

Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Joint Strategy 2017 - 2019



**Cheshire East
SEND Partnership**



We would like to thank everyone who has made, and is continuing to make, this Strategy a reality, including:

- All the children, young people, parents and carers who gave their time and energy and honestly told us how it is;
- our Education professionals: SENCOs, Head teachers, Teachers, Teaching Assistants, and Governors;
- our Specialist Support teams: the Cheshire East Autism Team, Educational Psychology Team, Statutory Assessment and Monitoring Team, and the Children with Disabilities Team;
- Early Help and Social Care professionals in Children's and Adults' Services;
- Health professionals within the Clinical Commissioning Groups and provider services;
- And all the members of the 0-25 SEND Partnership Board and work streams.

Contents

Executive Summary	3
1. What we want to achieve	5
What's Important to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers	5
Our Principles	6
2. Where we are now	7
National Context	7
Our Approach	8
Need in Cheshire East	10
Health Provision for Children and Young People with SEND	11
Educational Outcomes for Children and Young People	11
3. Our Priorities for 2017-19	12
1. Coproduction with Families, and Improving Communication	12
2. Child and Young Person-Centred Assessments and Plans	14
3. Preparing for Adulthood	16
4. Joint Commissioning, Sufficient SEN Provision and Effective use of Resources	18
5. Effective and Supported Workforce	20
4. How we will achieve this	22
0-25 SEND Partnership	22
Who's Involved	22
5. How we will know if we are successful?	23
Measuring Success	23
Reviewing our Progress	23

Appendix

	24
Acronyms	24
Key Aspects of the SEND Reforms	25
SEND Strategy Action Plan	26
Table 1: Attainment for Pupils in Cheshire East with SEND compared to National	30
Table 2: Pupils with SEND living in the most and least deprived areas of Cheshire East	31

Executive Summary

As a partnership, all relevant partners in Cheshire East are committed to providing the best quality education and support for all children and young people. We want all our children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to be **HAPI**: **H**appy and healthy, **A**chieving their potential, a valued **P**art of their communities, and supported to be as **I**ndependent as possible and to make choices about their own future.

Our vision

We want all our children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to be **HAPI**:

Happy and healthy

Achieving their potential

Part of their communities

Independent as possible, making choices about their future

This strategy sets out how we will drive developments to our services so that we support children and young people with SEND to **achieve the best possible outcomes** and **benefit from a seamless transition process**, which builds on high aspirations as they become adult citizens.

What are Special Educational Needs?

Special educational needs and disabilities affect a child or young persons' ability to learn, making it harder for them to learn than most children and young people of the same age. They can affect their:

- o Behaviour or ability to socialise, for example they struggle to make friends
- o Reading and writing, for example because they have dyslexia
- o Ability to understand things
- o Concentration levels, for example because they have ADHD
- o Physical ability

A child or young person has a special educational need if they need special educational provision to be made for him or her.

To achieve this, our principles for all our services that support children and young people with SEND are that they are:

- **Child and young person-focused**
- **Include children, young people, parents and carers in all decision making**
- **Inclusive**
- **Within local communities wherever possible**
- **Joined up and work together effectively as a partnership**
- **Make the best use of our resources**

We are committed to working in partnership with our key stakeholders in developing and shaping our services. Children, young people, parents, carers, early years' providers, schools and colleges, health and social care professionals are the people that are best placed to know what is needed and what works well. This strategy has been co-produced with these key stakeholders, and they will continue to be involved in helping us deliver to these priorities and in evaluating what difference we are making.

Based on their experiences of our services in Cheshire East, we agreed that the Strategy should focus on these five priorities:

- 1. Coproduction with Families, and Improving Communication**
- 2. Child and Young Person-Centred Assessments and Plans**
- 3. Preparing for Adulthood**
- 4. Joint Commissioning, Sufficient SEN Provision and Effective use of Resources**
- 5. Effective and Supported Workforce**

This Strategy outlines the key actions we will carry out to achieve our priorities. This is an ambitious programme which cannot be achieved without the full commitment from all the key partners at every level, from strategic directors to frontline practitioners within Social Care, Education, and Health across both children's and adult services. We have taken a whole system approach to improving support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) across Cheshire East. This work is being driven by the **0-25 SEND Partnership Board**, which includes representatives from the local authority, primary and secondary schools, further education providers, health, early years, and the Cheshire East Parent Carers' Forum.

