Our local strategies developed in 2022, focused on the development of an inclusive mainstream system, providing a strong Universal Offer to children in their local school. This begins in Early Years and is outlined on pages 93 and 94 of the Gloucestershire Childcare Sufficiency Duty Report (1A), which provides an overview of the EY inclusion offer and its development in the EY sector with the wider sufficiency of EY places. As a consequence, we have a high proportion of children and young people	Activity and progress towards the objectives set out below and in the three and one year plans are prioritised and sequenced based on the maturity matrix, our local self-evaluation and our existing local area SEND improvement plan. **Experts at Hand**

towards a shared understanding and consistent practices around inclusion	with EHCPs in mainstream settings (50.29% in state-funded schools and academies; 11.14%) post 16 FE and colleges compared to national data, but this proportion has become increasingly challenging to sustain owing to education settings' ability to meet increasing needs; parental confidence in mainstream provision and preference for specialist provision. We have developed a Whole School Inclusion Programme, which includes whole school workforce development using evidence improved practice, supporting in understanding and developing inclusive cultures in education settings and is testing our local Inclusion Framework and Toolkit, which we are currently piloting with primary schools. We are working in partnership with Ambition Institute to provide evidence-led school support into the pilot. The extension and expansion of this pilot work will provide an opportunity for the pilot schools to act as a systems leadership group, in implementing the evaluated and adjusted model across the local education system A similar programme is and continues to be successfully delivered with Early Years Settings – 100% of participating providers were assessed as secure across all five core outcomes, and 100% of participating settings completed the core inclusion training. Targeted inclusion support is leading to measurable improvements in practice quality. Over a five-month period, between 72% and 100% of supported settings improved their RAG rating across key outcomes including inclusive environments, positive behaviour, practitioner confidence, partnership working, and transitions. Improved inclusive practice in early years settings is reducing the need for specialist escalation. Referrals to the Early Years Multi-Disciplinary Team from DBV providers fell by 53% over a 12-month period, indicating greater confidence and capability within settings to meet children's needs earlier at the universal and targeted levels. There has also been a 30% reduction in requests considered at the RTA (Request for EHCNA) Panel, alongside an increase in the proportion of requests agreed (from 88% to 91%), evidencing improved quality and appropriateness of referrals for those children with the highest levels of need. Earlier identification and intervention have strengthened. There has been a 27% increase in children supported through the Graduated Pathway. We have a strong Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) programme and offer which has been recognised in national awards to secure positive outcomes for young people. This includes recognition of PFA needing to start as early as Year 6 and going up to the age of 25. This offer includes travel training, development of life skills and independent living skills, co-producing effective tools and training for education settings to use with young people to support preparation for adulthood. In the last year, 416 young people were supported through the PFA offer, an increase of 5 secondary and FE settings accessing the PFA programme; 500 plus professionals trained in PFA awareness and practice with over 500 parents carers engaged through PFA events to understand the offer and support their young person to prepare for adulthood. The offer also includes Transition Chat - an offer that consistently supports 80% of referrals to transition into post 16 education and, if appropriate, onwards support to supported internships or employment. The Employment and Skills Hub and Adult Social Care are key partners to ensure the offer is effective into adulthood and the range of provision available at Universal, Targeted and Specialist, where required to meet local populations' needs. We have, and will continue to develop, new post 16 tailored mainstream provision, alternative provision, and specialist provisions as part of Further Education settings to meet the range of needs and starting points of young people in the county. As of September 26, we will have developed 170 posts16 places (specialist units) in mainstream FE settings. This combines with continued use and development of supported internships with a new Supported Internship programme due to start in September 26. Through the roll out of our full review of the Education Directorate's operating model, we are reorganising our Inclusion and School Improvement services to strengthen their focus on whole school support and early intervention to prevent escalation of needs from September 2026. This will enable a three-tier model of support for education settings through Inclusion Officers, Education Psychologists & Advisory Teachers, and School Improvement Advisers – the Universal, Targeted	**Overview:** Education settings will access the Experts at Hand offer through a structured a Locality Cluster Model with education system leadership at locality level when at its most mature. The model will include scheduled multi-disciplinary engagement, access to advice and triage support, and clearly defined pathways to targeted and specialist support. There will be investment in 1. A skilled and sustainable workforce; an integrated data and digital infrastructure; and 3. capital investment aligned to inclusion priorities. The model will ensure that all settings have equitable access, supported by data-informed allocation and active monitoring of utilisation. The Experts at Hand model enhances existing provision by: (1) Integration with existing services; (2) Service expansion and enhancement through increasing workforce capacity; and (3) The introduction of new elements enabled by reform funding, including the locality-based delivery model and extension to services' early intervention capability • A comprehensive Experts at Hand offer across all age ranges from Early Years to post 16 and post 19. This system wide offer will develop centrally and respond to local context and need. Delivery will be planned at a local level with education setting/s and placed based to ensuring through coproduction that the offer meets local needs. This approach will promote education setting ownership and accountability in partnership with the local authority, ICB and commissioned services, with all partners responsible and accountable for delivery. (local, shared). • The Experts at Hand offer will signpost existing resources available through the Local Offer and build on existing capacity and enhance existing resources and services. • Primary access to the offer will be through termly planning meetings at three agreed key points during the year with education settings and for Early Years settings that are open all year. This approach will ensure consistent best use of professional capacity. These collaborative meetings will be data and evidence informed and will be the vehicle to co-construct a termly plan of support with clear deliverables and outcomes and identified lead professional/s in the setting who will ensure delivery of the offer on site. Additional access will be provided through a consultation helpline. • SENCO clusters, whole setting webinars, and CPD via the Knowledge Hub will provide continuous professional development availability to build confidence through partnership and peer support. • Navigation meetings will be held in partnership with professionals from Families First Partnerships, Young Minds Matter (Mental Health support teams), the School Nursing Service and Early Years Child Development and SEND Advisors, alongside Early Years Inclusion and Quality Leads to ensure system connectivity with Families First Partnerships, Best Start in life Family Hubs and also ensuring connection with the right professional if support is required above the EaH offer. • The outcomes of the support and intervention will be evaluated for and used in the following termly meeting to measure the outcomes and assess impact to inform the next term's plan. • Should a setting have a change of, or new emerging need(s), professionals and navigators will be available to understand the change, identify the urgency, problem solve and review proportionality, capacity, and expertise to respond to the emerging need(s). • The model will be subject to full annual evaluation with stakeholders to determine how the model co-produced, iterated and developed for future years as well as the quarterly quantitative and qualitative quarterly monitoring and reporting. **Workforce Development** • A comprehensive, multi-agency, workforce development offer will be available to all professionals working with children and young people, including parents and carers. This will be delivered through the Knowledge Hub - evidence informed practice and professional expertise, modelling of practice, coaching and a range of training materials. • We will develop and implement a peer-to-peer support model of setting-based EaH delivery to promote a culture of peer support and learning alongside regular self-assessment. • SENCO clusters will be strengthened to provide peer support and challenge, build knowledge, skills,

and Targeted Plus offer.

As part of the Education Directorate operating model review, we are planning to collaborate with Youth Support Services to provide a Joint post 16 and Youth Services team. This will build on the work the post 16 service already undertakes with the Education and Skills Hub and Adult Social Care. This collaboration will ensure identification and access to appropriate support and services to meet the needs for children from Year 6 onwards where PFA outcomes are identified, and plan proactively to meet educational and holistic needs using resources from Experts at Hand and Families First Partnerships and where appropriate the multi-agency child protection team to provide targeted and specialist support reducing the likelihood of children and young people not engaging in education, employment or training.

We have also transformed our Alternative Provision offer to ensure a consistent county wide service that is focused on children and young people's needs and not exclusively on geography and age. This has resulted in investment in primary provision for both The Altus School and Hospital Education Service, our two commissioned providers. We are exploring how this can be adapted to the DfE's 3-tier model and we have also piloted the Alternative Provision Specialist Task Force through involvement in the Change Programme. The impact is evidenced in available cases studies and overall, 71% of permanently excluded pupils in 2024-25 received provision within 10 days, evidencing improved timeliness of support for children at crisis point. 85% of Fair Access Process transitions from Alternative Provision back into mainstream were successful, a continuing sustained upward trend from previous years. Schools report improved access to graduated support through clear tiered pathways, including outreach, short term placements and transitional provision, enabling earlier intervention and greater confidence in managing risk and reintegration.

As part of the DfE Change Programme, we have also piloted the Early Language Support for every child (ELSEC) which has been focussed with early years and Reception age children, we and have been delivering Young Minds Matter into education settings, both of which provide a positive framing for the development of health services in the Experts at Hand model and the use of paraprofessionals. The impact of this work has been:

- Earlier identification of speech language and communication needs (SLCN)
- Improved communication and interaction skills
- Progress towards age-related expectations
- Improved school readiness and early language outcomes
- Reduced escalation to specialist services through early support
- Increased practitioner confidence and competence in identifying and supporting SLCN
- Consistent use of communication supportive strategies
- Improved ability to implement group and targeted interventions
- Better use of the graduated approach
- 100 coaching sessions delivered to education settings and 144 staff attending training, along with 45 settings completing communication friendly audits and 69% delivering SLCN interventions in targeted groups
- 1,760 children with needs identified with 339 children accessing targeted interventions
- 76% of children having made progress by their second screening, with 81% of children improving outcomes
- 18% of children reducing the gap in developmental delay and 52% of children moving into typical developmental range.
- 95% of parents saying they are likely to use strategies at home.

At this stage, our focus has been on mainstream inclusion in terms of children accessing their mainstream classroom with their peers, and as such we have not significantly invested in specialist bases. Our recently updated SEND sufficiency strategy prioritises the development of LA commissioned specialist bases and school-led support bases in schools. (2A) Page 15 and 19 highlighted sections of the GCC SEND Sufficiency Strategy, currently out for consultation until 23rd

confidence, and problem-solving opportunities through peer networks.
- A high-quality SEND workforce development offer – the offer has been developed in partnership with stakeholders and is evidence informed. The development and access to the offer is through a shared approach, facilitated using linked digital platforms, that signpost to one another. The platform hosts links to national and regional best practice with evidenced impact, as well locally produced quality assured resources. As such this will be an effective offer to raise workforce skill levels (shared, effective).

Alternative Provision and Inclusion Bases

- A 3-tier Alternative Provision Offer, supported by a specialist task force. This offer will be scaled up to be available across the county. Pilot impact measures have been strong with education settings, children, young people, and families engaged with the planning and delivery of support (shared, effective, fair).
- All secondary schools and further education providers will be supported to operate a setting commissioned inclusion base. Inclusion bases will support children and young people to have a greater sense of belonging in their local education setting and community. Access will be equitable with bases providing timely and early support (local, effective, fair, shared, early).
- A clear plan and strategy to deliver primary school commissioned inclusion support bases will have been developed and well progressed in its implementation. The strategy will encompass individually commissioned bases, locality-based cluster commissioned bases and respond to the impact of falling rolls. These bases will offer provision based on local presenting needs and be balanced with the physical capacity and financial sustainability of the school. These provisions will meet local needs early, use inclusion base guidance to so their offer and practice are evidence informed. These bases will be developed through collaboration and co-construction with the local authority. With schools organised into local clusters, this will enable settings to take on locality system leadership and drive a culture of collaboration and sharing of resources and the skills mix in the locality. (Local, effective, fair, shared, early).

Broader Inclusion Support Offer

- There will be an enhanced PFA offer, ensuring timely access to specialist input with access to a range of post 16 Education provision and supported internships, employment opportunities, and access to adult services for the range of needs moving across into Post 16. The development of the offer will ensure attention to cross border collaboration where appropriate to meet local population needs.
- A joined-up Education and Youth Support workforce will work collaboratively to meet the needs of children from Year 6 upwards, including children known to the Youth Justice System. The model of practice will be aligned the new Schools Service. Collaborative work with education settings will inform where Experts at Hand resources should be allocated to provide targeted interventions. Further alignment with the Families First Partnerships and Multi Agency Child Protection teams will enable targeted and specialist interventions to be put in place where needed, with a clearly articulated approach to transition.
- Education settings will have access to an integrated early intervention and community offer to deliver early help to meet universal and targeted social care needs
- Strengthened universal access in the Family Hubs and Holiday Activities and Food programmes for children and young people with SEND in collaboration with education settings, will ensure local needs are being met in local communities
- The provision of a strong community short break offer will ensure children and young people have positive experiences, spend time with peers, engage in activities in local communities and provide a short break for parent carers. Continued work in partnership with Adult Social Care and Employment Services will ensure appropriate transitions are effectively planned for young people approaching adulthood and taking support from Adult Social Care providers and employers.
- Increased parental confidence and a stronger sense of belonging for children and young people will result in a reduction in the number of children and young people accessing elective home education, education other than at school/education other than in school.

By the end of the three-year reform period, Gloucestershire will meet or exceed all national core

	June 2026, provides the growth trends of EHCPs creating the current demand for special school places. The twin-tracking of the two new special schools, alongside the commitment to inclusion provision for Early Years through to Post 16 on mainstream sites, simultaneously stabilises the system and provides future capacity for specialist placements on mainstream sites. The strengthened Universal Offer will prioritise the most prevalent and growing areas of need, including Speech, Language and Communication Needs, Neurodiversity, and Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. Evidence-based early intervention approaches such as ELSEC (Early Language Support for Every Child), ELKLAN a range of speech language and communication training for practitioners, settings and parent carers, like Early Talk Boost, a speech, language and communication programme, Whole School Inclusion, ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant), EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) and Young Minds Matter (mental health support teams) will be scaled up across all phases of education and embedded to support mainstream settings to respond confidently and consistently to these needs. We have worked with a VCS organisation and the Parent Carer Forum to co-produce a short breaks offer, harnessing and enabling local communities to develop and offer short breaks to increasing numbers of children and families. We have developed a short breaks sufficiency plan and are reviewing tendering arrangements for 2027 to provide holistic support for children and families. Co-production informs all our develop work in the county - in Gloucestershire coproduction is defined as shared decision-making between professionals and experts by experience. This includes structured mechanisms to ensure that lived experience informs service design, commissioning decisions, and evaluation at both strategic and operational levels (see coproduction journey graphic which sets out our working model).	minimum requirements through: • An agreed, locality-based Experts at Hand offer accessible to all mainstream settings across the 0–25 system, supported by school locality governance arrangements; schools will develop as local systems leaders in the tailoring and enhancement of the locality offer, including local cluster tailored commissioning governance to ensure the meeting of local needs priorities and achieving better value for money; • The model has been and will continue to develop in co-construction with the locality clusters of education providers, Parent Carer Forum, SENDIASS, the ICB, health trust providers and Senior Leaders in the Local Authority. This group will continue to drive forward, testing, learning, evaluating, and refining the model based on qualitative and quantitative data, impact, and value for money. **EaH Workforce:** • The delivery workforce will consist of an Advanced SALT Practitioner, Educational Psychologists, Educational Psychology Assistants, Advisory Teachers, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Assistants and Inclusion Specialists, Assistive Technology Lending Library and the Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce, alongside the collective outreach offer from the special schools' association (GASSH) and the alternative provision service, The Altus School. • The workforce will also include a range of Assistant roles, where these experts are progressing towards professional qualifications, enabling a succession pipeline for the experts' workforce of the future. • In recognition of local need, the speech and language therapy and occupational therapy resources have been planned to provide a greater proportion of Speech and Language Therapy, and a lesser proportion of Occupational Therapy. This has been based on local area need data, as well as learning from ELSEC. • The model focuses on increasing support in early years and primary phases, and transitions at these phases for the longer-term impact, with emerging needs being met with an ISP, and reducing the need for an EHCP and increasing Early Years, Education settings and parental confidence in mainstream education. • The model predicates a downward trajectory of all professionals' support post 16 and 19 in line with fewer pupil numbers. Speech and Language Therapy has the largest proportionate reduction in support post 16 and post 19, but an increase in Occupational Therapy and Educational Psychology. This pattern has been planned to support young people develop preparation for adulthood, life skills and transition and the support to be able to meet the intensity of needs of the young people of these ages where needs may be more complex. The model includes capacity to support young people who may not be in education in the local area due to their specific needs. • Evaluation of the Assistive Technology Lending Library (ATL) pilot, scheduled for August 26, will inform where to focus these resources to have greatest impact. • The ATL offer will be developed and scaled over 3 years, with a year 1 workforce in post for September/October 26. • A strengthened Universal SEND offer will be aligned to the National Inclusion Standards when published, and underpinned by a workforce development offer around use of the Standards; • Consistent multi-agency governance, data sharing and quality assurance arrangements inform commissioning and delivery through the school locality clusters, the ICB SEND Board and the SEND and Inclusion Local Area Partnership Board. We have the foundations in place for the Experts at Hand model from our work in the Change Programme and through DBV. In 3 years', time we will have a locally agreed and operating inclusion framework that is in line with National Inclusion Standards. This is a place-based locality model, with a clear understanding of need at setting and locality levels, informing the focus of the Experts at Hand offer and inclusion bases. The reviewed Inclusion Framework will **enable** a regular cycle of self-evaluation and the delivery of a facilitated peer-to-peer support/review model for quality standards in mainstream school and inclusion bases. The delivery of this model will be **enabled** through **capital investment** across Early Years, mainstream

		and FE, strategic local area workforce development strategy roll out, and maximising of data and digital tools to track and evaluate the impact of the offer, and agile and flexible response to emerging data trends as highlighted in the SEND Sufficiency strategy page 20. (2A) We will track the impact of this universal model at both a locality and county wide level through an enhanced data collection and impact reporting cycle into the SILAP programme board and on into the SILAP strategic board.
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 and is joined up, including strategic co-production, with a co-production benchmark with parent carers and children and young people.	The Local Authority is the system convener for the development of the SEND Reform plan and its implementation, and as such has brought all local area partners together to develop the plan and to agree the establishment of governance and area-based arrangements to enable school locality clusters, with their community of parents and carers to act as convenors and leaders in their own localities. The LA has commissioned a local research school Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) to work across the local education system to co-construct county-level guidance and support for Gloucestershire's settings to act within a self-improving system to drive enhanced mainstream inclusion informed by the National Inclusion Standards and local coproduced work on a whole school inclusion self- evaluation tool and supporting toolkit. The SEND and Inclusion Local Area Partnership (SILAP) Board has been operating since 2022 and led the system through the Local Area SEND Inspection, The Delivering Better Value in SEND programme and the SEND and AP change programme. The board brings together partners from across the local system to enable strategic collaboration and coproduction. This is supported by an operational programme group which ensures detailed oversight of the existing SEND and Inclusion improvement plan. In 2025 we expanded our governance to include a strategic board chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of the Council and attended by the Chief Executive of the ICB. This tiered governance structure ensures that decision making at all levels operates collaboratively. Strategic planning has improved with the use of the JSNA to develop a Joint Commissioning Strategy with Health, a delivery action plan, and to inform wider system developments. SILAP, whilst fully representative, still needs further development to ensure effective engagement from all stakeholders, including the provision of high quality and accurate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in a fully integrated data dashboard to enable more proactive and co-productive service design and review, interventions and commissioning. The KPIs will include specific indicators relevant to delivery of the Experts at Hand model, with clear governance and oversight through to the Executive group and across the governance of the wider Children's Services reform workstreams. The county has developed Education settings-based partnerships that operate at county-wide and locality levels. The Gloucestershire Education Forum brings together system leaders from the RDD, LA maintained schools, Dioceses, single academy trusts and multi academy trusts, Early Years and Further Education providers with a footprint in the county. The heads associations operate effectively, bringing together primary, secondary, and special school heads into phase partnerships, who the chairs then represent on the Gloucestershire Education Forum education systems leadership group. In addition, the primary system operates across 7 local partnerships and runs an Inclusion Committee, chaired by the primary schools' SILAP representative. Closer development and full representation of all schools in these partnerships will form the foundation of future area-based leadership and working in the Experts at Hand offer, which will require significant focus. During year one connectivity will be built with feeder Early Years settings and FE settings, including settings where children are educated out of area. The Gloucestershire school system continues to have a low rate of academisation. There has been an incremental development of MATs resulting in a low number of local multi-academy trusts with on average 5 schools, and a total of 18 different MATs with some presence in the county. This gives us an opportunity to work closely with diverse school structures as well as with children and families and the local partnership to co-construct locality cluster governance arrangements with education systems leaders. GLA and its EEF Research school will lead a commissioned workstream across the	Governance oversight will have been rapidly aligned to harmonise with the current Families First Social Care reforms governance, which includes the Best Start in Life Strategy and action plan to ensure all reform delivery activity reads across, maximising impact and operational efficiencies. There will be consistent and robust project management and governance infrastructure across all reform delivery activity. In responding to the ambitions of the White Paper, Gloucestershire will have carefully planned and rolled out the development of the local education system network structures to ensure that there is intentional design in the evolution of education settings governance and groupings for the delivery of locality-based services and Experts at Hand offer, aligning as closely as possible with Families First, Best Start Family Hubs and Neighbourhood Health footprints. We will be working closely with a diverse range of settings to maximise opportunities through reforms for support to children. We will need to navigate challenges around small rural primary schools within mapping and commissioning arrangements. In addition to the existing partnerships, early engagement regarding the reforms, suggested that cross phase locality partnerships will be a priority to support and enhance locality-based working. We will have significantly worked towards these partnerships operating as the local commissioners for identified local services to meet specific local needs that could not be addressed through the Experts at Hand county-wide arrangements In Year 1 Gloucestershire will have an established plan for and moving towards Education settings being part of a group of local Education Providers, supported by cross-phase locality partnerships that inform local and strategic commissioning priorities. We would aim for local partnerships to be up and running and to have access to devolved funding and a clear delivery plan relevant to Local Area need across phases of education for local commissioning by Year 3. Through this mechanism education settings/school leaders will develop their role in partnership systems leadership and ensure the tailoring of the Local Offer to the locality cluster community context. These clusters will be responsible for measuring the outcomes and impact of the Universal, Targeted, Targeted plus offer and any services the local cluster commissions to meet local needs. Each cluster will have outcome measures to evaluate impact and raise any system gaps to inform further and future development, sharing peer experience and knowledge across clusters and informing the future shape of the Experts at Hand offer. There will be an established model of coproduction with parents and children and young people with clear benchmarking and an annual self-assessment based on NHSE guidance that will ensure that as a minimum Local Area plans and strategies and mainstream school inclusion strategies are effectively coproduced and quality assured with parents and children and young people by building on the existing and evolving co-productive structures. We will maintain our established cycle of 'You said, We did' annual reporting, and ensure that is informed by all 'voice', including children and young people, that is gathered through coproduction and engagement activities with the actions taken and changes made resulting from the influence of voice. We will extend our work with children and young people to capture a broader view from across the system. This will focus on well-being, belonging and the impact of work on mainstream inclusion. SILAP will operate proactively using a comprehensive real-time data set to identify system trends and measure the impact of improvement activity and service delivery. This will inform both operational plans and activity and executive level governance oversight. This will inform SILAP's decision making regarding the targeting of resources. The locality cluster governance arrangements will monitor and respond to the

