

# Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) JSNA

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## Short Summary

Led by Cheshire East Council, the NHS and our volunteer communities



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## What is a JSNA review?

JSNA stands for Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

- A JSNA review is a review of a topic area relating to health and wellbeing, which helps us
  - **Understand an issue in more detail**
  - **Plan the services that are provided and the way organisations and wider communities can work together in the longer term.**
- New and more up to date information will continue to become available regarding our children and young people with SEND, and the numbers supported, which the system will need to remain alert to.
- However, this review provides an important, more detailed and comprehensive summary of the experience of SEND across Cheshire East from 2022 to October 2024, using a wide variety of data sources, helping us to build a shared understanding.
- The findings of the review have been summarised into this shorter summary and a more detailed full report, which can also be located on the JSNA website.

# What is SEND?

“Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can affect a child or young person’s ability to learn”<sup>1</sup>. This may include their<sup>1</sup>:

- “Behaviour or ability to socialise, for example struggling to make friends”
- “Reading and writing, for example because they have dyslexia”
- “Ability to understand things”
- “Concentration levels, for example because they have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)”
- “Physical ability”

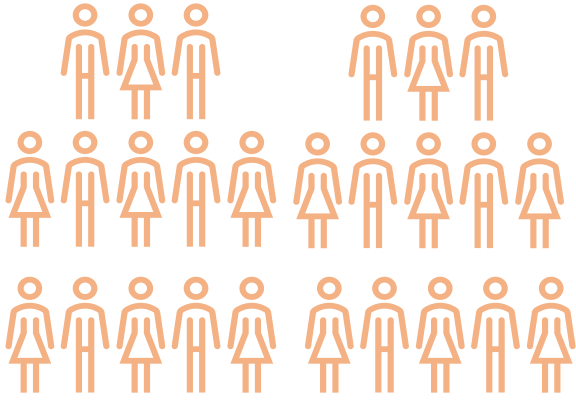
Healthy problem solving and emotional regulation skills, school readiness, good communication skills, healthy social relationships and a sense of belonging are all important factors in promoting good health and wellbeing throughout life.

**Optimising outcomes, independence and support for our children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability is a core priority for the Health and Wellbeing Board, Cheshire East Council, the NHS and our community organisations.**



1. Gov.UK Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs> (Accessed 9 May 2023).

This review was produced through the Special Educational Needs JSNA Working Group. The working group contributed to the development of the scope; analysis; and narrative development. In addition to this a range of stakeholders also contributed through providing insights and information.



Approximately **71**  
people contributed to  
the SEND JSNA.



Approximately **37** of  
these people were  
members of the working  
group\*.

\*Numerous individuals have been involved the SEND working group conversation at varying points of the JSNA process, which is why an approximate number is given.

Within this JSNA we have included feedback from the:

- Speech and Language Therapy pilot
- SEND Partnership Survey 2023 (123 staff, 63 educational settings, 54 young people and 234 parent carers responded).
- Cheshire East SEND Toolkit for Inclusion consultation (33 responses)
- SEND related complaints and compliments
- Healthy Young Minds recommission engagement.
- Delivering Better Value work (over 90 providers and 160 parent/carers responded)
- SEND Health Provider Survey (103 responses)
- We have had conversations with paediatricians which we plan to continue.
- Cheshire and Wirral Partnership Waiting List Pilot
- Cheshire East Parent Carer Forum (CEPCF) survey (117 responses)
- Parent Carer Forum member priorities
- Insights from the Parent Perspective Training
- A local family's experience of living with severe disability
- Feedback from young people who attend both the Macclesfield and Crewe Jigsaw groups

What is the take home message from this review?

**All children and young people have strengths, and all can and do achieve.**

- **This review outlines the need for a fundamental shift in culture.**
- **Inclusion is everyone's business** and SEND affects a significant proportion of the population.
- There are many dedicated and passionate people working to support our children and young people with SEND across Cheshire East place, including their families and people working in many different organisations.
  - There is also evidence of the positive impacts that they have had.
  - We need to further galvanise this and continue to work more closely together.



- We need to support our **families holistically**- for every interaction we need to think: physical, emotional, educational and social wellbeing, and recognise achievements and successes in relation to all of these aspects of life.
- We need an approach that is **person-focused and strength-based** rather than problem-focused.
- **We need a whole community approach to SEND and inclusion that empowers our children and young people and families to**
  - **Connect** with support at the earliest opportunity and as part of inclusive wider community life
  - **Recognise achievements and success**
  - **Recognise they are not alone but part of a community of experts by experience**, and seek resilience within this, and the wider community.