We are publishing this strategy at a time of very significant change; we have seen some of the biggest shifts in national policy for special educational needs and disability in over 30 years, and all public services are facing a challenging financial climate. This strategy will support us to ensure that we are well placed to meet this changing landscape.

Due to the energy, commitment and dedication of all parties involved in this work, we have already moved a long way towards achieving our aims, but we still have more to do to ensure that children and young people achieve the best possible outcomes.

Progress against this Strategy and our plan will be monitored and scrutinised on a termly basis by the 0-25 SEND Partnership Board to ensure we achieve what we have set out in this Strategy. We will revisit and refresh our priorities in two years time to ensure we continue to develop our services in response to what is most important and makes the most difference to our children and young people with SEND and their families.



1. What we want to Achieve

We want all our children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to be **HAPI**: **H**appy and healthy, **A**chieving their potential, a valued **P**art of their communities, and supported to be as **I**ndependent as possible and to make choices about their own future.

Our **Children and Young People's Plan** is based on what children and young people told us was most important to them. The Plan is strategically aligned to the work of the Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board and sets out how we aim to support children to get the best start in life. It has six priority areas that we are working to achieve across our services to ensure that Cheshire East is a great place to be young. We want to ensure that all our children and young people:

1. **Have a voice**, and are actively involved in decisions that affect their lives and communities
2. **Feel and are safe**
3. **Are happy and have good emotional and mental health**
4. **Are healthy and make positive choices**
5. Leave school with **the best skills and qualifications** they can achieve, and the life skills they need to thrive into adulthood
6. Children and young people with additional needs **have better chances in life**

This strategy contributes to our work across all of these priorities, but it is particularly related to priority 6: ensuring that children and young people with additional needs have better chances in life.

To achieve the best outcomes for children and young people, we need to **plan and deliver our services with children and young people at the centre**, involve them in decisions, and base our services on what children and young people need and how they tell us they want to be supported. This Strategy has been co-produced with our key stakeholders, and these people will continue to be involved in developing our services going forward.

Parents and carers' views on what's working well within Cheshire East, what needs to be improved, and what good support looks like can be heard in **this video** of the parent/ carer consultation events that were carried out in October 2016 and were jointly organised by Cheshire East Council and the Cheshire East Parent Carer Forum. An Executive Summary of the feedback from these events is also available.

What's Important to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers

Children, young people, parents and carers have told us they want:

- Services to be **centred around what's best for the child** or young person
- **All children and young people to get the support they need**
- **To be listened to**
- **To be included in decision making**, and developing how they will be supported
- **To have tailored support that meets their individual needs**
- For **professionals to be clear with them** about what is going to, or could happen, and what support is available
- For services to be **joined up**
- For services to be **open and transparent** about their basis for decision making, and arrangements for funding and support

Our Principles

We want to ensure that all our children and young people **achieve the best possible outcomes**. We want all our young people with SEND to benefit from **a seamless transition process**, which builds on high aspirations as they become adult citizens. To achieve this, we want our services that support children and young people with special educational needs and/ or disabilities to be:

- **Child-focused:** Children and young people are supported in line with their individual needs and what is important to them, both now and in the future.
- **Co-produced:** All children and young people are always involved in the decisions that affect their lives. Parents and carers are experts on their children's needs and are essential partners in decision making.
- **Inclusive:** Children and young people are supported to access the same services, activities and opportunities as their peers wherever possible.
- **Within local communities:** Children and young people can access support and activities within their local area wherever possible, and they are part of their local community.
- **Joined up and working together effectively as a partnership:** All services work together effectively so we offer a seamless service that addresses the needs of the whole person.
- **The best use of our resources:** Services are planned to meet the needs of children and young people in our area so we have the right types of services with the right amount of availability. We are creative and innovative in meeting children and young people's needs. Needs are met early to prevent escalation.

We want to:

1. Achieve the **best possible outcomes for children and young people**
2. Be **child and young person-focused**
3. **Include children, young people, parents and carers, in all decision making**
4. Be **inclusive**
5. Ensure that children and young people can have their needs met **within their local community** wherever possible
6. Be **joined up and work together effectively** as a partnership
7. Make the **best use of our resources**

"The class teachers, TA's and Head at my son's school have been supportive, flexible and positive, we are very lucky. Collaborative and imaginative!"