	local system in partnership with the PCF to co-construct guidance and support materials for the development of research informed individual setting level Inclusion Strategies. This co-productive work will be aligned with the National Inclusion Standards when published, and with a review of the Inclusion school self-evaluation framework and toolkit. Coproduction with parents has been a priority for the partnership and is embedded at strategic and operational levels in significant parts of the system. We have a strong relationship with our Parent Carer Forum (PCF), examples include co-production on the development of the new assessment to be used by Families First Partnerships, development of an EHCP Annual Review toolkit, recommendations for selection of new special school sponsors and development of the short breaks offer and Autism and ADHD Assessment pathways. Co-production with young people is less well established and is predominantly focused on the EHCP processes; we are focused on developing more consistent and robust arrangements to ensure children's voices influence both strategic and operational decision-making. This will be supported by a co-production benchmark, based on NHSE guidance Gloucestershire is proactive in working with national partners to develop its local education system, engaging Ambition Institute, Impower, the Education Endowment Foundation and regional networks (RIIA) to support, but more significantly, working with the DfE on the DBV and Change Programmes.	impact of Universal offer and Experts at Hand offer, and work as a partner with the LA and Health in determining the ongoing shaping of the offer
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.	Gloucestershire has a strong foundation of local specialist expertise and provision that supports education settings to meet needs closer to home, which we started to establish through the work on DBV and the Change Programme. This foundation includes an established Educational Psychology Service with a consultation-led operating model, an Advisory Teaching Service that supports schools, increasing access to some health specialist input through language programmes, and Young Minds Matter, and a transformed Alternative Provision offer supported by significant capital and revenue investment and strong links into headteacher networks. Alongside these strengths, rising demand, limited specialist base capacity and variable collaboration between mainstream, special and AP settings mean specialist expertise could be deployed more consistently or earlier across all localities. • We have prioritised the development of special school places to stabilise the system and to strengthen local capacity and mitigate rising independent special school costs; specialist bases attached to mainstream schools are in place but currently limited (5 primary and 1 secondary). • The Educational Psychology Service has removed its statutory advice backlog through innovative workforce practices and maintains capacity for consultation-led whole-setting development; statutory EHCP advice continues to take a high proportion of time. • The Advisory Teaching Service provides child-level support to schools and settings and has a clear improvement plan in place to pivot from September 2026 to a whole-setting support model. • Schools increasingly access health specialist input through language programmes and Young Minds Matter; there is an opportunity to extend this to provide a consistent and comparable route for other services including occupational therapy. • In line with the 3 Tier Model for AP, our alternative provision has been transformed with a Tier 1 offer and Tier 2 placements, specialist primary centres for Altus (PRU) and Hospital Education, and significant capital and revenue investment; further work is underway to strengthen earlier intervention so this becomes the norm. • There are existing connections between mainstream, special and AP settings (including leadership links through headteacher networks), but outreach and embedded school-to-school support are not yet consistently in place across the system, reflecting governance complexity alongside financial, capacity and accountability pressures. We have an opportunity in Gloucestershire to develop stronger collaboration between settings, including an outreach offer from special schools and embedded school-to-school support model. • Unregistered Alternative Provision is used after robust due diligence processes by the commissioner (school or LA), and we are about to launch a digital directory to make this	In three years, we would expect to increase mainstream inclusion, reduce the need for specialist places and travel to out of county placements through. • All education settings having access to school and LA commissioned inclusion and specialist bases mapped on a locality model according to need. • Capacity in specialist services will have increased to ensure that all education settings from Early Years to post 16 have access to a clear, coproduced, and effective provision offer • Information and guidance about the Experts at Hand offer will be available on the Local Offer and linked via other school and family dedicated websites and platforms, direct communications, and known, existing council and partnership communications platforms. • The Altus School Alternative Provision Service will lead a strong AP partnership and outreach offer for education settings, with the proportion of partnership placements doubled, alongside a reduction in PEX placements. • Unregistered alternative provision will be regulated and available through a digital procurement framework. • The special school association partnership will have developed and implemented a strong outreach offer that supports mainstream schools in the delivery of a Targeted and Targeted plus offer. This outreach offer will be designed alongside the EaH offer to ensure that it aligns with a complements the offer. • As set out in our data return, Independent special school placements will have reduced from 441 in 2026 to 253 by 2029. • A fully established Early Intervention and Community Service team made up of local authority Education and Early Help staff who will provide support to education settings to identify and meet children's needs as early as possible, enabling children to be part of their local community and accessing education. • Established muti agency child protection teams across all areas of the county, providing enhanced support to SENCOs from Early Years to post 16 and Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) supporting education settings to identify and meet children's needs where safeguarding concerns arise. • Health support to settings, which will include a linked staff member who will meet with school leads to discuss children's needs and coproduce support arrangements. Support workers will attend education settings alongside school staff, building on the model utilised in the ELSEC pilot. The MOU developed for ELSEC will be amended and utilised to support the relationship between EaH and education settings/staff. Health representative will attend SENCO cluster meetings and other appropriate education leaders' forums. Online programmes will be utilised to enhance communication and training

	process more accessible to users and easily updated to ensure accurate QA data is available to commissioners.	opportunities (e.g. an online learning, forum). EaH will build on the communication set out by ELSEC and the relevant core therapy services. With the introduction of school nursing support to EaH offer, there will be opportunities for health navigation via that service as well. We will have finalised a plan and be in delivery for full roll out of LA commissioned specialist bases across the county to meet needs close to home. At this stage we would expect at least 50% of this plan to have been delivered by the end of Year 1 and in place for all by end of Year 3. In 3 years, for Health services there will be early access to identification and early intervention through the Experts at Hand offer and a robust 'Waiting Well' offered for all services in scope. For services where there is a wait, these will be in line with nationally published timescales. This will include as a minimum: • Consultant-led services subject to the 18-week Referral to Treatment standard; • Community paediatric and therapy services, including speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, and wheelchair services; • Neurodevelopmental and autism diagnostic pathways across community and CAMHS routes; • Children and young people's mental health access and referral waits; and • Early years and 0–19 public health services where these contribute to early identification and prevention.
Encouraging inclusive culture & behaviours – using funding and shared accountability towards a system that works for children and families while achieving value for money.	Our local SEND and Inclusion strategies have three core pillars, which include the development of a common language and shared understanding of inclusion and ensuring that funding models incentivise inclusion. These have resulted in changes to a number of services, including the development of the local Inclusion Framework and Toolkit, changes to the Alternative Provision Service and the roll out of Section 19 provision to support persistent and severe absence. Both alternative provision and Section 19 provision provide clear planning to support reintegration back into the child's school setting. We have focused on protecting core school funding by not undertaking block transfers and providing a targeted SEND funding model for schools with the highest levels of need. In addition, the council provided £700k from the general fund to support primary inclusion clusters and restorative practice training offers. However, core school funding pressures and the high needs pressures, have significantly limited the ability to invest in shared funding solutions. We launched the Whole School Inclusion pilot with 15 schools — 10 primary and 5 secondary schools – running from January 2026. The programme is built around three key pillars: • **Support for schools** through collaboration with an Inclusion Partner to develop inclusive practice and access targeted, strategic multi-agency support. • A **comprehensive CPD programme**, designed and delivered by Ambition Institute. • The opportunity to **access additional funding pilot** to enhance inclusive practice A key priority in the review of the Education Directorate operating model has been to maximise the service offer available to work at whole education setting level, promoting inclusive practice and moving away from child-level support where this can now be undertaken by an all-age casework service. The new operating model, currently in formal consultation, will roll out from September 2026.	In three years, we aim to have an inclusive culture in the individual settings in our local education system, articulated in the settings Inclusion Strategy. This will be supported by an embedded inclusion framework, audit tool and supporting development toolkit resulting from the MAT-led co-construction of guidance and resources aligned with the National Inclusion Standards, and quality assured and enhanced through a model of peer-peer support and collaboration between education settings. This will increase the number of children accessing their education in their local school, reducing travel distances for suitable education and will longer term reduce high-cost placements and increase community inclusion. It is our aim to devolve funding, either through the High Needs Block or Experts at Hand funding to locality partnerships to enable locality systems leadership groups to undertake bespoke commissioning and hold shared accountability, enabling a closer link between commissioning and local service delivery. Key to enabling this will be the ability to free up resources and capacity from central and statutory services, from the earlier identification and intervention to improve outcomes for children, parental confidence in mainstream provision, and reducing escalation to more expensive statutory and specialist services. This will strengthen locality and system leadership's influence and impact on how an inclusive culture is developed in their local community and context, which is crucial in a large shire county that has diverse communities. By the end of Year 1, we will have completed the pilot of the Whole School Inclusion project and evaluated its impact, determined adjustments resulting from the evaluation and planned, resourced and be rolling out at pace the finalised model across the county in Years 2 and 3. The new Education Directorate operating model will have rolled out in full and will be fully aligned for delivery of education setting support with the Experts at Hand operating model, the Families First reforms and the Best Start in Life Strategy By the end of 2027 we will have a short break offer ranging from universal to specialist support matching and meeting the county's needs. This will be alongside continuation of our Holiday Activities and Food Programme and annual Big Health Day. Commissioned carers services all have been adapted to respond and be inclusive for all. Experts at Hand, Families First Partnerships and Best Start in life in partnerships with local voluntary and community sector providers will raise awareness of these local and accessible offers, encouraging and enabling wider awareness of the Local Offer, providing support to children and families, building community connections, promoting health and wellbeing, equity of access and inclusive and welcoming communities. This provides

		children with opportunities to support personal development, build independence and preparation for adulthood along with providing parent carer support. These provisions will be supported by an improved Local Offer, improved communication and awareness raising of the Local Offer and resulting increased use, enabling families to access information about support and services available to them across the local area partnership and their local communities.
Enablers	**Capital investment** The current capital investment programme is twin tracking the development of specialist provision, alongside the development of inclusion bases on mainstream sites. The current special school builds will stabilise sufficiency, for which there remains a shortage of at least 500 places, which is being met through the delivery of 2 new schools and existing school expansion projects. This programme will bring Gloucestershire into line with where it needs to be for the current demand in specialist education and relieve pressure on the heavily over PAN special schools and allow the time to build the support and specialist bases infrastructure for the future. Reduction in the capacity and even decommissioning of the current specialist school capacity is an ambition for future years. **Data and Digital** There has been much investment into data and digital systems through the commissioning of a new education information management system (£4.6m), which will see Capita replaced by Liquid Logic and move Education and Social Care onto the same platform. This will strengthen the 'single view of the child' that is critical to multiagency working and early intervention. The Local Area has moved to a Power BI data reporting model, using a 'data lake,' which pulls data from a range of multi-agency partners. This does not currently include health data but is part of the development roadmap. Data is used well at an operational level and is increasingly at a strategic level and to agree joint commissioning priorities. **Workforce development** The local area partnership has a broad workforce development offer available to the system. However, it lacks structure and can be hard to access due to the disparate nature in the way that the offer is developed through multiple services. There is an ongoing development project to consolidate and rationalise the training offer, with a view to simplifying and making the offer more accessible. The resulting workforce development platform is projected to provide a single point of access for WFD for education professionals, parents and carers, the internal LA workforce, extending to Social Care and Health joining up with the Social Work Academy and Health training pathways. Health will recruit a skills mix across the bands, recruiting Band 4 assistants rather than Band 3 placing emphasis on the importance of skills and experience. All staff will receive 2–4-week clinical induction & undertake probation. They will have access to regular clinical and management supervision, as well as ongoing in- house CPD opportunities. Band 5s will be supported through NQP competencies and Band 4s will be supported by the Workforce Development Framework for Support Workers, including use of the Speech Language and Communication Framework and the recently published Developing Speech, Language and Communication Assistant roles within the Experts at Hand Offer. Birmingham University offer SALT apprenticeships with a January intake. This training will be a part of the year 2 offer (January 2028 intake), Learning from the positive induction of the ELSEC workforce, all SALT staff will be invited to a 2- day induction including training and team building and planning to move from delivery of ELSEC to delivery of a language programme to meet the whole age range from 0-25. All staff will deliver care	**Capital Investment** Capital investment in special school and mainstream inclusion specialist bases will stabilise the system with the former and reduce future need for special school places with the latter. We expect the completion of the 2 new special schools in the next 18 months, to complete our local need for special school capacity. Over the next three years, we will focus on the development of local specialist base provision, ensuring that infrastructure and environment challenges that limit mainstream inclusion are addressed through the roll out of the school-led Support Bases. By 2029/30 we expect to have increased specialist base capacity from 80 to 560 places. **Data/Digital development** GCC will operate on a single case management system, with business processes embedded within the system to ensure that it provides a comprehensive view of the child and family. The Local Area will have an agreed strategy for the use of AI tools to support: • communication and accessibility of Local Offer and Experts at Hand offers, including readability and accessibility tools. • Development of initial drafts of plans (EHCP and ISP) • Improving business processes and reducing administrative functions. Completion of data transformation programme to ensure all partnership data is available through the 'data lake' and links to real-time Power BI reporting. Year 1 will focus on identifying further ways in which data can be an enabler of reform delivery so that all data is used effectively to identify areas for development and support local improvement; commissioning and workforce development activity. **Workforce development offer** Building on the work that has been done so far, we expect to have a clear, accessible, and annually reviewed workforce development offer, that is continually reviewed to assess impact and adapted based on regular needs analysis. We also aim to have workforce development standards, that are based on the research into effective andragogy, to ensure there is a quality framework that underpins our offer.

	and intervention in pairs to allow for joint working, observation, and development. The ELSEC pilot team will support the induction and training of members of the expanded teams, supported by the core speech and language therapy service. The enhanced team will continue to operate within a culture of learning and development, with CPD delivered to meet varied learning preferences.	

Success Measure 1: Strengthened mainstream inclusion

Metrics

- **Improved educational, outcomes for children and young people with SEND.**
- **Improved attendance, with a particular focus on reduction of persistent and severe absence.**
- **An increase in the proportion of children and young people accessing their local mainstream school.**
- **A reduction in the use of permanent exclusion.**
- **A reduction in the rise of elective home education and an increase in the return to an education setting**
- **A reduction in the request for EHCNA and progression to statutory plan.**
- **A reduction in the number of young people that are NEET.**
- **All children and young people, whose needs can be met in a mainstream inclusion base, are able to access one in their local community**

Success Measure 2: Increase confidence in the system

Metrics

- **Parents report increased trust in mainstream education's ability to meet their child's needs.**
- **Children and young people and**

Success measures

			Outturn:					Targets:			
Group:	Area:	Indicator:	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	National (latest)	Comment:	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Education Outcomes for CYP with SEND	Attainment	Children with SEND achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of EYFS	3.6	2.6		4.0	Latest published data is for 2024/25 academic year.	3.0	3.5	3.8	4.0
			25.0	23.1		26.4		24.0	25.0	26.0	27.0
			20.6	19.3		20.6		20.0	20.5	21.0	21.0
		Children with SEND meeting expected K2 standard in Reading, Writing and Maths	7.0	8.0		9.0	Latest published data is for 2024/25 academic year.	8.0	9.0	9.0	10.0
			21.0	22.0		29.0		23.0	24.0	26.0	29.0
			18.0	18.4		24.0		19.0	20.0	22.0	24.0
		Attainment 8 score for children with SEND	14.1	17.6		14.2	Latest published data is for 2024/25 academic year.	17.6	18.5	19.0	19.5
			35.2	36.8		33.8		34.0	34.5	35.0	35.5
			29.3	30.6		28.2		40.0	40.5	41.0	41.5
	NEET / EET	Percentage of KS4 SEN cohort in Education, Employment or Training at 17 (inc special schools)				85.2	Latest published data for 2022/23 academic year.	85.0	85.5	86.0	88.0
		16/17 years olds with SEN in education and training	84.1	86.2		87.4		86.5	87.5	88.0	89.0
Inclusion	Suspensions & Exclusions	Permanent Exclusion rate for children with SEND	0.6			0.4	Latest published data for 2023/24 academic year.	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.3
		Suspension rate for children with SEND	28.7			28.4		28.5	28.0	27.0	26.0
	Attendance	Attendance % - EHCP		84.2	84.7		Figures for the 2025/26 academic year are for the academic year to date.	85.0	86.0	87.0	88.0
		Attendance % - SEN Support		89.7	90.0			90.5	91.0	92.0	93.0

			Outturn:					Targets:		
Group:	Area:	Indicator:	2024	2025	2026	National (latest)	Comment:	2027	2028	2029
Inclusion	EHE	% of CYP with an EHCP in Elective Home Education (EHE)	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.1	Latest published data as at January 2025.	1.2	1.0	1.0
	Mainstream	% of CYP with an EHCP in mainstream schools (excluding SEN Units/resourced provision and independent mainstream)	44.5	45.8	48.7	38.6	Latest published data as at January 2025.	49.2	49.9	50.6
		% of pupils with an EHCP in Primary	3.2	3.6	4.6	3.5	Latest published data as at January 2025.	4.6	4.6	4.6
		% of pupils with an EHCP in Secondary	2.7	3.1	3.5	3.1	Latest published data as at January 2025.	3.5	3.8	4.0
		% of pupils with SEN Support in Primary	17.0	17.6	17.5	14.8	Latest published data as at January 2025.	17.5	17.0	16.0
		% of pupils with SEN Support in Secondary	11.8	12.5	14.1	13.4	Latest published data as at January 2025.	14.0	13.8	13.5
	Independent Special Schools and NMSS	% of CYP with an EHCP attending Independent Special School or NMS (excluding independent schools)	4.4	4.5	4.1	5.3	In published data, Independent schools are included as mainstream and have been excluded from this version of the indicator. Latest published data as at January	4.0	3.8	3.5
		% of CYP with an EHCP attending Independent Schools, Independent Special Schools or NMS	6.1	6.2	5.9	6.5		5.8	5.5	5.2
	EHCNA Requests	Rate of initial requests for EHCNA per 1,000 CYP (aged 0-24)	9.2	10.3		9.2	Latest published data are for the 2024 calendar year.	11.0	11.0	5.5
System Satisfaction	Appeals	Appeal rate to the SEND Tribunal based on total appealable decisions (calendar year)	3.9	4.3		3.2	Latest published data for the 2024 calendar year. The figure for Gloucestershire for 2025 is provisional.	4.3	4.0	3.2

The indicators and targets set out above are currently monitored as part of the Local Area partnership's oversight of the local SEND system. Metrics are delivered through a PowerBI dashboard, which enables users to identify trends in different demographics and key stages. The Board will, where appropriate target specific KPI's on demographic groups. For example, we currently have a focus on permanent exclusion for primary age children with an EHCP. The additional measures that monitor workforce and system satisfaction will be developed as part of the implementation of the reforms and the review of the reporting arrangements into the SILAP Board.

A baseline and targets for some of the workforce metrics are set out in table 15 of the data and finance template, other roles, including Advisory Teachers and the Young Minds Matter workforce will be baselined from staffing levels in September 2026, with success measures set by the local area partnership board.

parents both report their voice is heard and valued when individual plans are developed (ISP and EHCP) and in the strategic planning and commissioning. • **Education providers report confidence in accessing specialist services (EP, S&L, OT etc.)** • **Education providers report that they have access to a high quality and accessible training and workforce development offer** • **Reduce escalation, complaints and tribunal appeals by resolving concerns earlier and providing clearer routes to support.** **Success Measure 3: A financially sustainable system** **Metrics** • **A reduction in the demand for EHCPs** • **Reduced reliance on high-cost independent provision and EOTAS** • **Increased investment of High Needs funding into Early Years and Mainstream** • **Improved forecasting, commissioning, and oversight to ensure best value and system sustainability.** **Success Measure 4: A stronger workforce** **Metrics** • **Increased Full-time Equivalent of Education Psychologists (EP) and assistant EPs supporting schools.** • **Increased Full-time Equivalent of Advisory Teaching supporting schools.** • **Increased Full-time Equivalent of Speech & Language Therapists and assistants supporting schools.**	The system satisfaction measures will be baselined through a survey in the autumn term, with success measures agreed through the partnership board, once the baseline data is available.