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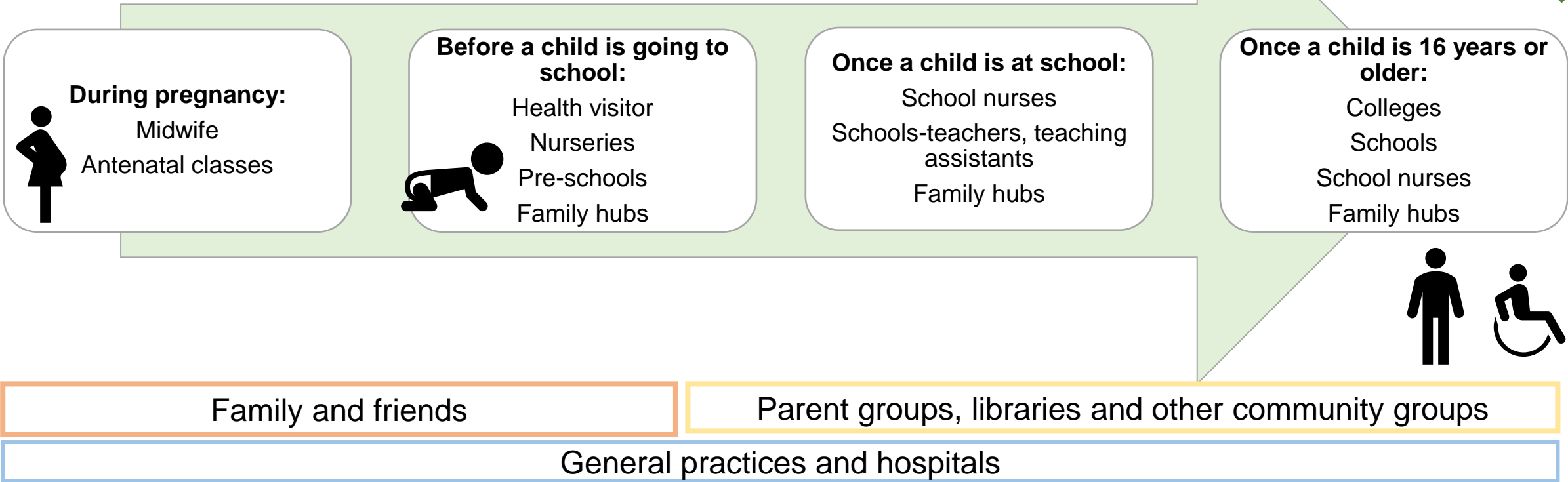


How are we supporting our children and young people with confirmed or possible SEND?

**All children have strengths and can achieve.**

**Everyone is different and all children develop in different ways and have different strengths.**

There is lots of support that all children and families receive routinely from a wide range of professionals:



These professionals can also refer on to a wide range of extra support. Families can ask them for advice about whether extra support is needed, or they might suggest it after one of the routine checks, like the 6-8 week and 12-month baby checks, the toddler check at 2 years old, or once a child reaches reception.



# What support is currently available to support children with possible or confirmed SEND and their families?

There are lots of different sources of support but it can be hard to understand what is there and what you need at what point.

Staff in nurseries, schools and colleges, including Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinators (SENCOs)

The health visitor and school nursing service (0-19 service)

The Toolkit for Inclusion

Physical and mental health and wellbeing advice and services

Family hubs

NHS therapies including for, example, speech and language, physiotherapy and occupational therapy

Cheshire East Council Education Services including: the Educational Psychology Service, Cheshire East Autism Team and Sensory Inclusion Service

NHS services to explore possible diagnoses leading to the SEND challenges experienced

The SEND Cheshire East Special Educational Needs and Disability Statutory Assessment Service

Cheshire East Information and Advice Service

Cheshire East Parent Carer Forum

Advocacy or someone to speak on the behalf of children or their families

Children and adults (18-25 years) early help and social care services

A wide range of services and sources of information that more specifically relate to specific challenges in education, health and wellbeing or care that can be found on the Local Offer website

**Cheshire East SEND Local Offer  
available at**

[www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/localoffer)

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Nearly every school will teach children with additional needs.