Parent

"[the school] were absolutely fantastic with him"

Parent

2. Where we are now

National Context

We are publishing this strategy at a time of very significant change; we have seen some of the biggest shifts in national policy for special educational needs and disability in over 30 years, and all public services are facing a challenging financial climate. This strategy will support us to ensure that we are well placed to meet this changing landscape.

The Children and Families Act 2014 takes forward the Government's commitment to improve services, life chances, and choices for vulnerable children and young people, and to support strong families. It underpins wider reforms to ensure that all children and young people can succeed, no matter what their background. The Act extends the SEND system from birth to 25, and **gives children, young people and their parents/carers greater control and choice** in decisions and ensuring needs are properly met.

The Act requires Local Authorities to implement a wide range of reforms and to ensure that children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) receive **timely** and **co-ordinated** support to meet their needs. As a partnership, Cheshire East is undertaking a significant body of work to improve the quality of our services and implement all aspects of these reforms. Key aspects of the reforms are included within the appendix.

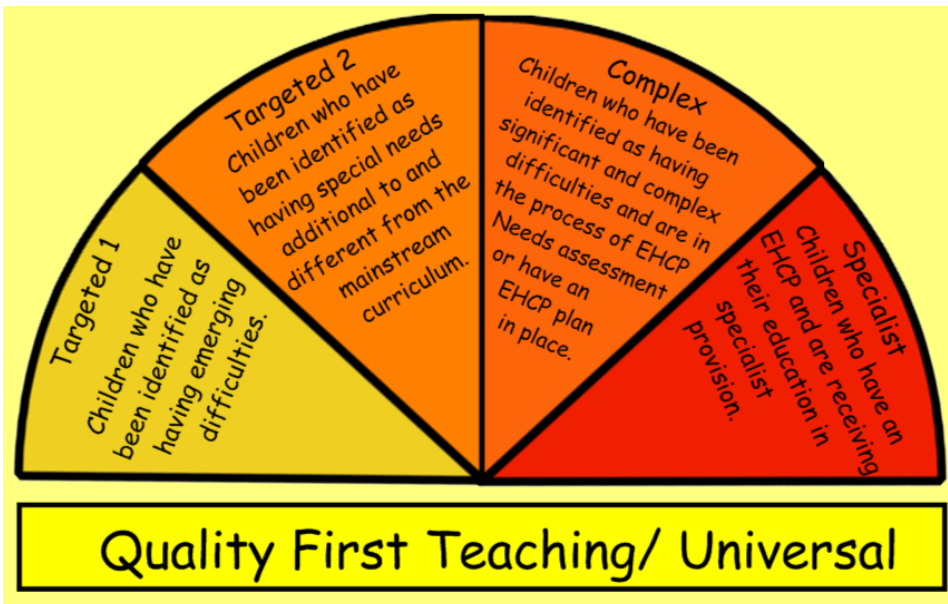
The Government's Mandate to NHS England 2014-15 states:

"One area where there is a particular need for improvement, working in partnership across different services, is in supporting children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities. NHS England's objective is to ensure that they have **access to the services identified in their agreed care plan**, and that parents of children who could benefit have the option of a **personal budget** based on a **single assessment across health, social care and education.**"



Our Approach

As a partnership, Cheshire East is developing a **graduated response** to meeting the continuum of special educational needs which is illustrated in the diagram below. This recognises that needs are on a continuum and may go up and down over time. The guidance on applying a graduated response is included within the **SEND Toolkit**.



A graduated response means that we expect reasonable adjustments to be made to ensure that the majority of children and young people with special educational needs are able to access and have their needs met within mainstream provision, so they enjoy the same opportunities as their peers wherever possible and are fully included within their communities.

Within the proposed SEND Toolkit, at the Universal Level, needs are met through **Quality First Teaching and Learning**, as well as health and social care services provided at either a universal or targeted level.

Quality First Teaching is provided to all children and young people, and continues to be provided to children and young people with SEND who are also receiving additional support within the graduated response. This means all teachers are teachers of children and young people with special educational needs.

Support at **First Concerns** is tailored to the needs of the individual child or young person, including for example assistive technology, individual or small group teaching, or in class support up to a total value of £3,000. At **SEN Support**, support is tailored to the needs of the individual child up to a total value of £6,000.

Some children and young people's needs will be more complex in some contexts, and the SEND Toolkit includes more specialist support to meet these needs. Where children and young people may require specialist support, we conduct a multi-agency assessment (Education, Health and Care needs assessment) to determine what additional support they need. If following assessment it is found that a child or young person will require provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age, an **Education, Health and Care Plan** (EHCP) will be written.