• **Increased Full-time Equivalent of Occupational Therapists and assistants supporting schools.** • **Increased proportion of schools supported by Young Minds Matters team.**	

INSERT DOCUMENT UPLOAD LINK

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.'*

Gloucestershire's strategy and Theory of Change build on the opportunities presented by SEND, Families First, Best Start in Life and Neighbourhood Health reforms, aligning these through a consistent focus on early intervention, inclusion, and place-based delivery.

A strengthened Universal Offer sits at the foundation of the model, ensuring that most needs are met at Universal and Targeted levels through increased workforce capacity and locality-based delivery. This enables earlier intervention and stronger support to mainstream settings, leading to improved outcomes, increased parental confidence, and a more sustainable and inclusive system overall.

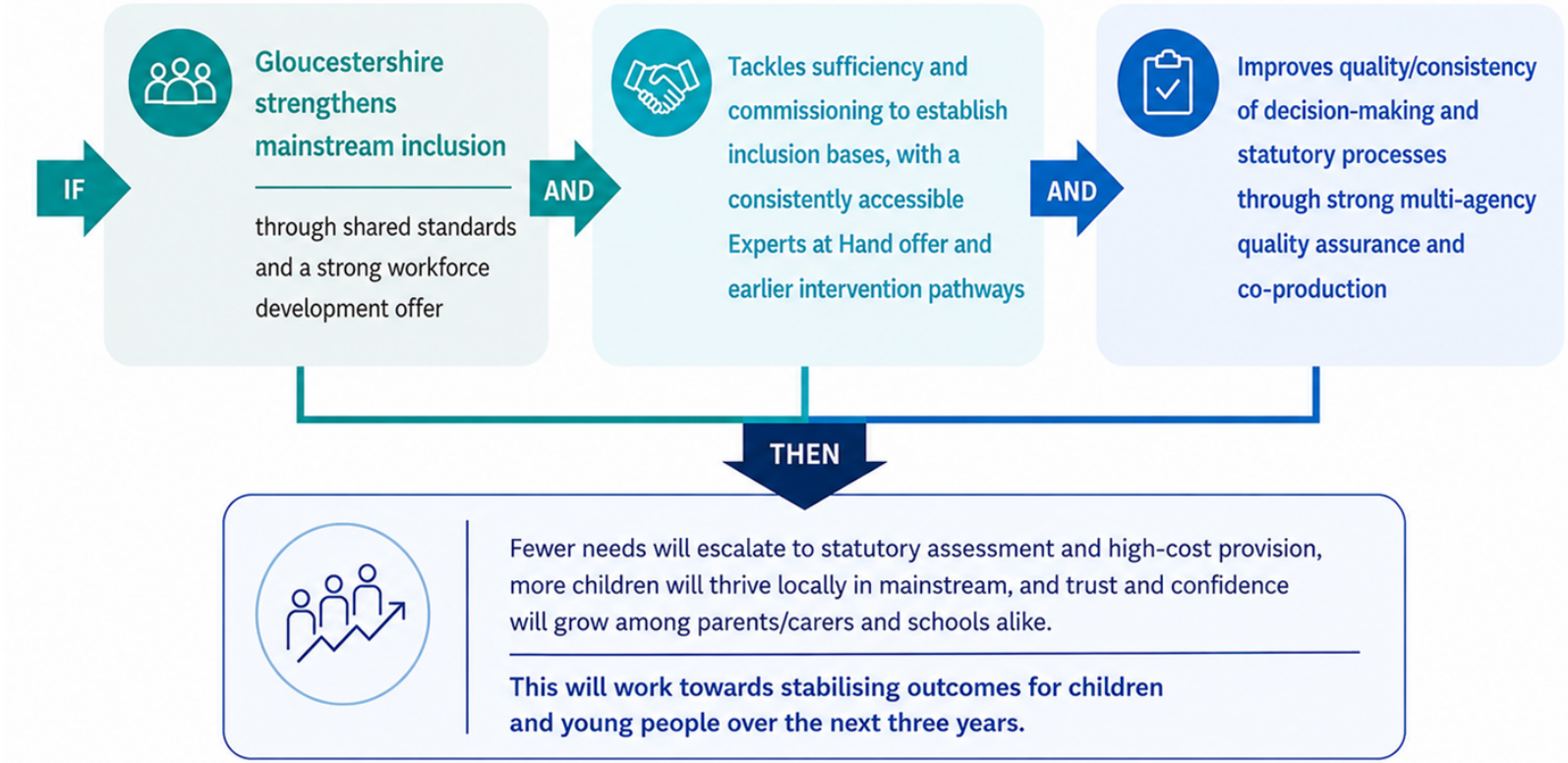
The partnership will build on SEND and AP Change Programme delivery through the Experts at Hand model, ensuring that education settings have access to the facilities, services and specialist expertise required to drive inclusion. A locality-based model will enable children and young people to access support within their communities, including local inclusion bases for both short-term and longer-term provision, reducing reliance on centralised referral pathways and statutory systems.

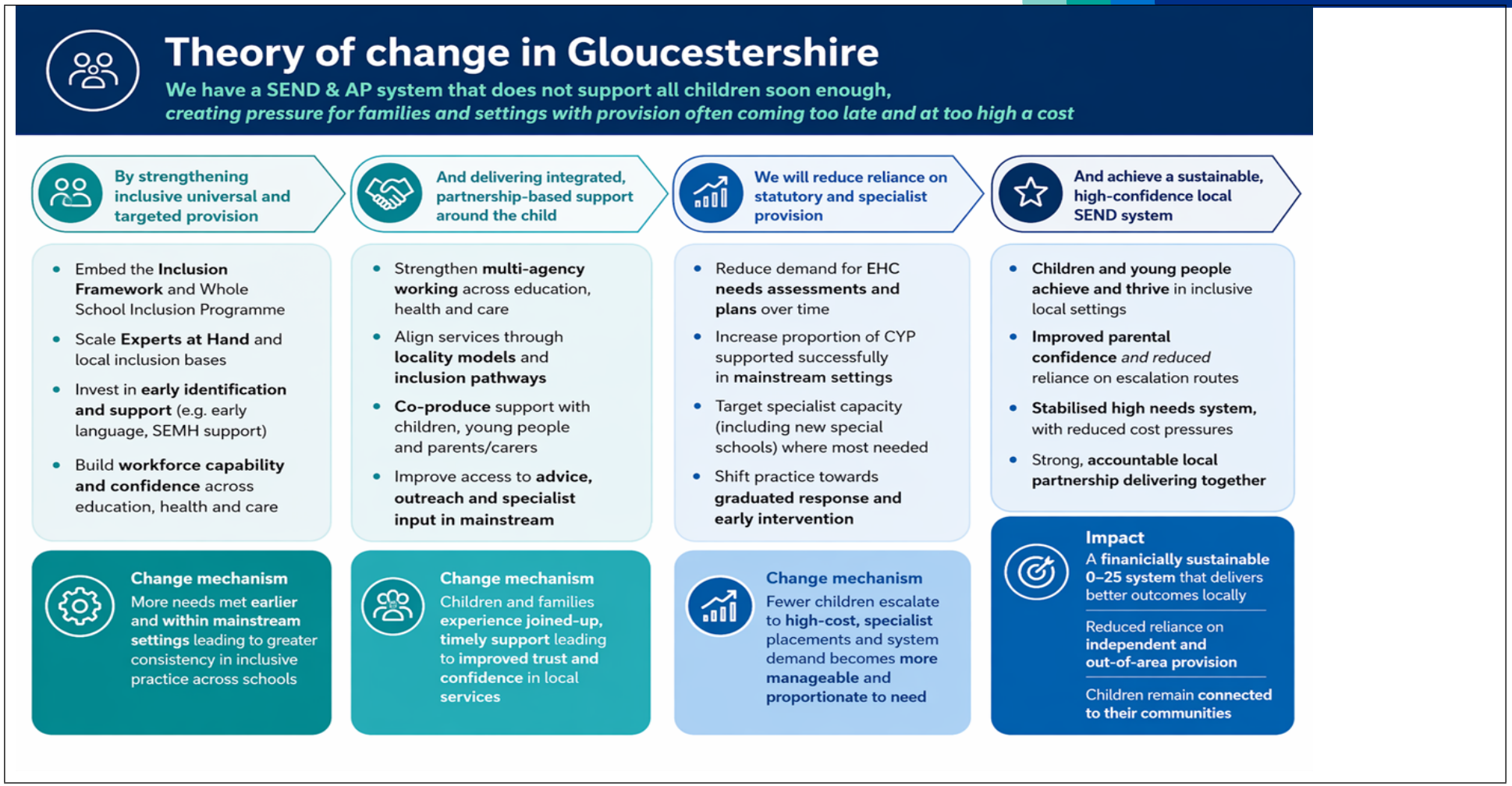
Co-production is central to delivery. Children, young people, and families, as experts by experience, will shape, influence, and evaluate services, ensuring that support is responsive, understood, and trusted.

The Theory of Change is that strengthened inclusive mainstream practice, aligned commissioning and integrated decision-making across education, health and care will reduce escalation to statutory provision, improve outcomes and attendance, rebuild trust with families, and stabilise the financial system over time.

Sustainability will be supported through planned demand reduction, front-loaded workforce investment, and ongoing national engagement on multi-year funding.

What is our hypothesis for change?





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

   INSERT DOCUMENT UPLOAD LINK

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.

Local roadmap for the next 3 years	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
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 .	**Mainstream inclusion:** **Strategy and development:** In year 1 we will start the development of local SEND and Inclusion strategy as part of a wider local education strategy, to set the SEND reforms alongside wider priorities for the development of the local education system. **LA Services:** To enable effective delivery and oversight of the Experts at Hand model and to strengthen our focus on mainstream inclusion support, we will launch a new School Service, that brings together school improvement, education psychology, advisory teachers and inclusion staff to provide a 3-tier model of support to the school system. **Partnership-wide Universal SEND Offer:** Gloucestershire's Universal SEND Offer will be formalised as a partnership-wide agreement, setting out clear expectations for ordinarily available provision across early years, schools, and post-16 providers. This model is resilient to any changes made through the various Local Government Reform (LGR) scenarios. The guidance for Inclusion strategies will be co-constructed with education settings and informed by the existing Inclusion Framework and Toolkit. Co-construction will be led by the research school MA. Inclusion Strategies for education settings will be reviewed for alignment with this offer and the LA's Schools Services will work with its MAT partner to support settings where further development work is required. The Universal Offer will: • Be co-produced with education providers, the ICB, Parent Carer Forum and wider partners; • Be informed by needs-based data, including JSNA and SEN2; • Align with National Inclusion Standards as these are published; • Be formally signed off by the SEND and AP Partnership Board (SILAP), ensuring clear system-wide ownership. The agreement will be reviewed annually to reflect updated population needs, data analysis, and national policy developments. These arrangements will ensure consistency, accountability, and shared expectations across the local system.	**Mainstream inclusion** • Review and consider iterations to the Universal Offer based on effective gathering, sharing, and responding to feedback • Develop school system/LA co-construction of pilot school to school peer review/QA model in mainstream schools, FE and Early Years, with clear recommendations for establishing a sustainable model. • Produce a detailed impact report for the Whole School Inclusion Programme, using both quantitative and qualitative data to inform next steps. • Agree sustainable model for the Whole School Inclusion Programme and commence cohort 2 of the programme, moving from Change Programme pilot funding to Experts at Hand funding to allow cohort increases for 2027/28 and 2028/29.	**Mainstream inclusion** • Review and consider iterations to the Universal Offer on increasingly effective gathering, sharing, and responding to date • Establish and deliver regular cycles of school-to-school peer reviews and joint local authority/MAT/locality cluster quality assurance arrangements. • Deliver cohort 3 of the Whole School Inclusion programme – 50% of the local school system.

	Gloucestershire will formalise its partnership-wide Universal SEND Offer through the revisited Local Inclusion Framework, which sets out clear expectations for ordinarily available provision across early years, schools, and post-16 settings. The Universal Offer will support education settings to meet the most prevalent and growing areas of need, including Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN), Neurodiversity and Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs, and will underpin the reduction of escalation into statutory and specialist provision. **Operational Steps:** • LA-MAT-led co- construction of a set of agreed school-to-school inclusion standards and strategy guidance for Inclusion in mainstream settings based on the local Inclusion Framework and Toolkit. The Local Area will commission the Education Endowment Foundation Research School in the Gloucestershire Learning Alliance MAT as the lead education provider to work co-productively with education settings in partnership with the PCF to design a guidance framework for education settings to develop their setting Inclusion Strategy with stakeholders in their local school communities. • Set out a review schedule, with clear partnership and stakeholder commitment and sign off, to ensure the framework and strategy guidance is reviewed on an annual basis following the annual refresh of the JSNA to ensure this is informed by any changes in local population needs and is inclusive of most up to date SEN 2 data and comparator analysis. • Finalise the LA Education Directorate operating model further to completion of the formal consultation, including the development and implementation of the new Schools' Service. • Complete the pilot of the Whole School Inclusion Programme and identify recommendations for sustainable delivery. This programme has been developed in partnership with the Ambition Institute and provides a whole school training offer, supported by an expert school inclusion partner and a multi-agency support team. **SENDIASS and Mediation Arrangements** Gloucestershire recognises the critical role of **SENDIASS** in supporting parents and carers to navigate the SEND system and in strengthening early resolution of concerns. Work with SENDIASS to develop and agree an effective model of mediation, in line with national minimum standards, for education settings to utilise and ensure consistency of approach across the county. SENDIASS will: • Continue to operate independently and at arm's length from the Local Authority, in line with statutory guidance and minimum service standards; • Provide impartial information, advice and support to children, young people, and families; • Support parents and carers alongside education settings to resolve issues early and consistently; • Contribute to improved understanding of pathways within the reformed SEND system. Mediation and dispute resolution arrangements will be strengthened through: • Clear escalation routes and metrics for timeliness, resolution rates, and outcomes;	**Mediation** • Pilot the local model for mediation in a locality clusters. • Set out the purpose and principles of mediation, how they are and can be used to resolve concerns as early as possible. **SENDIASS** • Develop and resource SENDIASS to provide greater reach to families and young people, ensuring the offer is made at arm's length to the local authority, in line with national minimum standards. This offer will be clearly articulated, including outlining how mediation can be used and published with a	**Mediation** • Taking learning from the pilot, publish a clear mediation model and associated training offer for to all education settings in the county to access. • Review the purpose and principles of mediation and qualitative and quantitative data to understand key themes, timeliness of resolution and outcomes. Review findings to determine effective use of resources to get the widest reach for the best outcomes. **SENDIASS** • Review the reach and impact of SENDIASS and trust and confidence in the impartial offer. Use the review to inform further investment, effective use of work resources to support families and young people move through the system changes with increasing confidence.

	• Transparency regarding SENDIASS independence in mediation processes; • Monitoring of mediation effectiveness through partnership governance. • Sharing knowledge and providing education settings workforce development on effective resolution This approach will promote improved confidence in the system and reduce escalation to formal complaints and tribunal. **Evaluation and impact:** consult with the education system and wider partners to consider and develop mechanisms to capture evaluative feedback from across the system, to better understand the experience of inclusion in the local education system	clear communications plan to enable families, young people, and education settings to understand, make use of and take learning from the offer • Develop clear escalation routes, metrics and monitoring of resolution and outcomes with clear reporting to SILAP for oversight and governance.	• Share thematic findings of families and young peoples' experiences to shape future service direction and delivery.
	Alternative Provision and Inclusion Bases (Support Bases) • Working with MATs and maintained schools, complete audit of all secondary schools to assess current capacity and barriers to the delivery of an effective school commissioned inclusion base also capturing good practice to inform quality standards for future bases. • Development of county wide plan to implement school commissioned inclusion bases in every secondary school in the county. • Phase1: School commissioned inclusion bases in 15 (35%) of secondary schools. • Increase specialist commissioning team capacity to audit and review existing primary school commissioned inclusion bases to assess efficacy and sustainability – "What works well? and how it can work for small schools and groups of schools, particularly in the primary sector. • Development of a county wide plan to commission and deliver school commissioned primary inclusion bases. This will be built on the current, and enhancement, of the existing foundation of clustering/groups of schools through existing school leaders' groups to enable sustainable delivery, school collaboration and coproduction, for the use of and within the availability of targeted capital funding in line with the accessibility strategy and schools' accessibility plans and will be alert to mitigating any DSG inequality risks. • Phase 1: School Commissioned inclusion bases available to 10% of primary schools (24), where capital works are not required and an additional 4 schools where minor capital works are required. • Development will include impact assessments of travel arrangements using the learning from a 3-year transport review which has already had positive impact and efficiencies through improved route mapping, use of multi person vehicles and developments to practice ensuring named provision is suitable and as close to home as possible. • Develop through coproduction a transitions provision model between EY settings and primary schools and their support base provision developing on current transition pilot plans • Further extend the EY SEND Assessment centre model to move from two centres in Cheltenham and Gloucester to one in each current District area. Current centres are supporting 76% of attending children with SEND to transition to a mainstream primary school. • Gloscol Harwick site expansion of Post 16 Level 1 and 2 vocational course offer with pilot inclusion base support offer – evaluate use and impact of base to inform approach to FE inclusion base model. • Publish 3-tier AP model and expand the AP specialist taskforce.	**Alternative Provision and Inclusion Bases (Support Bases)** • Review of phase 1 and roll out of phase 2, to ensure bases operating in 75% (32) of secondary schools and to assess impact for children and young people – what difference bases are making to increase inclusion as indicated by inclusion indicators and case studies. • Review of phase 1 and roll out of phase 2, to ensure inclusions bases are available to 25% (61) of primary schools (either on-site or through cluster arrangements). This will include a clear capital plan for investment in the required facilities to deliver effective provision. This is a particular challenge in small rural primary schools and will be a key focus of this phase of development. • Pilot EY transition provision model across 2 district areas and evaluate impact • Establish SEND Assessment Centres in Cotswolds and Forest of Dean • Review all current inclusion environments and approaches in mainstream FE settings to coproduce future models with FE providers • Review and update the 3-tier AP model and develop digital procurement framework for unregistered Alternative Provision. • Evaluate impact for APST and develop proposals for long-term sustainability and alignment with EaH model.	**Alternative Provision and Inclusion Bases (Support Bases)** • All Secondary Schools will be operating a school commissioned inclusion base (Support Base). • 50% (122) of all primary school will have access to a school commissioned inclusion base. • A clear resource roll out plan will be in place to achieve 100% of primary school access to a school commissioned inclusion base • Adjust EY transition provision model and begin wider roll out across localities • Establish SEND Assessment Centres in Stroud and Tewkesbury • Establish Inclusion base tailored models in 2 large FE colleges, operating across Stroud, Gloucester, Cheltenham, and the Forest of Dean - these college sites are available in 4 out of the 6 localities; they serve all localities.