Many schools will teach many children with additional needs and are used to making reasonable adjustments

- All schools have a special educational needs coordinator (a SENCO).
- Not all children need formal SEND support.
- Some of the **reasonable adjustments** that schools should be able to make as part of **ordinarily available inclusive provision** are shown below.
- Detailed information on reasonable adjustments is included within the Cheshire East Toolkit for Inclusion<sup>1</sup>. Some examples of these include:

Classroom position-e.g.  
front or rear of classroom  
according to need

Allow touch typing,  
dictation, scribe, assistive  
technology instead of  
handwriting

Allow use of ear  
defenders/ headphones to  
minimise  
distraction

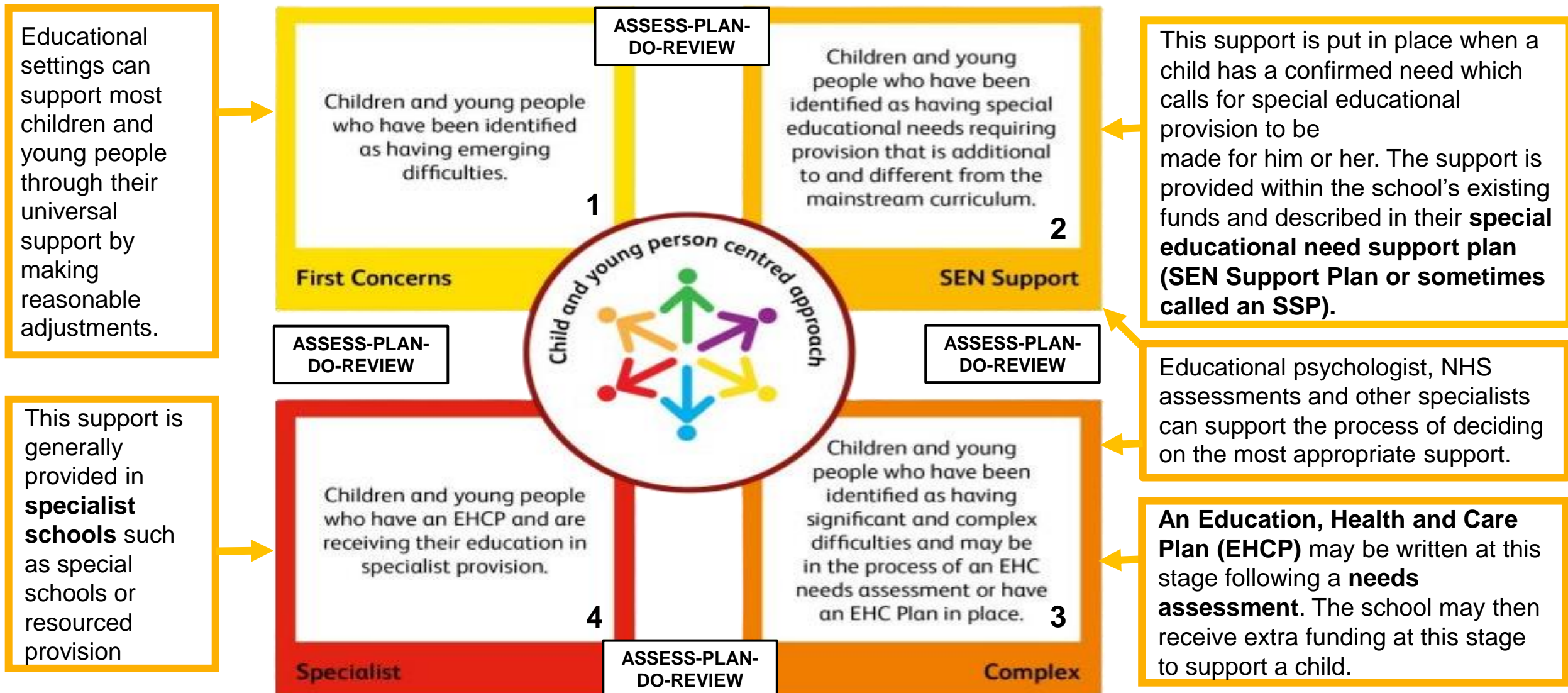
Provision of sensory  
resources e.g fidget toy,  
wobble cushion,  
TheraBand, chewing gum