In, Cheshire East, the local authority has provided schools with sufficient funding to provide up to 12 hours of additional support and we will usually therefore only issue a EHCP where a child requires provision in excess of this. The EHCP sets out what support they need within these three areas. Education, Health and Care Plans replaced Statements of SEN and Learning Difficulty Assessments with the introduction of the Children and Families Act 2014.

In Cheshire East, the majority of children and young people's special educational needs are met within First Concerns and SEN Support in mainstream provision, with a small proportion requiring specialist level services. In order to have a successful graduated response we need services to have an **inclusive approach** and we need **a range of services available across the continuum of need**.

"Parents/ carers are given [the] opportunity to be involved in finding a solution"

Parent

"The SENCO has been absolutely brilliant... exemplary I would say"

Parent



Need in Cheshire East

There are approximately **79,423** children and young people under 19 in Cheshire East, which is 21% of our population.

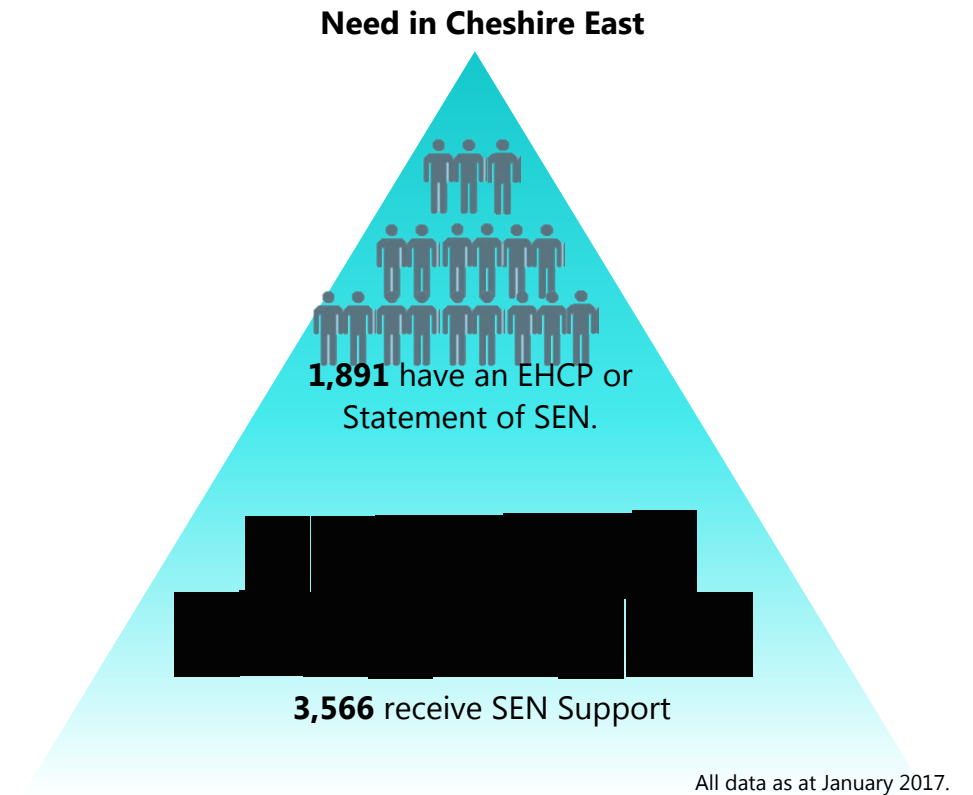
There is a comprehensive **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)** for children and young people with special educational needs and/ or disabilities. Our JSNA, which reviews the health and social care needs of our population, estimates that we should expect around **8,252** children and young people aged between 5 and 18 in Cheshire East to have a special educational need*. That equates to 10% of all children and young people – or **one in ten**. This number is based on the prevalence of different needs within the national population and within research literature.

3,566 children and young people receive SEN Support in Cheshire East, and **1,891** children and young people aged 0-25 in Cheshire East have specialist needs and have an Education, Health and Care Plan or a statement of SEN. A number of children and young people with SEN will have their needs met through universal support within Quality First Teaching and Learning or First Concerns.

The SEN Team are working with schools and other settings to improve our data on the number of pupils receiving SEN Support to ensure that we are consistently and accurately capturing the number of children and young people we support. As a result of this joint work, we expect to see the number of pupils recorded as receiving SEN Support increase over the next year.