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 and is joined up, including strategic co-production, with a co-production benchmark with parent carers and children and young people.	**Governance and system leadership** • Review Terms of Reference of the SEND and Inclusion Local Area Partnership Board and consider development of a service level agreement or memorandum of understanding to underpin and enforce engagement and performance. • Cross education system working group of MAT CEOs and phase/sector leaders to review current partnership arrangements across the local system and coproduce proposals to develop cross phase, locality cluster partnerships to support SEND reform implementation aligned to Families First Partnership and NHS reforms with the Gloucestershire Education Forum.	**Governance and system leadership** • Jointly review locality cluster/partnerships governance and working arrangements with MAT CEOs and phase/sector leaders, and coproduce proposals for devolved funding to support local, community inclusion commissioning and/or projects and impact evaluation mechanisms.	**Governance and system leadership** • Pilot locality cluster based devolved funding and commissioning models and implement coproduced evaluation mechanisms to review impact and inform future planning
	Strengthening use of data to inform system development • The Local Area Partnership Board will review and strengthen existing Key Performance Indicators for Education, Health, and Care to enable strategic oversight of the breadth of reformed system and align with the success measures in this plan. • Integration of Health data and KPIs into local area KPI dashboard, to enable single view of the system (currently reported separately). • Develop QA and evaluation cycle for SEND improvement plan, aligned to the new reform priorities, and linked to existing model of practice. • Continue the Implementation of the Joint Strategic Commissioning Strategy, including review of the current action plan that sits beneath the strategy, setting out key commissioning priorities based on the refreshed Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).	**Strengthening use of data to inform system development** • Annual review of the impact of the Joint Commissioning strategy and update delivery plan based on current data trends and needs assessment. • Review partnership data collection to better understand the links to improvement planning and commissioning and to assess impact on outcomes. • Planning and establishment of an annual report on the updated JSNA and data tracking for sharing with education settings, providers, and parent carers to provide a local area overview and a mechanism for education settings to benchmark trends in their settings with county trends. This will provide a strong basis for any further work around the joint development of services and the Experts at Hand offer and enable enquiry in terms of the effectiveness of earlier identification and intervention in individual education settings.	**Strengthening use of data to inform system development** • Commission external review of local area partnership governance, data use and effectiveness and impact of partner agencies activity. • Annual review of the impact of joint commissioning strategy and update delivery plan based on current data trends. • Publication and distribution of JSNA annual report for education settings, providers, and parent carers. Evaluation of earlier identification and intervention trends for future improvement planning work.
	Coproduction and communication • Review and coproduce minimum coproduction standards, strengthening education setting and parent carer coproduction, and children and young people participation mechanisms. A self-assessment process will be implemented at the end of Year 1 to measure our progress against the agreed standards, • Develop and implement a system-wide SEND Comms strategy, strengthening Local Offer, SENDIASS and PCF visibility with education settings. This will include a series of locality-based workshop sessions for parents and wider stakeholders on school sites with education settings staff, LA, and Health staff to enable better understanding of the reforms and the services available. In this way all stakeholders will share a common language and understanding of the actions being taken to deliver the reforms and will stand side by side in messaging to school communities. This approach will form the model for future multi-agency workshops to provide parental support workshops around primary needs in partnership with education staff on education settings sites. • Adapt existing coproduction strategy to respond to SEND reforms, in particular the coproduction and development of education system leader co-construction of inclusion strategies for individual education settings with their parent-carer communities. • Share exemplars of best practice based on the co-constructed guidance for education settings to effectively coproduce and measure the impact of their inclusion strategy and work with parents and carers and CYP to evaluate their inclusion strategy and and next steps in their planning activity.	**Coproduction and communication** • Develop an enhanced co-production training offer in line with the coproduced coproduction standards for use in education settings in partnership with the PCF and education settings to include in the local training and development offer for education settings via the workforce Knowledge Hub launched in Autumn 2026. • Establish reporting mechanisms to ensure visibility of parental experiences of co-productive work with locality clusters and individual education settings around inclusion strategy development and wider reform developments. Annual Parent Carer survey and ‘You said, We did’ report published to inform coproduction, system improvement and commissioning priorities more widely. Establish a regular pulse survey cycle with education settings testing settings’ self-assessment of co-productive practice.	**Coproduction and communication** • Established annual feedback and reporting mechanism to evaluate the quantity and quality of locality cluster and individual education setting coproduction with parents and carers, and its impact on inclusive practice. • Ongoing Annual Parent Carer survey and annual ‘You said, We Did’ report published to inform coproduction, system improvement, and commissioning priorities more widely. Maintain the regular pulse survey cycle with education settings testing settings’ self-assessment of co-productive practice.

	• Agree resourcing for both the local Parent Carer Forum and SENDIASS to enable the deepened, consistent, and more effective engagement with partner education settings that the SEND reforms will require to build stronger co-productive working between settings and their communities.		
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.	**Inclusion Bases (Specialist LA Commissioned)** • The 2026 to 2031 SEND sufficiency strategy is out for consultation, 5th May to 23rd June 2026 and will be going to cabinet in September 2026. This sets out the local sufficiency pressures, and intentions to respond to planned growth. The strategy sets out our intent to work with education settings to develop and commission a range of bases in mainstream settings. This will strengthen the mix of specialist provision available across the county and support more children and young people to attend their local school. (3A) The highlighted section on page 20 sets out the commitment to inclusion on mainstream sites within the SEND Sufficiency Strategy already scheduled for Cabinet Decision in September 2026. • Through engagement with education settings including MATs and existing school clusters, we are reviewing numbers on roll, projections of number on roll, site audits, current school populations needs and education settings skill sets. This is being reviewed alongside the JSNA. demographic data to develop a 3-year plan, based on demand profile, geography, and audit of secondary and primary school sites (audit outline above in school commissioned bases). • Develop detailed plans and commissioning briefs to enable commissioning discussions to commence with identified schools for first phase of delivery. • Agree commissioning arrangements for the first phase of specialist inclusion bases, with the inclusion of clear KPIs and monitoring arrangements, a peer-to-peer support and QA model and Local Authority oversight of delivery against KPIs and Quality Assurance oversight. **Early Years Sufficiency and Transitions** The local area will assess the sufficiency of early years provision as part of its wider SEND sufficiency and Best Start in Life planning, including: • Availability of early years places for children aged 0–5; • Availability of specialist SEND early years provision; • Identification of gaps for children with complex and emerging needs. Transitions from early years into primary education will be strengthened through: • Earlier information sharing between early years settings and schools; • Timely access to specialist advice where concerns are identified; • Alignment with Best Start Family Hubs and the Experts at Hand model to support continuity for children and families. The Best Start Family Hubs workstream is overseen jointly with the Families First Partnership governance programme board, and there is matrix management between Education Early Years and Social Care Early Help on aligning focus and activity.	**Inclusion Bases (Specialist LA Commissioned)** • By September 2027 open specialist bases to support 80 secondary and 80 primary placements. • Develop clear KPIs, with monitoring and reporting and peer support and QA mechanisms **Early Years Sufficiency and Transitions** Implementation of two further Early Years SEND Assessment / Support centres in the Cotswolds and Forest of Dean to enable supported transition to mainstream primary schools. Planning for Year 3 EY SEND Assessment/Support centres expansion based on locality impact data and countywide EaH impact evaluation. Continued delivery of the EY transitions project and Year 1 evaluation through the aligned Best Start in Life and EaH monitoring arrangements. Evaluation and planning of EY support and inclusion provision for Year 3 based on impact trends.	**Inclusion Bases (Specialist LA Commissioned)** • By September 2028 open specialist bases to support an additional 80 secondary and additional 80 primary placements. (160 for each phase at this point) above the current numbers. • Review and refine KPIs, monitoring, reporting and peer support and QA mechanisms **Early Years Sufficiency and Transitions** Year 3 EY SEND Assessment/Support roll out based on Year 1 and 2 evaluation findings in terms of expansion of settings and the impacts of the transitions project. Continued delivery of the EY transitions project with adjustments in line with Best Start in Life development work.
	Experts at Hand Delivery Model, Accountability and Assurance **Introduction**		

The Gloucestershire Experts at Hand (EaH) model has been designed as a layered and multi-provider, locality-based delivery model to maximise reach, equity and sustainability. This model has been developed following engagement with system partners and analysis of service demand and capacity.

This optimal model was developed following engagement sessions with education settings, professionals working across the local area partnership, parent carers, SENDIASS, and young people's views.

The EaH teams will be the first point of contact to triage and review onward access to other specialist services. Where appropriate they will support with a quality referral to specific services, such as core SALT and OT services, where greater intensity of support is needed or to a diagnostic pathway.

Where onward referrals are needed, the EaH multi-disciplinary team will support the education setting and family to know where to access ‘Waiting Well’ offers. Where triage identifies wider holistic needs, with consent these will be shared with the Families First Partnership and Best Start Family Hubs to enable access to holistic and timely support.

Experts by Experience

In addition to multidisciplinary professional expertise, the Experts at Hand offer will incorporate the insight of experts by experience, ensuring that service design, access routes and delivery models are informed by the lived experience of children, young people and families. Local delivery models will include opportunities for experts by experience to contribute to workforce development, including participation in training, development of resources and co-facilitation of learning where appropriate.

Experts by experience will be a key stakeholder in the evaluation of the EaH offer, shaping and refining the offer based on findings and experiences.

Model Commissioning

The model combines:

- Local Authority-led delivery of education-facing services, including Educational Psychology, Advisory Teaching, Assistive Technology Lending Library, an Alternative Provision Specialist Task Force and Alternative Provision and special school outreach;
- Integrated Care Board (ICB)-commissioned health services, including Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy and mental health support services, known in Gloucestershire as ‘Young Minds Matter’
- Jointly commissioned and co-produced activity across education, health and care partners.

This approach has been identified as the optimal model for Gloucestershire because it:

- Ensures consistent county-wide access to core support;
- Maintains clinical governance and workforce sustainability within health services;
- Enables responsive, locality-based delivery aligned to population need;
- Supports integration with wider reforms including Families First, Best Start Family Hubs and neighbourhood health models.

Alternative delivery approaches (fully centralised or fully devolved models) were considered and discounted due to risks relating to equity of access, fragmentation of provision and workforce sustainability.

The leadership of Experts at Hand will be through the Local Authority, with the LA and ICB having shared ownership and accountability to develop and deliver the core offer as a Local Area partnership. Medium- and longer-term devolution to education setting governed locality clusters of aspects of commissioning and the development of local bespoke project leadership will be co- constructed with education systems leaders and further strengthened as the system matures.

Additionality and integration with existing services

The EaH model is explicitly additional and is designed to expand capacity rather than replace existing services. Funding is being used to:

- Increase access to earlier specialist input in education settings;
- Strengthen workforce capacity across education and health;
- Reduce reliance on statutory pathways and high-cost specialist provision.

The model integrates with:

- Existing Local Authority Inclusion and SEND services;
- ICB-commissioned health services;
- Early Years provision and Best Start Family Hubs;
- Alternative Provision and specialist outreach services

Over time the services will be co-located in local bases. The Local Authority Head of Schools Service, Principal Educational Psychologist and SALT Advanced Practitioner will work collaboratively to lead the EaH offer.

The Head of Schools Service and Principal Educational Psychologist will be responsible for delivery, evaluation and review of Local Authority Services, with the SALT advanced practitioner being responsible to the ICB commissioner for delivery and evaluation of health services.

The Head of Schools Service and the ICB commissioner will be responsible for providing progress and impact reports to the SEND and Inclusion Local Area Partnership Board (SILAP) as well as being responsible for raising and mitigating risks.

The model builds on existing system capacity. Over time this additional capacity will embed with existing Educational Psychology, Advisory Teaching, Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational therapy services with most of the integrated capacity working as part of a system that increasingly works at a setting level, providing Universal, Targeted and Targeted Plus support.

Where a child needs more support than the EaH offer, wherever possible the same practitioner will provide the intervention, measure the outcomes and enable the child to step back down to Universal or Targeted Support. This approach ensures a coherent, three-tier system where Universal, Targeted and Specialist support are aligned and mutually reinforcing and are ready to pivot to whole setting support at the end of three years.

Place-based Locality Clusters

The Experts at Hand (EaH) offer will be delivered through a place based, locality cluster model, designed to strengthen early identification and intervention, support inclusive mainstream practice and reduce escalation to statutory pathways. Delivery will operate through cross-phase locality clusters aligning as closely as possible with Families First partnerships, Best Start Family Hubs and neighbourhood health footprints, enabling joined up multi-agency working around children, young people and families.

The Local Area Partnership recognises the requirement to ensure that access to support is equitable across all settings and not dependent on individual settings' engagement. Equitable access to the Experts at Hand offer and wider support will be managed through:

- Allocation of resources informed by JSNA, SEN2 data, school census, population indices and demand trends;
- Structured engagement through locality clusters, where all settings are included;
- Monitoring of access and utilisation data to identify and address any inequities;
- Inclusion of out-of-area further education providers attended by Gloucestershire young people.

This approach ensures that all settings, regardless of size, capacity or geography, can access appropriate support.

Commissioning Arrangements

Where delivery involves health partners, arrangements will be formalised through Service Level Agreements and Section 75 arrangements, setting out roles, responsibilities, funding flows, performance expectations and escalation routes. All commissioned services will be subject to clear quantitative and qualitative Key Performance Indicators, monitored through quarterly contract and performance review processes.

The leadership of Experts at Hand will be through the Local Authority lead by Ann James (DCS) as the named SRO, with shared ownership and accountability between the LA and ICB with governance through the SEND and Inclusion Local Area Partnership board. Longer term devolution to locality clusters will take place as the system matures, and arrangements will be co-constructed while being alert to DSG inequality risks.

Strategic oversight of the Experts at Hand offer will sit within the SEND and Inclusion Local Area Partnership (SILAP) governance structure, with accountability flowing through to the SEND Executive Board. A single Local Authority based Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) will hold operational responsibility for delivery of the EaH programme and for ensuring joint accountability across education and health partners.

Specialist Workforce Professional Capacity and Access

Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) and Occupational Therapy (OT) provision within the Experts at Hand model will be commissioned and overseen by the Integrated Care Board (ICB), with delivery aligned to locality clusters to improve accessibility for education settings and families.

The EaH model will:

- Increase access to non-statutory, early intervention advice and support from SaLT and OT and relevant specialist professionals within education settings;
- Enable education staff to receive functional assessment, environmental advice and workforce development, reducing reliance on diagnostic led pathways;
- Support children and young people to have needs met earlier, while core diagnostic and specialist health pathways remain separately commissioned, whilst also aligned to the new ICB structures and contracts.

Health Workforce development will include a Speech and Language Band 8A Advanced practitioner who will work through a population health approach, focusing on prevention, reducing inequalities and ensuring children and young people receive the right support at the right time through a needs led approach.

SALT Advanced Practitioner

The Advanced Practitioner will work across the four pillars of advanced practice of clinical practice, leadership, education and research. They will provide specialist advice, consultation, supervision and support to clinicians, education staff, families and the wider workforce. They will use advanced clinical reasoning and decision-making to manage complex cases, develop evidence-based interventions, and support integrated working across education, health and care systems.

The Advanced Practitioner role has a strong emphasis on system leadership and service transformation, including developing integrated pathways, influencing commissioning and strategic planning, improving workforce capability, and promoting communication-inclusive environments, leading on training, supervision and workforce development to build capacity, reducing reliance on specialist intervention where appropriate. The role includes engagement with universities to develop a supported curriculum and development offer for therapy assistants/apprentices to progress to university and become the qualified workforce of the future. There will be work with universities to ensure their provision for students for their placement education hours. This workforce model mitigates the recruitment risks identified in the risk register.

The Advanced Practitioner also drives research, evaluation and quality improvement, using data, evidence and stakeholder feedback to improve outcomes, address inequalities, and develop innovative models of care. They will lead audit, service evaluation and implementation of best practice, ensuring services remain effective, equitable and responsive to population needs.

Overall, the role combines advanced clinical expertise with leadership, education and research responsibilities to improve outcomes for children and young people at both an individual and system-wide level.

- Recruitment of additional, Educational Psychologist, SaLT and OT capacity, including the use of assistant roles and apprenticeships;
- Clear arrangements for supervision, professional standards and clinical governance through provider trusts;
- Alignment with wider health workforce planning to ensure sustainability beyond the three-year grant period mitigating the grant sustainability risk

Performance and access will be monitored through agreed KPIs, including timeliness of advice, coverage across localities and impact on escalation, with reporting through joint education and health governance structures.

Workforce capacity risks are being actively mitigated through a comprehensive workforce strategy, including expansion of paraprofessional roles across Educational Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy, development of clear training and progression pathways, and proactive recruitment aligned to future service demand. The partnership is also using locum capacity and system-wide workforce planning to ensure continuity of delivery during transition.

Financial summary

Year 1

Gloucestershire will receive £4,605,308 grant funding to deliver year one Experts at Hand. To make maximum use of this funding and provide timely delivery as much recruitment will take place as possible in year one which can carry forward and grow in years 2 and 3.

£3,684,246 will be 80% for direct delivery of the Experts at Hand Model.

£460, 531 as transformation costs

£460, 531 as admin costs

Some roles will start in September; other roles will commence in the period between September and December and other roles, such as specialist Teachers planned for January 2027. This leaves surplus in year one due to half year effect

Surplus will be used to manage any pay awards over projected % increase.

This funding will be used to increase capacity as follows:

Profession	Number	Funding
Educational Psychology	14	578,273
Specialist Teachers, including two leadership roles	17	£397,270
Alternative Provision specialist Task Force (less than 10% of grant)	1 (team)	£368,425
Assistive Technology Lending Library	1 (team)	£22,400

Speech and Language Therapy inc Band 8A and Assistants	34	£992,388
Occupational Therapy, inc Assistants	15	£425,309
Whole School Inclusion Programme	1 (team)	£213,155
Local Offer Development	1	93,000
Special School and Alternative Provision outreach		£100,000
Inclusion Navigators	6	£187,943
Data Analyst	1	£59,534
Project Management /support/admin across Local Authority and Health	5	£113,314
Leadership and management	1	£44,962
Communication and co-production	3	£80,103
Learning and Development	2	£71,450
GLA Research Schools		£40,000
Funding for cluster developments		£50,000
VCS grant		£30,000
SENDIASS, mediation and customer service	5	£143,948
Parent Carer Forum grant		£75,000
Assessment tools for schools and professionals		£161,920
Non pay/corporate overheads		£246,827
Total		£4,495,221
Surplus		£110,087

Experts at Hand: The approach to the delivery of the Experts at Hand model is set out above. • Engagement with education settings, health provider trusts parent carers and SENDIASS, and learning from ELSEC, APST, ATLL, the Three Tier model and, Young Minds Matter has informed the optimal delivery model. This model will be multi-disciplinary teams working within existing locality clusters. These will be developed to be cross phase clusters, to continually develop and inform transition planning. These clusters will align with Best Start Family Hubs, Families First Partnerships and Neighbourhood health patches to enable wider system partnership working. • Develop detailed data analysis using the JSNA, SEN 2, school census, and demand data to inform three-year, locality plan for experts at hand. This will	**Experts at Hand** • Workforce strategy in place and core workforce for 2027/28 in place to deliver support for education settings. • Review, adapt and continue delivery of Early Language support, adapting the model and widening the scale and scope of the offer to secondary and FE settings. • Review, adapt and develop a revenue and capital plan for longer term continuation of Assistive Tech Lending Library • Review the delivery model of Experts at Hand and refine in line with findings and scale to operate across increased scale	**Experts at Hand** • Workforce strategy in place and core workforce for 2027/28 in place to deliver support for education settings, including any cross-border arrangements • Review, adapt and continue delivery of Early Language support models • Review, adapt and continue delivery of Assistive Tech Lending Library • Annual Review (quality, uptake and needs analysis) of the workforce development and training offer for local area partnership.

	include qualitative data from Parent Carer Experiences, young people's experiences, education settings' experiences and reviewing the nature and type of provision needed. • Quarterly reviews of waiting well plans and strategies will take place to ensure the waiting well offer is known and used effectively as part of the local offer by families and professionals. Reviews will consider the reach, outcomes and impact of the waiting well offer and how this intersects with Experts at Hand to ensure this offer • Develop a delivery plan to focus on the largest areas of needs including the delivery of ELSEC, ELKLAN and evidence informed language and communication programmes, ELSA an emotional literacy programme, and provide settings, children and young people and families with strategies to meet the needs of young people who experience emotionally based school avoidance and Young Minds Matter to provide evidence informed interventions to meet local needs. • Coproduce a plan to undertake multi-disciplinary termly consultation and planning meetings with education providers. This will cover effective and proportionate use of the resource allocated to meet the education settings needs and, overtime, assess the impact of the support EaH is providing. The model will include an advice line to ensure schools have access to professional advice outside of their offer to ensure advice can be available and reallocation of resources based on changing needs. • Align communication and access to the Experts at Hand offer with existing services available through the current Local Offer, which includes transition support programmes, parenting support programmes, Young Minds Matter mental health support programme and access to short-breaks. Local Offer • Development of Service Level Agreements with clear quantitative and qualitative KPIs between the LA and the ICB, and the commissioned health care trust. These will have quarterly contract monitoring requirements, with clear escalation routes with reporting to SILAP and executive oversight to provide joint governance of shared accountability, use of funding, operational, and strategic oversight of performance, risks, and mitigations. These will include reviewing end evaluating the current waiting well offer, to consider if this is successfully identifying and meeting needs at the earliest opportunity, and/or ensuring the wait is for the most appropriate professional to meet needs. This will be monitored by Ann James (DCS) as the Local Authority based SRO. • Section 75 and 256 arrangements will be developed to ensure there is clear oversight of the flow of funding to the ICB for them to commission SALT and OT provision and for the LA to secure health employed workforce as part of the APST. These will be updated annually in line with grant conditions and funding with the APST will be less than 10% of the overall grant funding. • Development of local workforce recruitment and retention strategy to enable Experts at Hand Model. Including current and effective models of recruitment and retention which focus on use of Assistant Educational Psychologists, conversion to the doctorate courses primarily in Exeter, Bristol and Southampton, supporting increasing trainees and early recruitment with the commitment of a role 18 months in advance of qualification. Use of health paraprofessionals and apprenticeships with connections to the University of St Marks and St John, Plymouth and Birmingham city Universities, University of Gloucestershire, and University of West of England. • Recruitment of SALT and OT assistants at band 4 in recognition of the skills and experience they will bring to the role. • Develop the workforce development offer for support workers using the speech and language communication framework.	• Annual review (quality, uptake and needs analysis) of the workforce development and training offer for local area partnership. • Publish and communicate a finalised 3-tier inclusion offer through the local area partnership and the Local Offer. • Review the impact of the APST and consider the scope of activity and alignment with other multi-agency support models, through families first partnership programme and the neighbourhood health strategy. • Co-produce an outreach support model for special schools to support mainstream schools and the effective delivery of inclusion bases. • Produce a clear transition offer providing a range of support and planning for each change in stage and phase of education to ensure effective information flow and timely specialist input at transition.	• Evaluate the impact of the 3-tier inclusion offer and adapt to address any gaps, issues in delivery or changes in local area needs. • Review APST model, to assess how it can be deployed to respond to greater intensity of need beyond AP and potentially aligning with Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams (MACPT). • Implement special school outreach model.