The addition of a ramp to  
ensure accessibility

Access to classrooms on  
the ground floor if in a  
wheelchair and no lift is  
available

Allowing a pupil to wear a  
different item of uniform, different  
material or not to wear a certain  
item of uniform at all

# Children and young people with possible or confirmed SEND are supported to access education using a graduated approach, which is described below

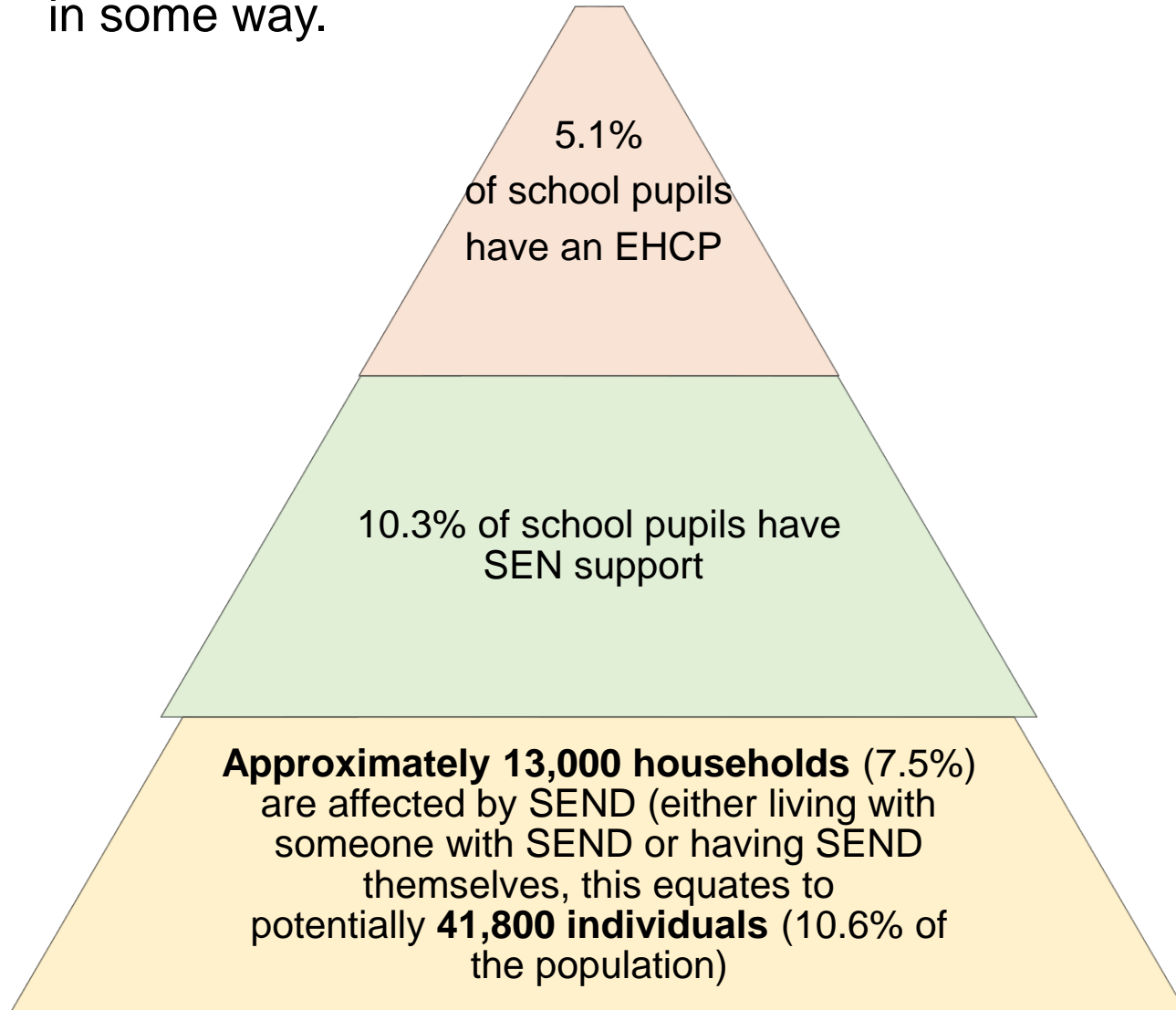


What are the experiences of our children and young people with SEND and their families?