Children and young people with SEND are more likely to live in the most deprived areas of our borough, and less likely to live in the least deprived areas (data included within Table 2 in the appendix). Proportionally more children and young people with SEND are eligible

for free school meals: this equates to just over 20% of pupils with SEND compared to 8.2% children and young people in Cheshire East (21% of pupils receiving SEN Support and 23% pupils with an EHCP or Statement are eligible as in the School Census, January 2017).



*This prediction is based on the prevalence rates for each need. As some children and young people will have more than one need, the actual number of children and young people is likely to be lower than stated, and not all pupils included in the estimated population numbers will necessarily have SEN, for example higher functioning pupils with ASC and pupils with physical disabilities may not need additional educational support. .

More detail on the needs of our children and young people with SEND and how we are meeting these is contained in our **SEN Sufficiency Statement**.

Health Provision for Children and Young People with SEND

Children's health care provision is commissioned in line with statutory duties in relation to the SEND reforms in The Children & Families Act 2014, drawing out the health elements from the 0 – 25 SEN & Disability Code of Practice. Much of healthcare for children and young people is delivered through universal preventative services and primary care services. However, when these services are unable to meet a child or young person's needs they may need to access targeted and specialised services e.g. those with continuing care needs, a special educational need and or disability and those with an EHC plan.

NHS Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and NHS South Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) work with colleagues in the local authority and have mechanisms in place to ensure practitioners and clinicians support the integrated EHC needs assessment process as well as contributing to the Local Offer, with the emphasis on outcomes rather than process. The local authority currently commissions Public Health services which include school nursing and health visiting. There are currently two main providers of children's community health services. These are Central Cheshire Integrated Care Partnership and NHS East Cheshire Trust. NHS Cheshire and Wirral Partnership Trust provide the whole range of mental health and learning disabilities services. Acute hospital care is provided by NHS East Cheshire Trust and NHS Mid Cheshire Hospitals Foundation Trust.

Educational Outcomes for Children and Young People

95% of schools in Cheshire East are currently judged Good or Outstanding by Ofsted (from the published Ofsted figures as at 31st December 2016). The national figure is 89%. This provides us with a very strong foundation from which to move forward.

82% of pupils in Cheshire East with a Statement of SEN or EHCP achieve attainment 8 in English at KEY Stage 4, compared to 55% nationally. For most attainment measures, Cheshire East pupils with SEND are achieving in line with their peers nationally (data included within Table 1 in the appendix). However, we have high aspirations for our children and young people and we want to be performing well above the national average.

We are currently working with parents to develop how we can capture and evaluate a broader set of outcomes outside of attainment for children and young people with SEND, such as health, preparing for adulthood and independence.



3. Our Priorities for 2017-19

This Strategy has been coproduced with our key stakeholders: children, young people, parents, carers, education, health and social care professionals. Based on their experiences of our services in Cheshire East, we agreed that the Strategy should focus on these five areas:

1. **Coproduction with Families, and Improving Communication**
2. **Child and Young Person-Centred Assessments and Plans**
3. **Preparing for Adulthood**
4. **Joint Commissioning, Sufficient SEN Provision and Effective use of Resources**
5. **Effective and Supported Workforce**

1. Coproduction with Families, and Improving Communication

Why this is a Priority

Our ambition is to lead the way in coproduction of services. We are committed to working in partnership with our key stakeholders in developing and shaping our services. Children, young people, parents, carers, early years' providers, schools and colleges, health and social care professionals are the people that are best placed to know what is needed and what works well. We want to ensure that we involve these key people in all stages of the decision making process from the very beginning, whether this is making a decision about what support is best for an individual, or whether it is a decision on how we should offer services, what the best service looks like, and what is the best use of our resources.

We have undertaken a range of activities with these key stakeholders to gain their views on how we develop our services and support going forward, and this has informed the development of this Strategy. This has included conferences and events, satisfaction surveys, and feedback on our 'Local Offer' of services. Parents and carers' views on what's working well within Cheshire East, what needs to be improved, and what a good service looks like can be heard in [this video](#) of our parent/ carer consultation events in October 2016. Over 600 individual pieces of feedback were gathered from more than 100 parent/ carers.