	• Develop and deliver a 2–4-week clinical induction programme for newly employed health practitioners, to ensure they have the support, competencies, and skills to fulfil their roles • Band 5 speech and language therapists will be supported through NPQ competencies where required. • Recruit 6 Assistant EPs roles and 4 SALT apprenticeship roles to continue building the qualified workforce. For the SALT apprenticeships the entries are required for May to access the following January intake, for Gloucestershire this means the apprenticeship university entries will be for January 2028 • Initial recruitment and pivot and build on the use of existing specialists to deliver the Experts at Hand Model. • Contingency planning will take place should recruitment to Experts at Hand role pose a risk to stabilisation of existing services • Extend and expand the delivery of Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC) and develop the model for all phases of education, through the growth in speech and language therapists and assistants. • Initial recruitment of Occupational Therapists and Assistants • Extend the Assistive Tech lending library into the 26/27 academic year. This will be available to 90 more schools • The Experts at hand service will collaborate with the already existing Multi-Disciplinary Teams of Young Minds Matter and the School Nursing Service for effective partnership collaboration; where appropriate, and with consent engagement with Family First and Best Start Family Hubs to ensure children and families are effectively supported. • The planned reach of Experts at Hand has been based on a model of delivery providing support as 1-1 small groups and whole class with 30% 1-1, 50% small groups (1-4) and 20% 1-30 (whole class of 30 children) • The coverage of Experts at Hand for year one along with the existing workforce will provide increased Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational therapists and assistants, creating capacity for 25,625 children to be supported across the academic year. In this initial year, this support will focus on Early Years and primary settings to meet identify and meet needs as early as possible and work across settings in the cluster with high levels of SLCN and children with neurodiverse needs. • From September 26, each school will be allocated an Educational Psychologist and an Advisory Teacher. The addition of increased EP and Advisory Teaching will enable support to Early Years SENCO's and post 16 settings. • The current EP model allows for 50% of time from the permanent workforce in supporting schools and 50% of time undertaking statutory advice. The increased resource will allow increased EP capacity meeting the needs of 5698 children using the 30/50/20 model of delivery. • This delivery of Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy in year one will be in the predominantly in Early Years and primary settings in the locality clusters of greatest needs, this will be informed by our JSNA, population and needs data, volume and number of EHCNA/Ps and service demand. • Complete the current review of our SEND workforce development and training offer based on gap analysis from the Learning Development Analysis aligned with the requirements and expectations for the education setting workforce in the SEND reforms and the Experts at Hand model in order to finalise and publish the workforce development offer to the wider local area partnership. • Review the 3-tier AP model piloted under the DfE change programme, to provide sufficient capacity to meet needs in the local area, align with Experts at Hand and adapt to become a 3-tier inclusion offer. Expansion and best practice		

	have been possible to date using local resources with the plan to remains working as a local area. • Publication of an online directory of quality assured and approved, unregistered alternative provision providers, to support education settings to access short term therapeutic interventions. • Finalise new property for Hospital education (bid submitted to school rebuild programme), to enable development of stronger on-site offer. This will enable delivery of partnership placements; strengthened primary school offer; and outreach. • Extend the commissioned arrangements for the Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce (APST), which was piloted during the DfE Change Programme. Retain the existing team during the 2026/27 financial year to meet the needs of 70 children and families. • Completion of the education operating model review process within GCC to form a dedicated Schools Service, that will enable greater accessibility to inclusion, Advisory Teaching, Education Psychology and School Improvement services. • **Best Start Family Hubs** will play a central role in the delivery of the Experts at Hand offer for children aged 0–5, supporting earlier identification, coordinated intervention and improved pathways into education, health and SEND support. Family Hubs will: ▪ Act as a key locality access point for early professional advice, including SEND-related concerns; ▪ Support triage and navigation to appropriate education, health, and community services, including the EaH offer. ▪ Enable early multi-disciplinary discussion where developmental, communication, neurodevelopmental or social-emotional needs are emerging; ▪ Strengthen links between early years settings, health visitors, therapists, and education professionals ▪ Support families to access wider early help, parenting support and community-based services. ▪ This approach will position Best Start Family Hubs as an integral component of the SEND early intervention pathway, rather than a parallel service, and directly supports reform priorities around earlier identification, reduced escalation, and improved family confidence.		
	Locality Cluster Model (LCM) • Work with the education system, through existing Families First engagement tools, the county headteachers' associations and the local education systems' leader forum (Gloucestershire Education Forum) to develop a cross-phase cluster model, aligned with Families First Programme and Health strategy, that will enable access to locality-based services. • The reform programme explicitly accommodates Gloucestershire's rurality and geographic variation through: ▪ Clustered commissioning and locality-based delivery models; ▪ Shared and commissioned inclusion bases where standalone provision is not viable; ▪ Mobile outreach and flexible deployment of specialist professionals; ▪ Alignment with existing school partnerships and Families First locality arrangements. • This ensures equitable access to support for small and geographically isolated settings while maintaining quality and sustainability.	**Locality Cluster Model (LCM)** • Pilot a Locality Cluster Model (LCM), in an area of high need (based on EHC Needs Assessments, attendance, exclusion, EHE data etc.), to test the impact of locality-based Experts at Hand model and connectivity to wider Social Care and Health reforms. • Full evaluation of LCM to assess impact for children and young people and families and education settings.	**Locality Cluster Model (LCM)** • Review and adapt locality cluster model based on 1st year pilot, before rolling out to all localities in Gloucestershire. • Develop a data-informed business case for devolution of early intervention funding to support locality-based commissioning models.

Encouraging inclusive culture & behaviours – using funding and shared accountability towards a system that works for children and families while achieving value for money.	**Inclusive culture and behaviours** • Provide a common framing and understanding of inclusion, through the publication of the locally coproduced Inclusion Strategy setting-level guidance and support materials, led by the EEF Research School /MAT led co-construction work, the Inclusion Framework and associated Toolkit, aligned with the published National Standards and universal inclusion/ordinarily available provision guidance. • Co-productive development of a template and exemplar Inclusion Strategy for education settings to enable consistency of approach, whilst enabling contextual approach to inclusion. • Experts at Hand funding deployed, based on education setting feedback, which identifies the areas that will have the greatest impact on mainstream inclusion. • The Parent Carer Forum, children, and young people's voice and wider VCSE partners will be recognised and engaged as key expert-by-experience partners within the Local Area Partnership, with clear routes to influence strategy, delivery, and accountability. • Development of funding strategy that enables the movement of funding down the system from high- cost statutory placements (EHCP and Permanent Exclusion etc.) to support enhanced mainstream funding and an increase in earlier intervention placements. • Development of further relevant training and support resources on the workforce development Knowledge Hub in line with the SEND Reform priorities	**Inclusive culture and behaviours** • Implement education setting coproduced peer-review model for inclusion as outlined above, enabling high support and challenge and the sharing of best practice in relation to inclusive practice. • Annual inclusion conference launched, with local and national exemplars of best practice in relation to mainstream inclusion. • Continued enhancement and promotion of the workforce development Knowledge Hub, including quarterly reporting on engagement and impact data. • Continued delivery by the WFD operational working group to deliver a full multiagency (Health and Social Care as well as education) and parent –carer pivoted training, information, advice and guidance offer, ensuring alignment with the strategic development of the planned Children's and Adults' workforce academy (currently the Social Worker Academy)	**Inclusive culture and behaviours** • Embed culture of peer-to-peer support/review through the peer review model and the sharing of best practice. • 2nd annual inclusion conference delivered to share local and national best practice. • Continued enhancement and promotion of the workforce development knowledge hub, including quarterly reporting on engagement and impact data. • Continued delivery by the WFD operational working group to deliver a full multiagency (Health and Social Care as well as education) and parent –carer pivoted training, information, advice and guidance offer, ensuring alignment with the strategic development of the planned Children's and Adults' workforce academy (currently the Social Work Academy)
Enablers	**Capital investment** • Capital investment in Year 1 will prioritise the development of school commissioned inclusion bases in secondary schools. • Scoping of primary locality cluster models will run concurrently with secondary school delivery	**Capital investment** • Capital investment in Year 2 will continue to support the development of school commissioned inclusion bases in secondary schools and also move to support primary school commissioned bases and LA commissioned specialist bases (160 places across primary and secondary).	**Capital investment** • Capital investment in Year 3 will support the completion of school commissioned inclusion bases, ensuring county-wide coverage. A further 160 places will be developed for LA commissioned inclusion bases, 80 places in both primary and secondary and 40 post 16 places
	Data/Digital development • GCC will be implementing a new case management system in March 2027. The new system aligns Social Care and Education on to the same digital platform, which will enable improved access for all officers to common and shared data sets and provide a single view of a child. • Exploration of further AI tools to support communication and accessibility of Local Offer and Experts at Hand offers, including readability and accessibility tools. • Completion of data transformation programme to ensure all partnership data is available through the 'data lake' and links to real-time Power BI reporting. More on data as an enabler of reforms needed	**Digital development** • Commissioning and implementation of AI solution to support accessibility and communication of the Local Offer and Experts at Hand offers.	**Digital development** • Complete implementation of AI solutions enabling accessibility and communication of the Local Offer and Expert at Hand offers. • Review Data tools available to the partnership to support strengthen used of data to drive decision making and evaluate impact.
	Workforce development • Development and implementation of a successful workforce recruitment and retention strategy for core services and the new Experts at Hand offer. Critical to this will be long term visibility of funding from the DfE and a clear plan to develop a sustainable funding model beyond the 3-year grant. • A key focus on building the skills of non-education-based professionals to ensure they are equipped to meet the requirements of the SEND Reforms	**Workforce development** • Increased availability of specialists to enable the successful delivery of the Experts at Hand model	**Workforce development** • Innovative recruitment and retention to maintain availability of specialists to ensure continued delivery of the Experts at Hand model

	• The Local Area workforce Knowledge Hub will provide a multi-media provision of free at point of access information, guidance and training for the education setting workforce (EY to post 16) as well as a bookable face to face chargeable training offer and links through to national and regional training resources. The LA will signpost settings to appropriate training opportunities in line with the SEND Reform requirements. Settings will determine their training priorities and supervision and coaching arrangements as part of their delegated staffing responsibilities either as a maintained school or academy. • The Local Area workforce Knowledge Hub is also a platform that will both support parents and carers and provide training resources, and host information, guidance and training resources coproduced and developed by experts by experience.		

Success Measure 1: Strengthened mainstream inclusion

Metrics

- **Improved educational, outcomes for children and young people with SEND.**
- **Improved attendance, with a particular focus on reduction of persistent and severe absence.**
- **An increase in the proportion of children and young people accessing their local mainstream school.**
- **A reduction in the use of permanent exclusion.**
- **A reduction in the rise of elective home education and an increase in the return to an education setting**
- **A reduction in the request for EHCNA and progression to statutory plan.**
- **A reduction in the number of young people that are NEET.**
- **All children and young people, whose needs can be met in a mainstream inclusion base, are able to access one in their local community (less than 5 miles?)**

Success Measure 2: Increase confidence in the system

Metrics

- **Parents report increased trust in mainstream education's ability to meet their child's needs.**
- **Children and young people and parents both report their voice is heard and valued when individual plans are developed (ISP and EHCP) and in the strategic planning and commissioning.**
- **Education providers report confidence in accessing specialist services (EP, S&L, OT etc.)**
- **Education providers report that they have access to a high quality and accessible training and workforce development offer**
- **Reduce escalation, complaints and tribunal appeals by resolving concerns earlier and providing clearer routes to support.**

Success Measure 3: A financially sustainable system

Success measures

			Outturn:					Targets:			
Group:	Area:	Indicator:	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	National (latest)	Comment:	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Education Outcomes for CYP with SEND	Attainment	Children with SEND achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of EYFS	3.6	2.6		4.0	Latest published data is for 2024/25 academic year.	3.0	3.5	3.8	4.0
			25.0	23.1		26.4		24.0	25.0	26.0	27.0
			20.6	19.3		20.6		20.0	20.5	21.0	21.0
		Children with SEND meeting expected K2 standard in Reading, Writing and Maths	7.0	8.0		9.0	Latest published data is for 2024/25 academic year.	8.0	9.0	9.0	10.0
			21.0	22.0		29.0		23.0	24.0	26.0	29.0
			18.0	18.4		24.0		19.0	20.0	22.0	24.0
		Attainment 8 score for children with SEND	14.1	17.6		14.2	Latest published data is for 2024/25 academic year.	17.6	18.5	19.0	19.5
			35.2	36.8		33.8		34.0	34.5	35.0	35.5
			29.3	30.6		28.2		40.0	40.5	41.0	41.5
	NEET / EET	Percentage of KS4 SEN cohort in Education, Employment or Training at 17 (inc special schools)				85.2	Latest published data for 2022/23 academic year.	85.0	85.5	86.0	88.0
		16/17 years olds with SEN in education and training	84.1	86.2		87.4		86.5	87.5	88.0	89.0
Inclusion	Suspensions & Exclusions	Permanent Exclusion rate for children with SEND	0.6			0.4	Latest published data for 2023/24 academic year.	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.3
		Suspension rate for children with SEND	28.7			28.4		28.5	28.0	27.0	26.0
	Attendance	Attendance % - EHCP		84.2	84.7		Figures for the 2025/26 academic year are for the academic year to date.	85.0	86.0	87.0	88.0
		Attendance % - SEN Support		89.7	90.0			90.5	91.0	92.0	93.0

			Outturn:					Targets:		
Group:	Area:	Indicator:	2024	2025	2026	National (latest)	Comment:	2027	2028	2029
Inclusion	EHE	% of CYP with an EHCP in Elective Home Education (EHE)	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.1	Latest published data as at January 2025.	1.2	1.0	1.0
	Mainstream	% of CYP with an EHCP in mainstream schools (excluding SEN Units/resourced provision and independent mainstream)	44.5	45.8	48.7	38.6	Latest published data as at January 2025.	49.2	49.9	50.6
		% of pupils with an EHCP in Primary	3.2	3.6	4.6	3.5	Latest published data as at January 2025.	4.6	4.6	4.6
		% of pupils with an EHCP in Secondary	2.7	3.1	3.5	3.1	Latest published data as at January 2025.	3.5	3.8	4.0
		% of pupils with SEN Support in Primary	17.0	17.6	17.5	14.8	Latest published data as at January 2025.	17.5	17.0	16.0
		% of pupils with SEN Support in Secondary	11.8	12.5	14.1	13.4	Latest published data as at January 2025.	14.0	13.8	13.5
	Independent Special Schools and NMSS	% of CYP with an EHCP attending Independent Special School or NMS (excluding independent schools)	4.4	4.5	4.1	5.3	In published data, Independent schools are included as mainstream and have been excluded from this version of the indicator. Latest published data as at January	4.0	3.8	3.5
		% of CYP with an EHCP attending Independent Schools, Independent Special Schools or NMS	6.1	6.2	5.9	6.5		5.8	5.5	5.2
	EHCNA Requests	Rate of initial requests for EHCNA per 1,000 CYP (aged 0-24)	9.2	10.3		9.2	Latest published data are for the 2024 calendar year.	11.0	11.0	5.5
System Satisfaction	Appeals	Appeal rate to the SEND Tribunal based on total appealable decisions (calendar year)	3.9	4.3		3.2	Latest published data for the 2024 calendar year. The figure for Gloucestershire for 2025 is provisional.	4.3	4.0	3.2

We have structured success measures around what we see as the 4 core priorities for the SEND reform – An inclusive and financially sustainable SEND system that provides expert support when needed, to improve outcomes for children and young people. Within the four overarching success measures, there are a range of metrics that we will need to monitor to assess impact and improvement in the system.

Metrics • **A reduction in the demand for EHCPs** • **Reduced reliance on high-cost independent provision and EOTAS** • **Increased investment of High Needs funding into Early Years and Mainstream** • **Improved forecasting, commissioning, and oversight to ensure best value and system sustainability.** Success Measure 4: A stronger workforce Metrics • **Increased Full-time Equivalent of Education Psychologists (EP) and assistant EPs supporting schools.** • **Increased Full-time Equivalent of Advisory Teaching supporting schools.** • **Increased Full-time Equivalent of Speech & Language Therapists and assistants supporting schools.** • **Increased Full-time Equivalent of Occupational Therapists and assistants supporting schools.** • **Increased proportion of schools supported by Young Minds Matters team.**	

INSERT DOCUMENT UPLOAD LINK

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 Local delivery plan **Objectives:** Year 1 delivery has been designed to ensure that all national core minimum requirements are either met or materially progressed. Where full delivery extends beyond a single year (e.g. inclusion base coverage, workforce growth), Year 1 milestones focus on governance, commissioning, workforce mobilisation, and quality assurance necessary to support sustainable implementation at scale. Each workstream is mapped to the relevant Core Minimum Requirements and funded through a combination of delivery grant, transformation funding, and administrative support to ensure compliance and deliverability.		**Q2**		**Q3**		**Q4**	
Workstream outline – mapped to building block ***Outcome -*** *what you want to achieve with this workstream* ***Success measures –*** *how you measure progress drawing on metrics from the accompanying data template*	***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?*
Inclusive culture and behaviours This workstream will build on the priorities for the mainstream inclusion workstream, to ensure that system wide decision making and funding builds and embeds a culture of inclusion across the local education system. **Outcomes** Local commissioning; policy; and funding decisions are made with a clear focus on earlier intervention and inclusion. **Success Measures** Cultural change will take place over time, but it is expected that this work will impact on all of the identified success measures.	Head of Schools Service – Interm Lead Whole School Inclusion Programme Lead	• Provide a common framing and understanding of inclusion, through the publication of the local Inclusion Framework and Toolkit, aligned with national standards and universal inclusion/ordinarily available provision guidance. • Development of template and exemplar Inclusion Strategy for education settings to enable consistency of approach, whilst enabling contextual approach to inclusion. • Experts at Hand funding deployed, based on education setting feedback, which identifies the areas that will have the greatest impact on mainstream inclusion.	Cultural change will take place over time, but it is expected that this work will impact on all of the identified success measures.	• Development of funding strategy that enables the movement of funding down the system from high- cost statutory placements (EHCP and Permanent Exclusion etc.) to support enhanced mainstream funding and an increase in earlier intervention placements.	Cultural change will take place over time, but it is expected that this work will impact on all of the identified success measures.	• Approval of long-term funding strategy by local Schools Forum.	Cultural change will take place over time, but it is expected that this work will impact on all of the identified success measures.

Mainstream Inclusion In this workstream we will: • Continue the development and strengthening of mainstream inclusion across the county, ensuring it is aligned with new guidance from the DfE and that there is a clear and consistent view of what we mean by 'mainstream inclusion' and that the universal inclusion offer is well understood by all key stakeholders. • develop a peer-review model to enable the sharing of best practice and provide a structured vehicle for school-to-school support. • Strengthen LA school support services, to provide a single point of access for advice; a sustainable whole school inclusion programme and ensure guidance and stronger oversight and challenge, where national and local guidance is not followed (with DfE Regions Group where appropriate). **Outcomes** • A clearer and more consistent understanding of mainstream inclusion, by all key stakeholders. • An effective model for peer-review and the sharing of best practice. • A high-quality school support offer from LA services to provide advice and guidance and hold schools to account where practice is not in line with national guidance. **Success Measures** Education Outcomes for CYP with SEND • Key Stage 2 outcomes • Key Stage 4 outcomes • NEET Inclusion Metrics • Improve attendance of pupils with SEND	Head of Schools Service – Interm Lead Whole School Inclusion Programme Lead GLA MAT Research Director	• Initial engagement and coproduction of Inclusion Strategy development guidance and school-to-school peer review model – MAT-led. • Complete consultation process regarding restructuring of LA Education operating model and publish details of new 'Schools Service.' • Agree with education providers an approach to capturing parental satisfaction feedback across the county (adapt current parent carer survey and broaden reach). • Agree with school system an approach to capturing feedback from all schools on the inclusion support services available to them (Schools Survey).	This work will compliment exiting work to support inclusion. Within the financial modelling we are expecting to see a 1% mitigation in the rising demand for EHCPs.	• Local Inclusion Framework updated and published in line with national guidance/standards and to ensure that that there is clear view of what a strong 'universal SEND offer' from education settings should include. • Coproduction of school-to-school inclusion strategy peer review model – agree model, approach, and resourcing. • New Schools Service Launched (Sept 2026). • Annual parent carer survey opens for feedback. • Launch 1st Annual schools survey to set a baseline for school satisfaction with inclusion support services. • Engage with SENDIASS to design and develop a model of mediation in line with the national minimum standards	This work will compliment exiting work to support inclusion. Within the financial modelling we are expecting to see a 1% mitigation in the rising demand for EHCPs.	• Initiate pilot of the school-to-school Inclusion Strategy peer review model, to provide feedback on effectiveness of the model and refine. • Parent carer survey closed – Analysis and report produced to enable development of 'You Said, we Did" report. • School survey closed – analysis and feedback reported to Heads/Leaders' associations and SILAP and an agreed action plan developed. • Publish mediation model, designed in partnership with SENDIASS	This work will compliment exiting work to support inclusion. Within the financial modelling we are expecting to see a 1% mitigation in the rising demand for EHCPs.