## Who experiences SEND across Cheshire East? (1 of 2)

Many Cheshire East residents are affected by Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in some way.



SEND issues are not just relevant to a small number of our residents.



It is important to understand the experiences of our children and families affected by SEND.



There are potentially 41,800 Cheshire East individuals that are affected by SEND in some way. Whether that be that they are living with someone with SEND or have SEND themselves.



The number of individuals affected would be even greater when considering close family and friends not living with children and young people with SEND but actively involved in supporting them. The number is greater still when considering children no longer in school and aged up to 25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).



# What trends are we seeing in who experiences SEND or possible SEND across Cheshire East?



- Generally, Cheshire East performs well in relation to uptake of routine health visitor baby and toddler checks. In addition, there is evidence nationally that COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on development for some children and young people, so attending the routine checks, to obtain early advice and support, is even more important in recent years.



- Positively, more children aged 2-2.5 years achieved a good level of development in Cheshire East compared to the England average.



- However, rates of achieving a good level of development at reception age in our children and young people eligible for free school meals is much lower than those not eligible. Crewe sees the lowest percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development.



- A higher percentage of children and young people have an EHCP in Cheshire East compared to the England average and numbers are increasing. However, there are a lower number of children and young people with SEN support plans than the England average rate.

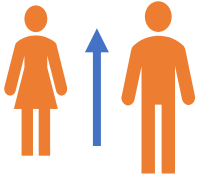


- The commonest primary support reasons needing EHCPs are: social emotional and mental health, speech language and communication need and autism.



- It is very difficult to predict the likely numbers of EHCPs that will be required in the future.

# Across Cheshire East, where do communities or populations experience SEND more often?



- There are more males than females with both Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and SEN support plans in Cheshire East.
- Those children and young people aged 5-19 consistently account for over 90% of EHCPs and 95% of SEN support in Cheshire East. Children and young people aged 20 and over make up less than 3% of the EHCPs. Some children with EHCPs go on to university or employment at which point the EHCP ceases. However, in some cases, it may be that some children don't go on to access further education. Currently there is not a systematic approach to capturing and understanding these outcomes in our post 20 population.



- A higher proportion of white British pupils have an EHCP (5%) compared to pupils of any other ethnicity (3%). There are also lower proportions of pupils with EHCPs where English is an additional language than the national average (2.5% compared to 3.5%).



- A higher percentage of our children with SEND are eligible for free school meals when compared to our children without SEND.
- As at July 2023, the highest proportions of residents with EHCPs were seen in Crewe (1.4%), Congleton (1.3%) and Macclesfield (1.2%) care communities (as a % of the total population in July 2023).



- National evidence shows that there are significant differences in SEND by sexuality. There is evidence to suggest that LGBTQ people with a learning disability face 'double discrimination' because of their sexuality or gender, as a result some LGBTQ people with a learning disability may hide their sexuality to avoid discrimination.
- SEND appears more frequent amongst our children and young people open to early help or children's social care. During January 2024-April 2024, approximately 14% of children and young adults (18 and under) with an EHCP were open to either Childrens Social Care, or Early Help.

What are some of the challenges that children and young people with SEND experience? (1 of 2)

**All of our children and young people with SEND can and do achieve, and have many strengths.**

However, across Cheshire East place, we do not yet have a good system for capturing and celebrating achievements and successes in our children and young people with SEND, or acknowledging that they overcome many challenges on a regular basis. The system of support tends to focus in on where things do not go to plan.



Significant numbers of the children and young people who are presenting to our Emotionally Healthy Children and Young People support (now known as the Healthy Young Minds service) have SEND or a pending diagnosis relating to SEND.

Local data suggests that children and young people with SEND appear to be at higher risk of presenting to hospitals with self-harm.



Nearly one in 20 children with an Education, Health and Care Plan have had a suspension.



Nationally, families of children and young people with more severe learning disabilities have reported experiencing challenges in receiving joined up care and inclusive support from healthcare. Similar experiences were fed back to us from a local resident.



## What are some of the challenges that children and young people with SEND experience? (2 of 2)



Sometimes, our children and young people with SEND are educated in alternative provision settings. During 2022/23 there were 26 pupils with SEND attending alternative provision. Of these, half (13) had an EHCP, this is a large increase compared to previous years.



Unmet SEND and neurodiversity needs have been highlighted as significant issues in young people engaged with the Cheshire Youth Justice Service



NHS services that support in assessing for Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder, Autism, and other concerns with child development vary across Cheshire East, in terms of waiting times and what support is available to whom.



There are challenges in terms of availability of appropriate settings for some children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans.

## Feedback from young people in our JIGSAW youth group highlight many joys but also worries\*

### What do we like about life?

- Football
- Social media: funny videos; a world to connect to; stop isolation
- Being with family and friends, youth groups, Cheshire East Youth Council and Jigsaw SEND Youth forum
- Healthy living
- Holidays
- Education-learning new things/skills
- Art-painting for mindfulness and mental health and rug making
- Singing, music and dancing
- Gyms open 24 hours a day
- Like staff at college
- Animals/pets
- YouTube
- Video games
- Watching musicals
- Food and cooking
- Listening to audio books
- Utopia
- Films
- Shopping
- Architecture



### What don't we like/worries us?

- Social media-bullying, harassment
- Not enough shops
- Cost of living/ paying bills
- My football team going down a league
- Not enough nature
- Discrimination-race, sexuality etc.
- Poor mental health services
- Finding jobs and not getting jobs-frustrating
- Long waiting lists to get NHS support
- Difficulties speaking to a GP straight away
- Things being uncertain
- War
- Thinking extensively
- College/school
- Home
- The future and having security
- Covid coming back and having to go into another lock down – becoming isolated from friends and family
- Losing friends
- Losing family members



\* Jigsaw is group for young people aged between 13-25 with Special, Educational Needs and Disabilities.  
Discussion with young people at the Jigsaw Group, aged 19-24 in Crewe. 16 November 2023  
Discussion with young people at Jigsaw Group in Macclesfield feedback received by email (Participation worker 26/03/24)

# Feedback from young people in our JIGSAW youth group highlight some things they look forward to and also some worries about the future\*

## What do we want to do in the future?

- Holding down a job/ getting a good job
- Having my own house/flat if I feel ready
- Travel- seeing the world
- Being an uncle
- Families of our own- husbands, wives, kids
- Being happier than I am now
- Becoming a youth worker
- Becoming a voice actor
- Being happier with my inner conflicts
- Being a judge on a talent show
- Being famous
- Being my own boss- running my own company
- Getting married
- Living on my own
- Working in a nursery
- Being independent
- Going out socially- pubs etc
- Learning to drive



## What are we worried about in the future?

- Not being able to get the right mental health support/ not enough mental health support
- Not having support when I turn 25 years old
- Cost of living-buying a house/ not being able to buy a house
- Living alone and moving out of family support-would I have the right support
- We need more preparing for adulthood days
- Getting old-can't walk properly, becoming ill/injured
- What will happen to the NHS if it continues to be underfunded
- People I am close with leaving my life
- That I won't be able to stay in a good mental place
- Having financial problems
- What if someone in my family gets ill
- Not having the right support
- Not being able to find a job
- Change
- Being bullied
- Losing friends/family members to death
- My mental health not getting better



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Discussion with young people at the Jigsaw Group, aged 19-24 in Crewe. 16 November 2023

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## Parent carers have spoken about a wide variety of challenges they face when trying to support their children and young people with SEND

Feeling emotional, lonely / isolated, stressed and permanently in state of 'fight or flight', frustrated, scared, exhausted, desperate or grieving

Settings not having reviewed the graduated approach or communicating regarding the graduated approach

Challenges in ensuring the curriculum is sufficiently adapted for their child's needs and with support sensory issues

Survey results suggest many parent carers see positive impacts of new Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) once in place, with fewer responses suggesting that the EHCP does not meet the needs of their child/young person/pupil, but frustrations were expressed around the time it takes to get and issues and uncertainty about the process and information available to them at this time

A need for more provision or clarity of provision stated within the EHCP. However, a recent survey highlighted that 65% of parent carers responding felt EHCP provision would improve outcomes or progress

Spinning too many plates and being a nurse, parent, psychiatrist, advocate-having many roles, no training

Dealing with their own additional needs

Challenges getting the right help and support from healthcare services.

Challenges getting the right help and support to prepare them for their next steps.

Challenges getting the right help and support to join clubs, activities, to go on holiday or to make friends.