• Reduction in exclusion of pupils with SEND • Increased proportion of CYP with SEND with Mainstream • Reduction in the rise Elective Home Education numbers. **System Satisfaction** • Parents report increased trust in mainstream education's ability to meet their child's needs. • Education providers report that the appropriate support and services are available to support inclusion							
Alternative Provision and Inclusion Bases (Education Setting Commissioned) In this workstream we will support and lead the local education system in the development of setting commissioned inclusion bases, ensuring that they align with national guidance and enhance support for children and young people. **Outcomes** A clear plan for both primary and secondary schools and Further Education settings to develop and access a locally commissioned inclusion base. In year 1 we expect to see small numbers of commissioned provision in both the secondary and primary systems, although secondary is prioritised, as set out in the DfE expectations. **Success Measures** Education Outcomes for CYP with SEND • Key Stage 2 outcomes • Key Stage 4 outcomes • NEET Inclusion Metrics • Improve attendance of pupils with SEND • Reduction in exclusion of pupils with SEND • Increased proportion of CYP with SEND with Mainstream	Head of Education, Infrastructure and Planning	• Complete audit of all secondary schools to assess current capacity and barriers to the delivery of an effective school commissioned inclusion base. • Development of county wide plan to implement school commissioned inclusion bases in every secondary school in the county.	We do not expect to see any significant movement in data in this timeframe.	• Increase specialist commissioning team capacity to audit and review of existing primary school commissioned inclusion bases to assess efficacy and sustainability – "what works well? and how can it work for small schools? Groups of schools?" • Use specialist commissioning team capacity to audit Further Education settings provision to support inclusion • Development of a county wide plan to commission and deliver school commissioned primary inclusion bases. This will need to consider clustering/grouping of schools to enable sustainable delivery and the use of and availability of capital funding. • Expansion of Glos Col Hardwick site provision to extend P16 capacity.	In the settings which operate an inclusion base we would expect to see: • Reduction in exclusion 50% on previous year. • Improved attendance – 1% on previous year • Reduction in movement into EHE – 50% on previous year. • Reduction in demand for EHC Needs Assessments (25%) • Reduction in NEET by 5% *(the targets above are for illustrative purposes, we would expect to agree targets with individual settings, based on their context, including admissions timeframes and baseline data).*	• School commissioned inclusion bases in 15 (35%) of secondary schools. • School Commissioned inclusion bases available to 10% of primary schools (24), where capital works are not required and an additional 4 schools where minor capital works are required. • Impact assessment of impact on ability to access local education and reduce need for SEND transport. • Develop and pilot transitions provision/support model for EY to primary. • Publish 3-tier Alternative Provision model	In the schools which operate an inclusion base we would expect to see: • Reduction in exclusion 50% on previous year. • Improved attendance – 1% on previous year • Reduction in movement into EHE – 50% on previous year. • Reduction in demand for EHC Needs Assessments (25%) • Reduction in NEET by 5%

• Reduced demand for Education Health NA • Reduction in the rise Elective Home Education numbers. System Satisfaction • Parents report increased trust in mainstream education's ability to meet their child's needs.				• Extend AP specialist taskforce as part of EaH model.			
Governance and System Leadership In this workstream we will review the efficacy and suitability of governance arrangements to oversee the delivery of the SEND reforms alongside our existing improvement planning and the response to and preparation for regulatory inspection. The workstream will also consider how we can build and empower system leadership across the local area partnership to support effective implementation and deliver of the reforms. **Outcomes** Effective governance arrangements in place and the foundations in place to start developing proposals to devolve funding into locality partnerships to meet local context and needs.	Director of Education	• Review Terms of Reference of the SEND and Inclusion Local Area Partnership Board and consider development of a service level agreement or memorandum of understanding to underpin and enforce engagement and performance.	This workstream does not directly affect any of the success measures, but ensures stable governance in the local area partnership.	• Q3 and 4: Review current partnership arrangements across the local system and coproduce proposals to develop cross phase, locality cluster partnerships to support SEND reform implementation; Families First Partnership and NHS reforms with the Gloucestershire Education Forum. • Review and strengthen the visibility of children and young people's voice at SILAP partnership board.	This workstream does not directly affect any of the success measures, but ensures stable governance in the local area partnership.	• Q3 and 4: Review current partnership arrangements across the local system and coproduce proposals to develop cross phase, locality cluster partnerships to support SEND reform implementation; Families First Partnership and NHS reforms with the Gloucestershire Education Forum.	This workstream does not directly affect any of the success measures, but ensures stable governance in the local area partnership.
Strengthening use of data to inform system development This workstream will ensure that the strategic direction and commissioning arrangements for the system are led by clear, joined-up data, KPIs and quality assurance reporting. **Outcomes** • Clear set of KPIs based on the success measures outlined in this plan. • Quality assurance and evaluation plan in place to ensure measurement of impact is beyond core data and KPIs. **Success Measures** This workstream will not have a direct impact on the success measures but	Head of Quality, Performance and Innovation Service	• The Local Area Partnership Board will review and strengthen existing Key Performance Indicators for Education, Health, and Care to enable strategic oversight of the reformed system. • Develop QA and evaluation cycle, aligned to the new reform priorities, and linked to the existing model of practice. • Review Terms of Reference for the Local Area Partnership and development of a service level agreement to underpin and enforce performance.	This workstream will not have a direct impact on the success measures but will enable tracking and monitoring of progress and impact.	• Integration of Health data and KPIs into local area KPI dashboard, to enable single view of the system (currently reported separately). • Continue the Implementation of Joint Strategic Commissioning Strategy and complete enhancement of associated action plan, which sets out key commissioning priorities based on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).	This workstream will not have a direct impact on the success measures but will enable tracking and monitoring of progress and impact.	• Continue the Implementation of the Joint Strategic Commissioning Strategy, including review of the current action plan that sits beneath the strategy, setting out key commissioning priorities based on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)	This workstream will not have a direct impact on the success measures but will enable tracking and monitoring of progress and impact.

will enable tracking and monitoring of progress and impact.							
Coproduction and communication This workstream will build on an existing workstream in our local SEND improvement plan, that is focused on strengthening coproduction and communication with CYP and parent carers. Priorities will be adjusted to incorporate the SEND reforms and ensure there is a clear plan for coproduction and communication with all stakeholders. **Outcomes** This workstream will ensure that the implementation of SEND reforms are coproduced with all key stakeholders and that communication across the system is effective. **Success Measures** *This workstream will not materially affect any of the core success measures but will enable effective implementation.*	Quality, Coproduction and Engagement Service Manager	• Review and agree minimum coproduction standards between education settings, parents, and carers, and to strengthen children and young people participation mechanisms • Develop and implement a system-wide SEND comms strategy, strengthening Local Offer, SENDIASS and PCF visibility with education settings. This will include a series of locality-based workshop sessions for parents and wider stakeholders on education setting sites with education staff, LA, and Health staff to enable better understanding of the reforms and the services available. In this way all stakeholders will share a common language and understanding of the actions being taken to deliver the reforms and will stand side by side in messaging to education communities. • Agree resourcing for both the local Parent Carer Forum and SENDIASS to enable the deeper and more effective engagement with education settings that the SEND reforms will require.	This workstream will not materially affect any of the core success measures but will enable effective and co-produced implementation.	• Adapt existing coproduction strategy to respond to SEND reforms, in particular the coproduction and development of inclusion strategies and parent carer – education setting coproduction. • Coproduce and publish an exemplar of best practice for education settings to effectively coproduce and measure the impact of their inclusion strategy. • Update the local offer to include details of the SEND reforms and associated changes including Experts at Hand Offer Inclusion Bases. • Launch communication campaign to clearly articulate SEND reforms to the population, ensure clarity of intentions are clear and that Myths are busted.	This workstream will not materially affect any of the core success measures but will enable effective and co-produced implementation.	• Engage with education settings, regarding the development of a co-production training offer to include with the local training and development offer for education settings.	This workstream will not materially affect any of the core success measures but will enable effective and co-produced implementation.
Inclusion Bases (Specialist LA Commissioned) This workstream will oversee the planning and commissioning of specialist inclusion bases across the county, to support local access to specialist provision. **Outcomes**	Specialist Commissioning Manager	• Based on consultation and the agreed specialist sufficiency strategy - Develop 3-year plan, based on demand profile and geography and audit of secondary and primary schools (audit outline above	Specialist inclusion bases, will not have a material impact on the success measures in Year 1, but in future years will: • Reduce reliance on independent	• Develop detailed plans and commissioning briefs to enable commissioning discussions to commence with identified schools for first phase of delivery.	Specialist inclusion bases, will not have a material impact on the success measures in Year 1, but in future years will: • Reduce reliance on independent special school places.	• Agree commissioning arrangements for the first phase of specialist inclusion bases.	Specialist inclusion bases will not have a material impact on the success measures in Year 1, but in future years will: • Reduce reliance on independent special school places.

In the first year, this workstream will put in place the conditions for the successful commissioning and delivery of new specialist inclusion bases from September 2027. **Success Measures** Specialist inclusion bases, will not have a material impact on the success measures in Year 1, but in future years will: • Reduce reliance on independent special school places. • All children and young people, whose needs can be met in a mainstream inclusion base, are able to successfully access one in their local community.		in school commissioned bases).	• special school places. • All children and young people, whose needs can be met in a mainstream inclusion base, are able to successfully access one in their local community.		• All children and young people, whose needs can be met in a mainstream inclusion base, are able to successfully access one in their local community.		• All children and young people, whose needs can be met in a mainstream inclusion base, are able to successfully access one in their local community.
Experts at Hand *Through the Experts at Hand workstream we will look to build on existing work and expand capacity in the specialist workforce. In year one we will:* • *increase Early language support programmes capacity covering more classes* • *expand Occupational Therapy providing environmental assessments for educational settings, initially focussing on early years and primary settings with high levels of children with neurodiverse needs, and provide evidence informed functional occupational therapy and workforce development tools for all education settings.* • *Expand the Young Minds Matter programme with an additional team.* • *expand and strengthen education psychology and advisory teaching services.* • *Continue development roll out of local AP offer, including 3-tier model and the specialist task force.* • *Extend the Assistive Tech Lending Library piloted and run through the DfE Change Programme.*	Head of Service SEND Associate Director, Children and Young People (ICB)	• Coproduction of local workforce recruitment and retention strategy to enable Experts at Hand Model. • Utilise the Experts at Hand funding, to significantly enhance the existing inclusion services available through the Local Offer, which includes transition support programmes, parenting support programmes and Young Minds Matter mental health support programme. Local Offer • Develop plan to increase EP capacity and move from 50% of time supporting schools and 50% of time undertaking statutory advice to increased time supporting at setting level. • Expansion of workforce to include 6 Assistant EPs roles and 4 SALT apprenticeship roles. (Sept 2026). • Initial recruitment of Occupational Therapists and Assistants. • Extend and expand the delivery of key DFE Change programme activity including ELSEC	A range of professionals will be in post at the latter end of Quarter 2 (Sept 26). These professionals will not yet have a material impact in this first quarter	• Complete the current review of our training and development offer, to finalise and publish the to the Local Area Partnership. • Review recruitment success and challenges from Q2 and progress back to recruitment to fill any gaps. • Develop contingency plan to ensure stabilisation of existing statutory services. • Finalise new property for Hospital education (bid submitted to school rebuild programme), to enable development of stronger on-site offer. • From September 26, Educational Psychologists and Advisory Teachers will move to allocation of an Educational Psychologists and Advisory Teacher to each school in the county. The addition	Subject to recruitment and commencement at the beginning of September 26 increased professional time in education settings reaching 15,661 of children and young people based on an assumption of existing workforce and EAH delivery through a model of 30% 1-1, 50% 1-4 and 20% 1-30. Recruitment for September will be challenging due to notice periods for professionals on standard teacher terms and conditions (Burgundy Book).	• Review and update workforce recruitment and retention strategy based on success in Q2 and Q3. • Expected outcome from School Rebuilding programme to support Hospital Education. Develop plan and timescale for Tier 1 and 2 primary offers. • Review APST and AP 3-tier offer and further develop based on impact data • Annual review of ELSEC, language programmes and YMM programmes to assess impact and make recommendations for development.	Subject to recruitment and commencement at the beginning of September 26 increased professional time in education settings reaching 15,661 of children and young people based on an assumption of existing workforce and EAH delivery through a model of 30% 1-1, 50% 1-4 and 20% 1-30

Outcomes *The priority outcomes in year one will be to:* • *Increase to schools' access to specialists, including EP, AT, S&L and OT.* • *Build on the DfE Change programme, by extending Early Language programmes, APST, the AP 3-tier offer and the Assistive Tech Lending Library.* • *Align the Experts at Hand model with the Best Start in Life Strategy, Family Hubs, and Families First Reforms, to ensure intentional multi-agency design and clear and straightforward access to support.* ***Success Measures*** Inclusion Metrics • Improve attendance of pupils with SEND • Reduction in exclusion of pupils with SEND • Increased proportion of CYP with SEND with Mainstream • Reduce reliance on independent special school places • Reduced demand for Education Health NA • Reduction in the rise Elective Home Education numbers. • All children and young people, whose needs can be met in a mainstream inclusion base, are able to successfully access one in their local community. Workforce development Metrics • Increased Full-time Equivalent of Education Psychologists (EP) and EP assistants supporting schools. • Increased Full-time Equivalent of Advisory Teaching supporting schools. • Increased Full-time Equivalent of Speech & Language Therapists and assistants supporting schools.		and Language programmes across all age ranges ▪ Extend the Assistive Tech lending library into the 26/27 academic year to reach 90 more schools in the academic year ▪ Review the 3-tier AP model piloted under the DfE Change programme, to align with Experts at Hand and adapt to become a 3-tier inclusion offer. ▪ Extend the commissioned arrangements for the Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce (APST). Retain the existing team to meet the needs of 70 children and families. • Publication of the online directory of quality assured and approved, unregistered alternative provision providers, to support education settings to access short term therapeutic interventions. • Health pathways will be reviewed with reference to relevant NICE guidance, including national expectations for the timeliness of autism diagnostic assessments. Where local waiting times exceed national guidance, mitigation and improvement actions will be agreed and monitored through partnership governance.		of increased EP and Advisory Teaching will enable support to Early Years SENCOs and post 16 settings. • Completion of the Education Directorate operating model review process within GCC to form a Schools Service, that will enable greater accessibility to inclusion, advisory teaching, education psychology, and school improvement services. • Onboard and induct new workforce. • Support applications to universities for EP, OT, and SALT apprenticeships • Form multi-disciplinary locality teams, in line with existing school clustering arrangements focussing on greatest areas of need for priority EAH delivery • Secure ICT, IMS, and Legal corporate resource to provide wider roll out of Assistive Tech Lending Library.			

• Increased Full-time Equivalent of Occupational Therapists and assistants supporting schools. • Increased proportion of schools supported by Young Minds Matters team. System Satisfaction • Parents report increased trust in mainstream education's ability to meet their child's needs. • Children and young people and parents both report their voice is heard and valued when individual plans are developed (ISP and EHCP) and in the strategic planning and commissioning. • Education providers report confidence in accessing specialist services (EP, S&L, OT etc.) • Education providers report that they have access to a high quality and accessible training and workforce development offer • Education providers report that the appropriate support and services are available to support inclusion • Reduction in tribunal appeals • Increased resolution at mediation							
Locality Cluster Model (LCM) The aim of this project is to consider: • how school locality clusters, can align with locality models being developed through both the social care and NHS reforms. • How school clusters can develop to enable access to local inclusion bases. Local Multi-Academy Academy can operate well in this space, but many trusts are not locality based. This is particularly relevant for small rural schools, where running their own inclusion base will not be sustainable, without local collaboration. • Longer-term plans to devolve funding into localities to support local commissioning and delivery of key services.	Director of Education through Gloucestershire Education Forum governance (local education system systems leadership group	N/A	N/A	• Work with the school system, through heads associations and the local education forum to develop a cross-phase cluster model, aligned with Families First Programme and Health strategy, that will enable access to locality-based services.	It is not anticipated that this work will have an effect on the success measures until Year 2	• The reform programme will explicitly accommodate Gloucestershire's rurality through clustered commissioning models, shared inclusion bases, mobile outreach, and flexible delivery of specialist support. This will ensure that small and geographically isolated schools are able to access expertise equitably and sustainably.	It is not anticipated that this work will have an effect on the success measures until Year 2

Outcomes A clear plan to strengthen local collaboration, enabling services to be commissioned to meet contextual local needs. To embed some intentional design into the development of school governance in the county and move away from a fragmented system of school collaboration. **Success Measures** • All children and young people, whose needs can be met in a mainstream inclusion base, are able to successfully access one in their local community. • Education providers report confidence in accessing specialist services (EP, S&L, OT etc.) • Education providers report that they have access to a high quality and accessible training and workforce development offer • Education providers report that the appropriate support and services are available to support inclusion.							
Projected Investment Spend per quarter Investment decisions will be reviewed quarterly through partnership governance, with spend aligned to delivery milestones and subject to value-for-money assessment. Funding profiles will be adjusted where implementation evidence indicates a need to re-sequence activity or strengthen capacity.		Projected spend QTR 2 £642,175 1 month funding of year 1 EAH plan (Sept 26)		Projected spend QTR 3 £1,926,523 3 months funding of year 1 EAH plan, (Oct-Dec 26)		Projected spend QTR 4 £1,926,523 3 months of funding of year 1 EAH plan (Jan-March 27)	

INSERT DOCUMENT UPLOAD LINK

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.

Gloucestershire has established governance arrangements across the Local Area Partnership at executive, strategic, and operational levels, which will be strengthened to support delivery of SEND and wider national reforms collaboratively and effectively. Gloucestershire County Council has reviewed and restructured its Education Directorate operating model to prepare for implementation. Programme and project management capacity from the SEND and AP Change Programme will be redeployed to ensure continuity of expertise and a smooth transition. Dedicated financial support is in place through the Schools Finance Team, with experience of both the Change Programme and Delivering Better Value in SEND. Data and performance capacity is being assessed, with plans to secure dedicated support for delivery. Collectively, the partnership has the programme, financial and analytical capability required to deliver the reform programme. Wider reforms across Social Care and Health operate on different timelines; however, alignment will be maximised where possible to strengthen delivery, optimise resources and integrate data and financial planning, particularly to support locality-based working. Overall capacity is assessed as sufficient to deliver the 2026–27 SEND Reform Plan and DfE reporting requirements. Where required, additional capacity will be secured through transformation funding. External support from Impower has been commissioned to support delivery and alignment with Families First reforms.

8. **Other funding**

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.

Gloucestershire has not undertaken any block transfers in 2026-27, or in previous years, as this does not align with a strategy for strengthening

mainstream inclusion in schools and meant we would be unable to pay the National Funding Formula to schools owing to our low school funding levels as an authority.

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.

Gloucestershire's capital strategy is designed to do two things at the same time: address immediate sufficiency pressures for children and young people with the most complex needs and accelerate the longer-term reform objective of strengthening mainstream inclusion and reducing reliance on high-cost external provision. Capital investment is therefore intentionally twin-tracked, combining expansion of specialist capacity with the development of inclusion bases and mainstream adaptations in partnership with mainstream schools and MATs, alongside assistive technology support.

The case for immediate specialist investment is strong. EHCP numbers are projected to increase from 7,524 in 2025 to 10,720 in 2029, with continued growth across mainstream, specialist bases and maintained special schools. At the same time, Gloucestershire's data shows sustained pressure on specialist placements and a level of reliance on independent provision which will not reduce without additional local capacity.

This is why Gloucestershire is building new special schools now. The partnership's strategic direction remains to increase capacity within mainstream settings wherever needs can be met there; however, some children and young people already in the system have needs which cannot currently be met through mainstream provision or inclusion bases, because they require specialist environments, equipment, workforce expertise and therapeutic support. The two new special schools are therefore not a departure from the inclusion strategy: they are the essential stabilising investment that enables it. They respond to current deficits in specialist sufficiency, alleviate pressure on existing special schools operating under sustained demand, and reduce dependence on costly independent and out-of-area placements while inclusion reform is scaled.

Two new special schools are already in contract and being delivered for completion in 2027 and 2028, funded through £39.5m of Basic Need and pre-2025/26 High Needs Capital Allocation, to meet existing demand for 4–16-year-olds with the most complex needs. This is reflected in the data template, which shows special school capacity rising from 1,551 places in 2025/26 to 1,961 by 2029/30. Over the same period, independent special school/NMSS placements are projected to reduce from 441 to 253, evidencing the intended shift towards locally delivered provision.

Alongside this, the partnership will deliver 480 additional inclusion places over three years from September 2027, with specialist bases projected to grow from 80 places to 560 by 2029/30. This is supported by mainstream capital adaptations, including hygiene facilities, lifts, step-free access, acoustic and lighting improvements, and small group/regulation spaces, together with £100k annually of HNCA for assistive technology in 2027/28 and 2028/29. The Hospital Education AP Service is also relocating from September 2026 using School Condition Allocation funding to improve suitability and reintegration support.

The capital profile is front-loaded to address immediate need, with planned spend of £10.2m in 2025/26 and £21.3m in 2026/27, followed by further investment in bases and adaptations through to 2029/30. All schemes are informed by travel impact assessment so that new capacity improves access to local provision and reduces avoidable transport pressure. In this way, capital investment supports both the current sufficiency challenge and the future reform model: more children educated locally, fewer high-cost external placements, and a more inclusive and financially sustainable system.

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.