## Parent carers have highlighted the following communication and information sharing needs

Proactive communication and more timely support

For them and their child or young person to be listened to evidence that they have been listened to and that their concerns have been acted upon

Key workers to be accessible

Clarity of processes

Communication about mental health

Support and advice from local authority services

Support navigating the SEND system

Recommendations regarding educational settings

Improved routes to reach relevant teams

More helpful information on the Local Offer website with improved ability to navigate it

# Parent carers also report the wide variety of strengths and assets that they bring to supporting their children and young people with SEND<sup>1</sup>

Parent carers can be:

- Knowledgeable
- Aspirational
- Inspirational
- Resourceful
- A great coproduction partner
- Hard working
- Ambitious
- Expert in their child and their individual needs, abilities and aspirations
- Inventive and full of ideas
- Able to help make your job easier
- Doing a brilliant job of managing a difficult situation<sup>1</sup>

Educational settings have reported that there are ongoing challenges with:

### Recruitment



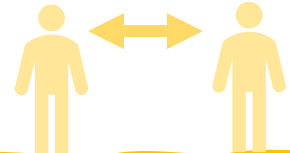
### Understanding and implementing the graduated approach



### Getting support from healthcare and ensuring most children make good progress



### Communicating between settings and services



# Transition and preparing for adulthood



- More information and better communication is needed regarding transition and preparation for adulthood in our children and young people with SEND.
  - **Some parents reported they had insufficient information, communication and support regarding transition. SEND providers also reported that parental knowledge and involvement could be barriers to transition.**
  - **Educational settings also report that they receive insufficient information regarding new pupils to support them with transitions.**
- It is difficult to track progress in our children and young people with SEND in terms of the breadth of preparing for adulthood outcomes across education, health and wellbeing, and care. Annual reviews do not appear to capture this information fully.
  - **This makes it difficult to demonstrate that SEND support is helping and what the most appropriate SEND support is likely to be for any child or young person, particularly at stages of transition.**

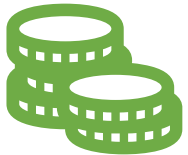


# What do we know about outcomes for our children and young people with SEND in terms of them being happy and well, and prepared for adulthood?



**Our understanding of outcomes for children and young people with SEND (in terms of education, health and wellbeing (including physical, mental and social wellbeing), and care is very patchy.**

- The proportion of children and young people with SEND achieving expected standards is understandably lower than those without SEND, given the challenges they experience. However, wellbeing in adulthood is underpinned by so much more than educational attainment alone. This is why having an understanding of achievement in relation to a much broader range of preparing for adulthood outcomes is vital.
  - Of note, when considering attainment in children and young people with SEND across the country, children and young people in Cheshire East with an EHCP have been doing better than their national peers, on average. However, children with SEN Support plans tend to have results that are below national.
- Approximately half of children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) in reception (during 2011/12) were in mainstream in year 12 (during 2022/23). The number of young people in year 12 with EHCPs has increased from 132 in 2018 to 248 in 2023.
- Over the past 4 years the Supported Internship programme has resulted in 75% of interns progressing to paid work or apprenticeship.
- During 2023/24 12.5% of adults with learning disability are in paid employment.
- As of 2023, of the 1,678 young people in Cheshire East who had an EHCP and were aged 18+, 33% have received an adult social care (ASC) assessment at some stage with 48% currently receiving support.
- More than half (68%) of the 14–17-year-olds with a learning disability received a health check during 2023, which is something they will be eligible for annually throughout life. This is a lower uptake rate than in people aged 18 years and older with a learning disability.



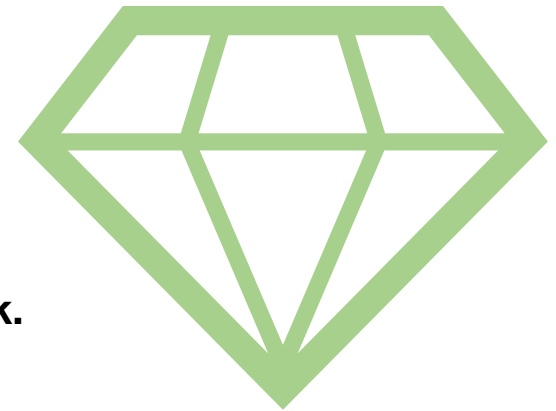


# Strengths of SEND provision across Cheshire East

This review focuses on the challenges experienced and gaps in provision in relation to SEND across Cheshire East and makes a wide range of recommendations in relation to these.

However, it also highlighted many strengths including:

- Our **children and young people with SEND** themselves with broad and varied talents, interests, passions and expertise.
- Extensive **passion, dedication and engagement from professionals, children and families** alike to optimise outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- A **recognition of need for change** and for SEND to be a priority across organisations.
- **Focus on the need for promoting inclusion** and of tools to support inclusive approaches across educational settings and connection with the wider children and families agenda, for example, through family hubs.
- A highly active and engaged **Parent Carer Forum**.
- Developing proactive **family hub support**.
- Broad **engagement of school staff** with the local training offer.
- A recognition of the **importance of starting to prepare for adulthood early**.
- **Good reach of health visiting service evidenced by uptake of routine early years checks**.
- **Examples of positive feedback from parent/carers**.
- **Collaborative working to improve consistency of NHS support through the clinical network**.
- **Work in progress to try to support SEND earlier, and in more effective ways**



## The overarching recommendations from the review are that across Cheshire East, we need to:



Provide inclusive information, be proactive and intervene early



Think holistically: education, health and wellbeing, and care



Recognise complex risk factors early, including where there has been childhood trauma



Increase resource and capacity to ensure that a child's education needs are met in the best setting so that the child is not disadvantaged.



Ensure timely and consistent NHS provision of support and advice in relation to Autism, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and therapies such as speech and language, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and sensory processing



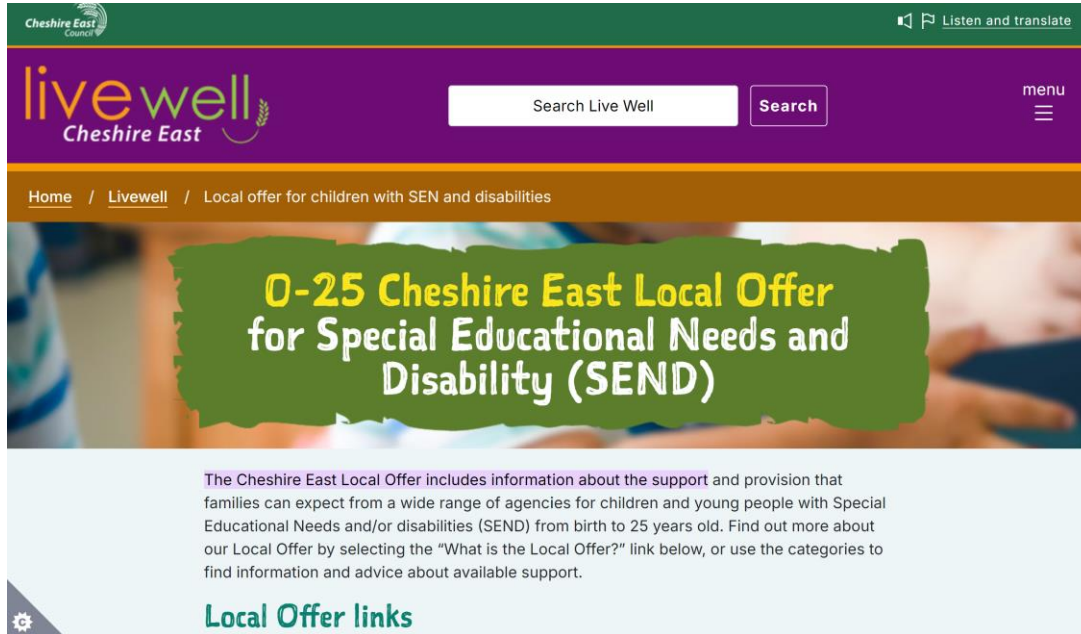
Communicate clearly, proactively, consistently, transparently, and through a person-centred approach



Empower children, young people, families and professionals to look towards, and plan for the future

# Additional Resources

Here are some links to help you or someone you know



The 0-25 Cheshire East Local Offer for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can be found here:

[www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/localoffer)

Other information can be found below:

Cheshire East Council Family Hubs [Family Hubs \(cheshireeast.gov.uk\)](http://cheshireeast.gov.uk)

Toolkit for Inclusion [Toolkit for inclusion \(cheshireeast.gov.uk\)](http://cheshireeast.gov.uk)