Strategic Context and System Alignment

Gloucestershire's SEND Reform strategy aligns national reforms across SEND, Families First, Best Start in Life and Neighbourhood Health, embedding a shared focus on early intervention, inclusion, and locality-based delivery.

A strengthened Universal Offer underpins the system, ensuring most needs are met at Universal and Targeted levels through increased workforce capacity and place-based support. This reduces escalation to statutory services, improves outcomes and parental confidence, and supports long-term system sustainability.

Delivery Model and System Reform

The partnership is implementing a locality-based model through Experts at Hand, building on SEND and AP Change Programme learning to ensure education settings can access specialist expertise within communities.

Local inclusion bases will provide flexible short-term and longer-term support, reducing reliance on centralised referral pathways and statutory provision.

Aligned commissioning and integrated decision-making across education, health and care will ensure earlier needs are met, improving outcomes and attendance while reducing demand for high-cost provision and stabilising the system financially.

Governance, Partnership and Accountability

Delivery is underpinned by a well-established, co-produced improvement plan informed by Ofsted-CQC, DBV and SEND Change Programme feedback.

Strategic oversight is provided through the SEND and Inclusion Local Area Partnership, bringing together leaders from the local authority, NHS/ICB, education (including Early Years and Further Education), social care, parent carers and children and young people to set direction, manage risk and align reform with wider place-based strategies.

Progress will be monitored through shared data, agreed metrics and transparent reporting across governance structures to ensure accountability and continuous improvement.

Co-production and Lived Experience

Co-production is central, with children, young people and families recognised as "experts by experience" who shape, influence, and evaluate services, with an enhanced role into influencing decisions in governance arrangements.

The Communications and Co-production Steering Group (CCSG) coordinates voice, insight, and feedback across the system, ensuring lived experience informs priorities and service development at both strategic and operational levels.

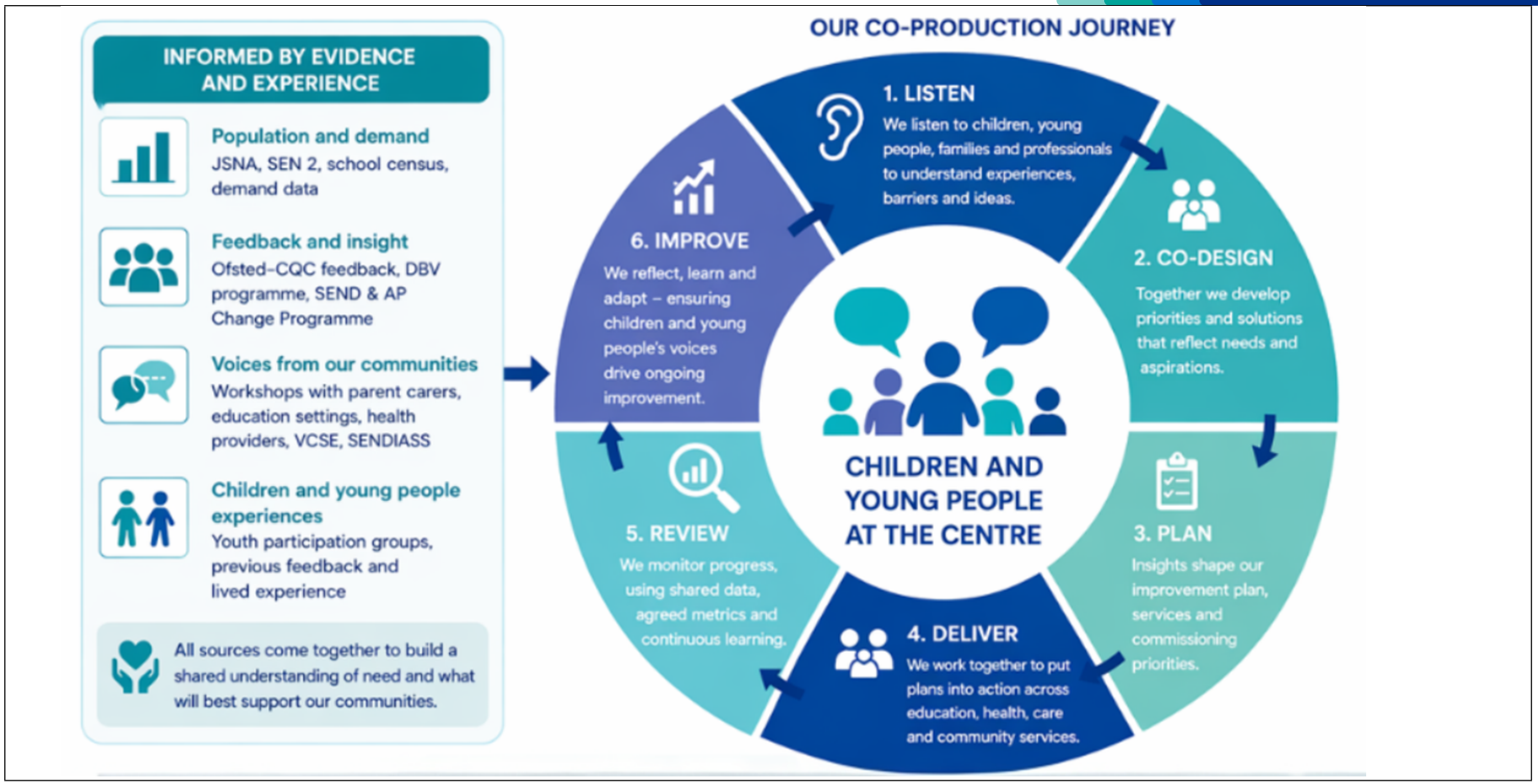
Feedback will continue to be systematically gathered through multiple sources, including engagement events, pupil wellbeing surveys, Parent Carer Forum activity, SENDIASS insights, complaints, mediation, and survey data.
A structured “You Said, We Did” cycle ensures feedback is analysed, acted upon, and reported back to families, strengthening transparency and trust.

The partnership recognises the need to strengthen the distinct voice of children and young people. Year 1 delivery will expand participation through Communities of Practice, targeted engagement, and investment in VCSE partners to reach diverse groups and build collective influence.

Engagement, System Ownership and Continuous Improvement

Engagement across education providers (including Early Years and Further Education), health partners, community organisations, and families has supported a shared understanding of needs and reform priorities.
Delivery will continue to be driven through consistent, inclusive engagement, with defined participation structures, locality engagement, and clear reporting routes into governance.

The strategy ensures that participation is both a voice mechanism and a driver of system improvement, embedding continuous learning, shared ownership, and sustained delivery across the local area partnership.


INFORMED BY EVIDENCE AND EXPERIENCE
Population and demand
JSNA, SEN 2, school census, demand data
Feedback and insight
Ofsted-CQC feedback, DBV programme, SEND & AP Change Programme
Voices from our communities
Workshops with parent carers, education settings, health providers, VCSE, SENDIASS
Children and young people experiences
Youth participation groups, previous feedback and lived experience
All sources come together to build a shared understanding of need and what will best support our communities.
OUR CO-PRODUCTION JOURNEY
1. LISTEN
We listen to children, young people, families and professionals to understand experiences, barriers and ideas.
2. CO-DESIGN
Together we develop priorities and solutions that reflect needs and aspirations.
3. PLAN
Insights shape our improvement plan, services and commissioning priorities.
4. DELIVER
We work together to put plans into action across education, health, care and community services.
5. REVIEW
We monitor progress, using shared data, agreed metrics and continuous learning.
6. IMPROVE
We reflect, learn and adapt – ensuring children and young people's voices drive ongoing improvement.
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE

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	Likelihood	RAG	Mitigation	Residual RAG
Local Government Reform decision will be known in June/July with three possible models – one Unitary Authority or 2 variations of a two Unitary Authority model – Greater Gloucester or East/West spilt. Both latter models would split the local school system and require the establishment of two Children's and Adults Services, Parent Carer Forums rather than the current single whole county services. With the local authority as the system convenor with a pivotal systems leadership role, this poses a major risk both new authority's ability to continue to drive the SEND reforms programme. There is no national framework for determining the apportioning of the risk and quantum of the current Dedicated Schools Grant deficit in the county, risking the financial stability of both newly formed unitary authorities. There is a further risk that link up opportunities for efficiency and connectives across the local area between 2UAs will be missed.	Critical	Very likely		LRG programme team and structure established. Impacts of both scenario (1UA /2UA) identified and reviewed by Children Service Senior Leadership with recognition that a 2UA scenario would have huge impact on delivery of the SEND reforms. The intent is to have a foundational roadmap that the new entities can build on and iterate rather than starting afresh. This will enable the newly formed entity(ies) to keep pace with reforms alongside the necessary activities to embed a one or two new entities. SRO and SEND Exec Board will remain alert to these opportunities through explicit recording of these opportunities in its foundational roadmap. SRO and SEND Exec Board will remain alert to these opportunities through explicit recording of these opportunities in its foundational roadmap.	Likely
Health Clustering – changes in the ICB – moving from co-terminus, which singularly services local population needs to a cluster arrangement with BNSSG (4 ICBs coming together). Gloucestershire is singularly joining pre-existing structures of the other 3 areas. This is resulting in the loss of experienced workforce and the end of existing working relationships, including changes to the Health SEND SRO.	Critical	Likely		We have early engagement with new ICB cluster and CEO already attends the SEND Executive Board. Urgently seeking clarity on the ICB budget allocation for Gloucestershire. Urgent contract management review of all existing contracts and financial arrangements in order to deliver BAU and Reforms, including understanding whether existing BHSSG contact arrangements will come across into Gloucestershire Urgent confirmation of SRO and relationships formation. Planned responses to the NHS QAF, determined by priority actions identified based on new arrangements.	Possible

Low funding for Gloucestershire education settings compared to comparator authorities. Gloucestershire is the 26th least well funded local authority for DSG funding per mainstream pupil out of 151 authorities at £9,008.60. Source of data: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schoolsgrant-dsg-2026-to-2027 This means that Gloucestershire schools have a far greater funding challenge than comparable schools elsewhere undergoing the same change. Our schools are starting at a disadvantage in developing mainstream inclusion having already had to make significant reductions in staffing and activity linked to inclusion support	Critical	Very likely		Continued lobbying for reform of the National Funding Formula. Recognition of school variation in starting points owing to funding challenges and ensuring EAH is equitably and proportionately accessible to all settings. The LA will develop guidance to support the education settings in the most effective and efficient use of Inclusion Mainstream Funding. In the primary sector, support and specialist bases will be co-productively developed across a locality of schools, to ensure economies of scale, with devolution of monies to school clusters where there is a clear model of a locality continuum	Possible
Experts at Hand finite funding for 3 years and delivered through annual ringfenced grants, makes it difficult for the partnership to recruit effectively or sustain workforce funding beyond Year 3. The requirement to spend all 26-27 funding by the end of the financial year risks, and to start spending before the reform plan is approved, risks poor value for money issues around recruitment and the need for further changes required when plan is reviewed by DfE.	Moderate	Possible		EHCP demand reduces by Year 3 to allow pivoting of some resources such as casework officers supporting evidence informed interventions to enable return to school, increasing navigator capacity so schools have a central point of contact Reduction in the need for individual child level interventions from setting level support reducing demand and increasing specialist capacity to intervene at universal and targeted levels in 3-years' time. Front load recruitment of specialists to ensure availability for Year 2 Not within local decision making, but a clear and flexible 3-year grant would help.	Possible

Recruitment and retention of sufficient workforce to deliver Experts at Hand	Crisis	Very likely		Build on two year success with paraprofessionals of Speech and Language Therapy and Educational Psychology Assistant roles. We will extend this recruitment strategy to occupational therapy assistants. The existing ELSEC workforce of paraprofessionals and professionals will pivot to Year 1 SALT Experts at Hand. Build on two years of success in enabling assistant EP's to gain access to the doctorate course. We will expand the number of Assistants and apply the same CPD and workforce development offer. Due to the number of course places available remaining low and the number Educational Psychology Assistants increasing across the country the conversion rate success may reduce. Continue to take trainee Educational Psychologists in Years 2 and 3 to build a relationship with Gloucestershire through a well-supported placement that builds confidence and competence, and we recruit 18 months in advance of qualification to have a commitment to working for Gloucestershire when qualified. We continue to hold EP, OT and SALT FTE vacancies in our local existing services. We use locum support where required and available and will use existing and established relationships to secure as much locum capacity as possible within resources to provide full capacity. The EAH workforce to be additional to the existing workforce and for the services to deliver the model and core services through one shared resource, mitigating the risk of professional workforce seeking to move from core services to the Experts at Hand workforce. Training up other professionals (in schools) to fill the gaps in the interim to lead on specialist areas alongside increasing outreach from special schools and Alternative Provision Tier 1 offer.	Likely

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

Effective delivery of Gloucestershire's SEND Reform Plan is dependent on alignment with major national and local reform programmes. The Local Area Partnership has embedded mitigation actions within its governance, roadmap, and delivery model to ensure continuity, stability, and system resilience.

Local Government Reorganisation

Local Government Reorganisation poses a significant risk to delivery continuity, leadership capacity, and system coherence. To mitigate this, Gloucestershire has established a dedicated LGR programme structure, including scenario planning for both single and two-unitary models. A foundational SEND reform roadmap has been developed to ensure that delivery can continue irrespective of organisational configuration. Oversight is maintained through the SEND Executive Board, with the Senior Responsible Officer ensuring that reform priorities, risks and opportunities arising from reorganisation are explicitly tracked and managed. This approach protects reform delivery and maintains system leadership during transition.

NHS Reform

NHS reform represents a critical dependency for SEND delivery, particularly in relation to commissioning, workforce capacity, and early intervention. To mitigate risks, the partnership has established early and active engagement with the emerging ICB cluster, with NHS leadership represented within SEND Executive governance arrangements. A programme of contract and financial review is underway to

ensure continuity of existing SEND services, alongside work to secure clarity on future resource allocation and SEND leadership roles within the new ICB structure. The partnership will utilise NHS Quality Assurance Framework processes to prioritise and monitor actions aligned to new arrangements. These measures ensure SEND remains visible within NHS governance and that joint accountability for early intervention and EHCP processes is maintained.

Children's Social Care Reform and Families First

Children's Social Care reform and Families First initiatives are key enablers of early intervention. Risks of fragmentation or misaligned thresholds are mitigated through shared governance and integration of SEND priorities within these programmes. Cross-system working ensures that early identification, family support, and safeguarding responses are aligned, reducing escalation driven by unmet needs. Locality-based delivery models are designed to align with Families First Partnerships and multi-agency teams.

Best Start in Life and Family Hubs

Family Hubs are a critical mechanism for earlier identification and coordinated support. To mitigate risks of parallel working, Family Hubs are explicitly positioned within the SEND early intervention pathway, acting as access points for professional advice, triage, and multi-agency coordination. This integration supports earlier identification of need and strengthens continuity between early years, health, and education services.

Financial and Workforce Dependencies

Low DSG funding and workforce constraints present significant risks. These are mitigated through equitable, data-informed allocation of Experts at Hand resources, guidance to maximise the effectiveness of inclusion funding, and locality-based commissioning models to create economies of scale. Workforce risks are addressed through a comprehensive strategy including expansion of paraprofessional roles, training, recruitment aligned to future demand, and use of locum capacity where required.

Curriculum and Assessment Review

The Curriculum and Assessment Review underpins inclusive mainstream education. The partnership will support settings to align practice with national expectations through workforce development and inclusion framework implementation, ensuring mainstream provision remains the default pathway for meeting need.

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.

Governance and system assurance

- System assurance is delivered through multi-agency governance via SILAP and the SEND Executive Board, with oversight of plan milestones, inspection requirements, risks, and impact on children, young people, and families.
- Financial sustainability and demand trends (Data & Finance Annex: demand projections; high-cost spend trajectories) are reviewed as part of routine governance reporting.
- Education setting Locality cluster governance and performance tracking arrangements will enable setting collectives to evaluate their performance and the impact of the EaH offer and undertake an active role in the partnership in holding itself and other partners to account.

Performance and data systems

- Progress is tracked through a shared multi-agency SEND dashboard integrating education, health, and care data, aligned to DfE KPIs and quarterly data returns (Data Annex: KPI baseline, trajectory, and benchmarking tables).
- Linked datasets and benchmarking against national and statistical neighbours enable real-time monitoring of system performance and outcomes.

Programme and delivery management

- Delivery is managed through a single integrated improvement plan, with highlight reporting, risk registers and action logs providing systematic oversight of progress and barriers (Finance Annex: savings assumptions; workforce investment profile).

- Monitoring prioritises Year 1 success measures to enable timely intervention where delivery is off-track.

Quality assurance and lived experience

- Quality assurance will include audit, case tracking and thematic review, alongside structured feedback from children, young people, and families as "experts by experience."
- Lived experience evidence is used alongside quantitative data to assess system impact and inform continuous improvement.

Health performance and escalation

- Health waiting times (including >52 and >104 weeks) are routinely monitored and reported (Data Annex: health pathway performance tables).
- Clear escalation routes ensure timely resolution of delivery risks, supported by "waiting well" interventions where delays persist.
- Quarterly review of the waiting well offers, including, uptake, outcomes and impact. This will include reviewing the suitability of the offer, the effectiveness, if this is in line with most up to date evidence informed practice, the impact, including if children's needs are met without the need for assessment or intervention and those using the offer to ensure awareness of this as part of the universal local offer.
- The quarterly review will inform the continued development and design of the Experts at Hand offer

.

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.

Use of performance data to inform decision-making

- Performance data and stakeholder feedback are reviewed through partnership governance (SILAP and SEND Executive Board) and used to adjust delivery priorities and sequencing, reallocate resources, inform commissioning decisions, and update the Reform Plan annually.

Integration of data, finance, and system intelligence

- A comprehensive framework triangulates KPI performance (Data Annex: baseline, trajectory, and benchmarking tables) with financial monitoring of demand and high-cost provision (Finance Annex: cost pressures and investment assumptions), ensuring decisions are evidence-based and aligned to system sustainability.

Structured stakeholder feedback mechanisms

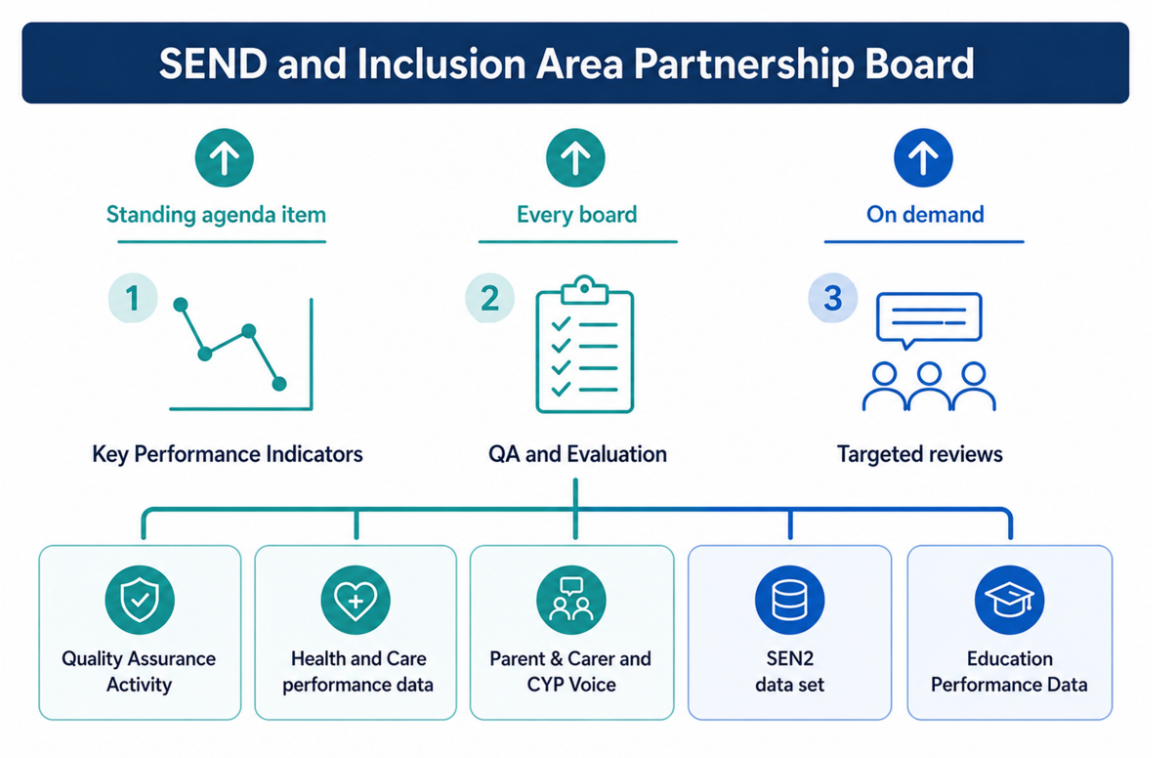
- Feedback is systematically gathered through the Annual Parent Carer Survey, children, and young people's engagement activity, Voluntary and community sector and SENDIASS thematic insight, education provider surveys and "You Said, We Did" reporting.
- These mechanisms ensure that children, young people, and families, as experts by experience, directly influence priorities, service design, and system response.

Quality assurance, evaluation, and targeted review

- Cyclical quality assurance, audit, case tracking, and targeted reviews assess delivery impact across key workstreams, including inclusion bases and Experts at Hand (Data Annex: SEN2, health and education performance datasets).

System-wide feedback, adaptation, and continuous improvement

- Engagement with education settings and locality clusters will be strengthened to ensure consistent feedback on delivery impact and inclusion practice.
- The partnership will adapt delivery in response to local intelligence, lived experience, and national feedback (DfE and RIIA), ensuring a responsive, outcomes-focused, and continuously improving system.



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.

INSERT DOCUMENT UPLOAD LINK

Section 4 – Governance

13. **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.

Gloucestershire Local Area SEND and AP Partnership Board role and status:

Gloucestershire's SEND and Inclusion Local Area Partnership (SILAP) Board fulfils the role of the local SEND and AP Partnership Board. It brings together statutory partners across education, health and care to set system priorities, oversee delivery of SEND and AP reforms, and draw conclusions from strategic planning and commissioning discussions.

The SEND and AP Partnership Board operate beneath the Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board within the local governance structure, with defined reporting and escalation routes to ensure alignment with wider place-based strategies for children and young people.

It should be noted that in Gloucestershire, overall accountability for delivery of the Local SEND Reform Plan sits with the named Senior Responsible Officer (SRO), Ann James, Exec Director of Children's Services, who is accountable for progress, outcomes and effective use of funding across education and health partners, and reports formally through the SEND Executive Board.

Operating expectations of the SEND and AP Partnership Board (SILAP):

The Partnership Board:

- Is jointly chaired by senior leaders reflecting statutory accountability;
- Meets at least six times per year, with additional sessions scheduled where delivery requires;
- Operates flexibly to ensure accessibility for all partners, including hybrid meeting arrangements;

- Allows nominated deputies to attend where required to maintain continuity and decision-making; and
- Ensures sufficient agenda time to enable meaningful strategic discussion and challenge.

Co-production with parent carers and children and young people remains central to how the Board operates and will continue to evolve as part of the partnership's maturity journey. Governance arrangements will ensure that experts by experience are represented within decision-making forums, including defined roles for the Parent Carer Forum and children and young people's representatives and the voluntary and community sector representative within the Local Area Partnership Board and associated governance structures. Clear mechanisms will enable experts by experience to raise concerns, provide challenge, and contribute to escalation processes, propose and be part of the solution ensuring transparency and responsiveness across the system.

Education and training representation

Gloucestershire has adopted a representative model for education and training involvement, bringing together early years, mainstream schools, special schools, post-16 and alternative provision through a combination of headteacher associations, sector representatives, and Schools Forum leadership.

Education representation is structured to ensure coverage across early years, mainstream (primary/secondary), special, FE/training, and alternative provision, with defined routes to capture views from providers attended by Gloucestershire CYP that are located out of area. Representatives are accountable for reflecting sector wide views back into Board discussions.

This approach ensures that education provider perspectives inform strategic planning and commissioning across the full 0–25 system, including provision located outside the local authority area. Clear feedback loops are in place to ensure representatives reflect the views of their sectors rather than individual institutions.

Children and young people's strategic involvement

While children and young people do not routinely attend Partnership Board meetings, the local area has established and is strengthening formal mechanisms to ensure their lived experience informs strategic planning and commissioning decisions.

During Year 1 of the Reform Plan, these mechanisms will be consolidated to ensure that children and young people's views are systematically gathered, analysed, and presented to the SEND and AP Partnership Board, with clear feedback provided on how their input has influenced decisions.

Governance Mechanism *This may be a governance group, or an individual (e.g. SRO).*	**Purpose/ Responsibilities** *What is the function of this governance mechanism? What are they accountable for overseeing? What information is reported to this governance mechanism?*	**Membership** *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).*	**Cadence** *How regularly does this governance mechanism meet?*	**Decision Rights** *What decisions can this governance mechanism make?*	**Escalation Route** *Where can this governance mechanism escalate issues or decision to?*
Health and Wellbeing Board	System-wide oversight of health and wellbeing priorities for the local area, including strategic alignment with SEND and AP reforms. Receives periodic reporting on SEND/AP reform progress and risks to ensure alignment with wider place-based priorities.	Statutory Health and Wellbeing Board membership	HWB meets quarterly	Strategic oversight; endorsement of system alignment and escalation of cross-system barriers.	Top-tier system board
SEND Executive Board	• To oversee the continuous improvement of the SEND system such that it delivers effectively for children and young people with SEND including the delivery and functioning of the multiagency SILAP Board. • To ensure that Local Area SEND inspection	• CEO Gloucestershire County Council • CEO of BNSSGG ICB • Executive Director Children's Services - LA SEND SRO • LA Section 151 Officer • Chair of Directors of Gloucestershire Parent-Carer Forum • GCC Director of Education • ICB SEND SRO	Bi-monthly	**Decision making** authorisation of the SEND and Inclusion Local Area Improvement Plan as devised and recommended by the SILAP Board. The specific focus on the actions that address the Ofsted-CQC SEND inspection recommendations and the SEND Reform Implementation Plan with the	Health and Wellbeing Board - periodic reporting to the Health and Wellbeing Board for system alignment.

	recommendations are responded to effectively and that relevant improvement plans are implemented in a timely way. • To oversee performance and quality improvements, taking a collegiate and problem-solving approach to complex challenges, system shocks, and changes. • To consider any additional remedial action and/or resourcing requirements that will drive improvement for children and young people with SEND. • To oversee the national SEND reforms ensuring local policy, strategy, and system alignment. • Financial oversight is assured through regular reporting from finance leads and Schools Forum/High Needs governance into SILAP and the SEND Executive Board, with Section 151 officer as a member.			impact of Decisions and actions closely monitored. **Progress and risk** – receiving progress reports against targets for the delivery of planned improvements to the quality and performance of the SEND system, as well as to any new or emerging risks to the achievement of that improvement. This will include financial information and value for money analysis on the part of all partners. **Innovation** – encouraging and endorsing evidence-informed innovative practice that delivers efficient and effective solutions for the families of Gloucestershire. **Influencing change** - leading business and cultural change through respective organisations and reporting on progress made. **Communication** – ensuring that there are clear and effective communications strategy and plans to share progress, emerging trends and new developments with families and key stakeholders. **Evaluation and impact** – ensuring that there is an	

				effective evaluation framework in place to monitor the quantitative and qualitive impacts of local development work.	
SEND & AP Partnership Board: **SEND and Inclusion Local Area Strategic Partnership Board (SILAP)**	SILAP fulfils the role of Gloucestershire's SEND and AP Partnership Board, convening statutory partners to set priorities, oversee delivery and draw conclusions from strategic discussions. The purpose of the board is to oversee and the guide the delivery and improvement of Inclusion, SEND and Alternative Provision services across Gloucestershire. To do this the board will ensure: That local decision-making, regarding changes and developments to the local system, are focussed on impact, asking the questions: • What difference is this making for • children and young people and • their families? • How do we know?	**GCC Director of Education (Education SEND SRO) – Co-chair of SILAP Board** **ICB SEND SRO - Co-chair of SILAP Board** **Attendees:** • Director of Education, • ICB Senior Responsible Officer for SEND - Associate Director – Children, Young People and Maternity, • Project Manager, • Head of SEND, • Assistant Director, Education, • Director of Commissioning & Partnerships, • Designated Social Care Officer (or nominated equivalent) and Designated Medical/Clinical Officer roles are represented to ensure statutory responsibilities are fulfilled • Principal Educational Psychologist, • Early Years' Head of Service, • Head of the Virtual School, • Public Engagement Officer, Young People,	Bi-monthly	**Decision making -** signing off proposals and making key decisions that will drive improvement in the local inclusion and SEND offer. The expectation is that decisions of the partnership will be agreed through consensus. **Progress and risk-** Provide constructive support and challenge to the local area partnership through monitoring and managing by exception and risk the implementation of the Inclusion and SEND strategies, the Local Area Improvement plan, and SEND Reform Implementation Plan. **Innovation** – encouraging and driving evidence-informed innovative practice that delivers efficient and effective solutions for the families of Gloucestershire.	SEND Executive Board

	• How will this provide better value • For money or support a more • sustainable local system? The effective implementation of the Inclusion and SEND strategies and the Schools White paper reforms. Ensure that local delivery plans align with new and developing national policy. Effective, multiagency leadership of the SEND local area partnership is in line with the LGA Framework LGA-SEND Multiagency Leadership Framework That any risks identified as part of the SEND & Inclusion improvement plan are appropriately resourced and mitigated. Improvement to the equality of access to provision for all children and young people in Gloucestershire. Partnership influence - Partnership	• Head of Integrated Commissioning for Adult Mental Health, Advocacy & Autism, • Head of Integrated Commissioning – Learning & Physical Disabilities, • Head of Service, Disabled Children and Young People, • Head of Adult Social Care Operations, • Public Health Consultant, Maternity Children and Young People, • Head of Early Help, • CYPS Service Director, • Designated Medical Officer, • Gloucestershire Parent Carer Forum Director, • SENDIASS Service Manager, • Active Impact – VCS Representative, • Strategic Lead for Inclusive Employment, • Head of Service - Community and Youth Justice, • Head Teacher HT Association Representative (Primary), • Head Teacher HT Association Representative (Secondary),		**Influencing change** - driving business and cultural change through respective organisations and reporting on progress made, and escalating issues to their respective organisation/ governance arrangements and the board **Communication** – ensuring that there are a clear and effective communications strategy and plans to share progress, emerging trends and new developments with families and key stakeholders. **Evaluation and impact** – ensuring that there is an effective evaluation framework in place to monitor the quantitative and qualitive impacts of local development work. The SEND and AP Partnership Board receives routine reporting on health waiting times relevant to children and young people with SEND. This includes NHS Referral to Treatment data, Community Health Services waiting times and	

	oversight of the development of systems and processes which will improve the delivery of and engagement with SEND and Inclusion services. Children and young people's participation is embedded through defined engagement routes, with insights formally reported into SILAP to influence strategic planning, commissioning, and evaluation. **Operating expectations:** Meetings are held in accessible formats (including hybrid options) and scheduled to maximise partner attendance; agenda time is sufficient to address all items. Partners may nominate an appropriately briefed deputy to maintain continuity of decision-making and oversight.	• Hear Teacher HT Association (Special School), • Childminder, Early Years representative, • Director of Student Employment and Experience - Gloscol, • Strategic Communications Business Partner, • Finance Business Manager, • ICT, • Legal Services, • Strategic Intelligence Manager		children and young people's mental health datasets, supported by qualitative insight into lived experience while children and families wait for support. This information is used to provide system challenge, agree mitigating actions, and monitor impact through agreed governance and escalation routes, ensuring health waiting times are treated as a shared system responsibility rather than a health-only issue.	
ICB SEND Board	The purpose of this Board is to lead on the overall vision and strategy of SEND within health services in	• ICB Executive Lead for SEND • ICB Senior Responsible Officer for SEND	Six-weekly	This Board makes decisions on matters relating to health services that impact on SEND and sign off any	Through to the ICB Executive Group and SILAP as appropriate

	Gloucestershire and to oversee key expectations and improvements. The group is responsible for key decision making and direction which feeds into the workstreams beneath it and wider SEND governance in the county. The SEND Programme Board also: • Agrees Terms of Reference for workstreams • Has oversight of workstreams • Has oversight of programme risks and issues **ICS Vision** Improved health and wellbeing through joined up care and communities	• ICB Associate Director Children and Young People • ICB Senior Commissioning Manager, Children and Families • ICB Designated Clinical Officer for SEND • Service Director for Children's Services, Gloucestershire Health, and Care Trust • Designated Medical Officer for SEND, Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust		relevant returns e.g. Quality Assurance Framework and SEF and assurance around inspection preparation.	
SEND and AP Programme Managers Group	**Decision making -** signing off proposals and making key decisions that will drive improvement in the local inclusion and SEND offer. The expectation Is that decisions of the partnership will be agreed through consensus.	• LA Assistant Director – Education – Co Chair • Associate Director – Children's and Maternity – ICB – Co-chair • Head of SEND • SEND Programme Manager, • Senior Project Manager • Head of Early Years • Education Post 16 Lead	Bi-monthly Pre and post SILAP Board meetings – to drive actions agreed at board and to provide reporting of actions and	The Group is accountable to the bi-monthly SEND and Inclusion Local Area Partnership (SILAP) Board. Via its membership, the Group reports into partner agency own governance structures as appropriate. This is a delivery group making decisions about	SILAP Strategic Board

	Progress and risk- Provide constructive support and challenge to the local area partnership through monitoring and managing by exception and risk the implementation of the Inclusion and SEND strategies, the Local Area Improvement plan, and the SEND Reform Implementation Plan. **Innovation** – encouraging and driving evidence-informed innovative practice that delivers efficient and effective solutions for the families of Gloucestershire. **Influencing change** - driving business and cultural change through respective organisations and reporting on progress made, and escalating issues to their respective organisation/ governance arrangements and the board **Communication** – ensuring that there are a clear and effective communications strategy and plans to share progress, emerging trends and new developments with	• Strategic Lead for Education Inclusion • Quality and Engagement Manager • Inclusion Strategy & Relationship Manager • Locality Inclusion Lead • Head of Service DCYPS • Head of Service Early Help and Targeted Support • Public Health Commissiong • EHCP Service Lead • SEND Quality Assurance Lead • Specialist Commissioning Lead	impact back into the board.	operational matters linked to specific workstream delivery and delivering actions set by SILAP.	

	families and key stakeholders. **Evaluation and impact** – ensuring that there is an effective evaluation framework in place to monitor the quantitative and qualitive impacts of local development work.				
Schools Forum	The purpose of Schools Forum is a consultative forum with some decision-making powers. The Schools Forum considers a range of areas including: • De- delegation from mainstream budgets • Creation of funds for significant pupil growth • Agreeing centrally retained budgets • Funding for central early years expenditure • Authorising a reduction in the schools' budget to fund a deficit arising in schools' expenditure • Amendment to the schools' funding formula • Arrangements for the education of pupils regarding places to be	Schools' Forum membership consists of: • Headteachers and Governors from LA maintained and Academies (primary, secondary, and special). • Representatives from Early Years Providers • College/Further Education Leaders • Parent carer representation • Local Authority Lead Officers • Lead Cabinet Members High Needs working membership varies depending on the area of focus.	Schools' Forum usually meets 4 times a year with the High Needs working group meeting regularly and as need to progress the DSG management plan.	Schools' Forum is largely consultative with information sharing on relevant funding considerations and recommendations from SILAP.	Schools Forum is a statutory consultative forum and provides input on funding and high needs matters. Key issues and recommendations are routinely fed into SILAP and the SEND Executive Board to ensure alignment between reform delivery and funding decisions.

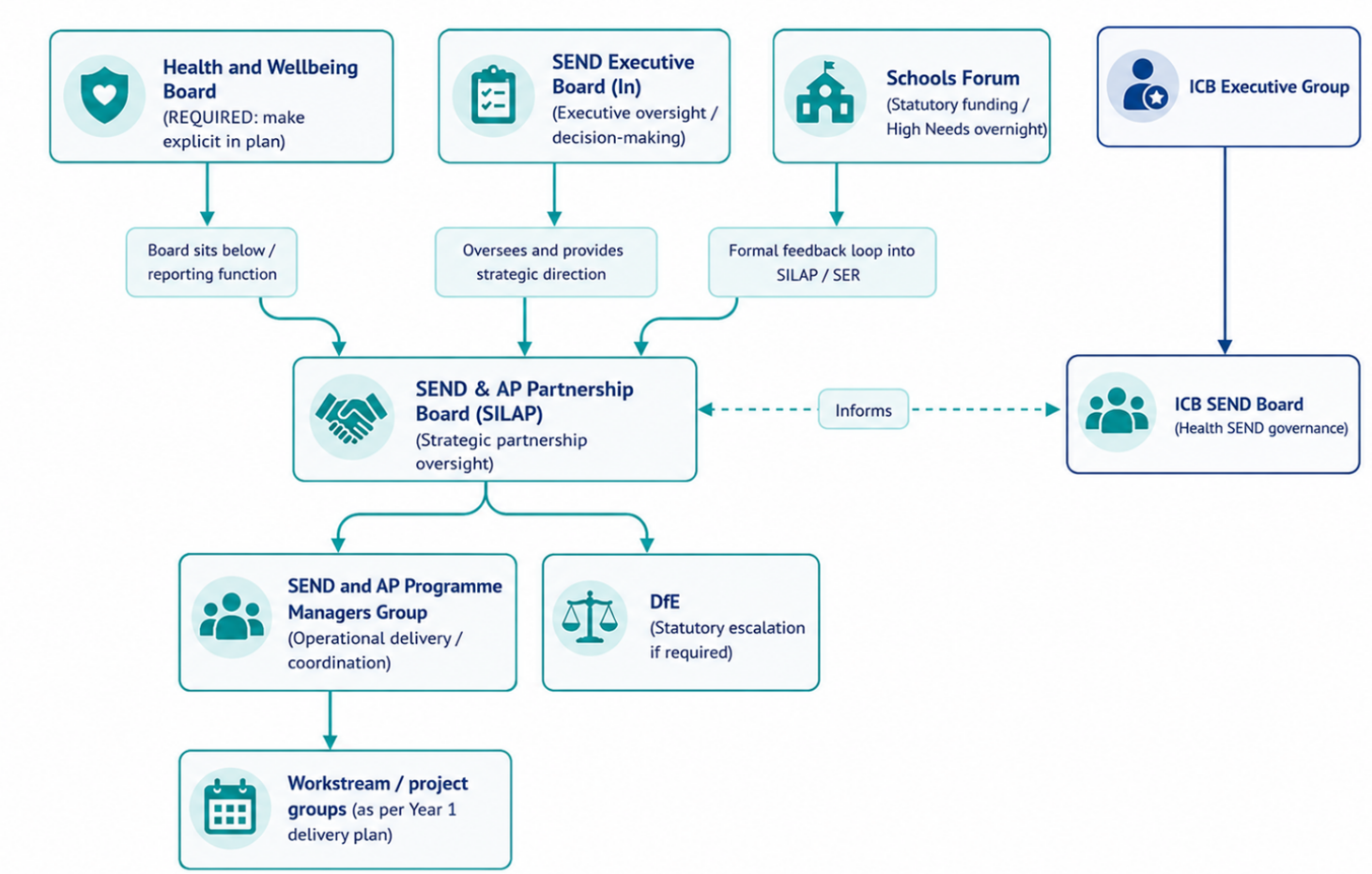
	commissioned by the Local Authority and arrangement of top up funding • Arrangements for pupil referral units and education other than at school, • Arrangements for early years provision and allocation of central government grants for schools.				

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

INSERT DOCUMENT UPLOAD LINK

Gloucestershire's SEND and AP reform delivery is overseen through a tiered governance structure. The SEND and AP Partnership Board (SILAP) convenes statutory partners to set priorities, oversee delivery and draw conclusions from strategic discussions, with escalation to the SEND Executive Board for executive decision-making. The partnership board sits below and reports into the Health and Wellbeing Board for system alignment. Operational delivery is coordinated through the SEND and AP Programme Managers Group and associated workstreams. Health SEND governance is led through the ICB SEND Board, with linkage into partnership governance. Education funding and high needs oversight is supported through Schools Forum, with established feedback routes into the partnership governance structure.

Children and young people's views will be systematically captured through the more formal establishment of participation mechanisms, with formal reporting into the SEND and AP Partnership Board to ensure their experience informs strategic planning and commissioning decisions.


Health and Wellbeing Board
(REQUIRED: make explicit in plan)
SEND Executive Board (In)
(Executive oversight / decision-making)
Schools Forum
(Statutory funding / High Needs overnight)
ICB Executive Group
Board sits below / reporting function
Oversees and provides strategic direction
Formal feedback loop into SILAP / SER
SEND & AP Partnership Board (SILAP)
(Strategic partnership oversight)
Informs
ICB SEND Board
(Health SEND governance)
SEND and AP Programme Managers Group
(Operational delivery / coordination)
DfE
(Statutory escalation if required)
Workstream / project groups (as per Year 1 delivery plan)

Section 5 – Central Government Support

14. **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

National policy and funding reform

- A comprehensive review of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and National Funding Formula is required to address structural inequities in funding distribution and ensure resources are aligned to need.
- Gloucestershire is currently the 26th least well-funded authority per mainstream pupil, creating sustained financial pressure on inclusive delivery.
- National reform is essential to ensure that investment in mainstream inclusion is both sufficient and reaches settings supporting the most complex cohorts.

Workforce capacity and system resilience

- Delivery of inclusive reform is contingent on a sustainable workforce; a clear, funded national strategy is required to address systemic recruitment and retention challenges within the teaching workforce.

- Increased national investment in specialist workforce pipelines, including Educational Psychologists and therapists, is critical to ensure system capacity meets rising demand.

National implementation clarity and consistency

- Timely and detailed national guidance is required to support consistent implementation of core reform components, including Experts at Hand, National Inclusion Standards, Inclusion Bases, Individual Support Plans and Specialist Packages.
- Clear national expectations for data collection, reporting and evaluation are essential to enable robust assurance and comparability across local areas.

System infrastructure and quality assurance

- National support is required to establish peer-to-peer quality assurance models for mainstream inclusion bases, strengthening consistency, scalability, and sector-led improvement.

Funding certainty and delivery capacity

- A flexible, multi-year Experts at Hand funding settlement is essential to enable effective workforce planning, system transformation, and delivery of value for money at scale.

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**					