"All areas need to pull together quicker and actually need to communicate. One area or person for the parent to contact"

Parent

"SEN team feels a bit like a black hole – stuff goes in with no idea if/ when you will get something back"

In the consultation events, parents and carers reported that they felt that improvements were needed in relationships between local authority professionals (both within education and social care), education providers (including SENCOs and teaching staff), health providers and families. Individuals reported issues with a lack of trust and/or understanding of each other's position or priorities. Parents felt there was often a lack of communication between professionals (such as SENCOs or Local Authority staff) and themselves, and also between

professionals in different agencies, which resulted in them feeling that they were not included in decision making.

Parents and carers also felt confused about who to approach regarding support, and wanted clear information about both the available support options and services, and the processes involved - for example, in assessments.

"So many different organisations... and so many different ways to get help – which is great, but it all gets rather confusing"

"EHCP info and what happens needs to be clearer on the website"

Parent

"Parents need to be kept involved"

What we have achieved so far

To improve communication, all schools and families now have an individual named 0-25 SEND Officer to contact with any queries regarding an EHC needs assessment or EHC Plan. In addition, the improved EHC needs assessment process, which has been developed



with

multiple professionals and parents, is designed to embrace the principle of coproduction and allow for more communication between families and the designated 0-25 SEND Officer. There is a Designated Clinical Officer to provide operational and strategic links with health services and ensure the CCGs are meeting their statutory obligations.

In June 2017, the Cheshire East Local Offer for SEND was relaunched as part of a brand new online resource called '**Live Well Cheshire East**'. This features information and advice on a variety of topics, including community activities, health issues, care and support for both children and adults, along with a directory of over 3,000 related services.

We have strong, committed and enthusiastic people within our borough, and these people are supporting us to continue to develop and improve our services. Parent representatives are members of the 0-25 SEND Partnership Board and work streams, and we are now developing a strong partnership with which we can deliver significant improvements for children and young people.

What we plan to do

To build on what we have achieved so far we will:

- **Develop an effective communication strategy** to promote the work of the 0-25 SEND Partnership and engage and update key stakeholders on progress. This includes the publication of a regular SEND newsletter.
- **Work with children and young people with SEND** to develop ways to involve children and young people in shaping our services
- **Develop a guide to co-production with families** to support practitioners
- **Develop mechanisms to share and celebrate best practice and person-centred work**
- Continue to develop and **strengthen effective relationships with the Parent Carers' Forum** as well as explore how we can widen our engagement with all parents and carers
- **Establish a regular feedback process for the Local Offer** – both on our provision and the support provided through the offer
- **Establish a regular feedback process for Education, Health and Care Assessments and Plans**, including requests for assessments
- Continue to **develop our online resources** in partnership with families to ensure information on our Local Offer, the support for children and young people with SEND, and their families, is clear and accessible
- **Hold a 'Meet our Local Offer' Day event** to raise awareness of the support available for families
- **Continue to consult with** children, young people, parents, carers and other key stakeholders to gain their views and plan and develop services together

2. Child and Young Person-Centred Assessments and Plans

Why this is a Priority

We want our services and processes to be child and young person-centred and transparent. The best quality support is underpinned by good quality child and young person-centred processes, assessments and plans.

A strong assessment that considers the needs of the whole person enables us to determine what support is needed, and a good quality plan ensures all the key parties are involved in developing a solution together, and understand their roles in delivering support. Child-centred support means providing integrated support that meets children and young people's individual needs, across education, health and care, in line with what is important to them, both now and in the future.

"SEN provision varies wildly from school to school depending on the Head's attitude and spending priorities"

Parent

"Parents not aware of when an EHCP is an appropriate course of action"

Some parents had experienced delays in assessment processes, including the EHC needs assessment and diagnostic Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) assessments. One of the biggest areas of concern for parents related to the level of support that was put in place for children and young people within their educational setting (e.g. school). Although some parents had good experiences of support within school, it was clear that this was not consistent across all of Cheshire East and was often dependent of the experience, knowledge or attitude of the teaching staff involved.

"ASD ADHD referrals and assessment took too long"

"My EHCP is working very well for me and it gives me support"

Young Person

In addition, parents were confused about the level of support that should be in place within educational settings for different needs, and were unclear when a request for an EHC needs assessment would be appropriate.

What we have achieved so far

In order to achieve more integrated planning and support to meet the needs of the whole person, and improve how Education, Health and Social Care professionals work together, we have reviewed the processes and procedures around supporting children and young

people across the SEND spectrum of needs. We have developed a Children with Disabilities Policy, and we have reviewed the processes and supporting documentation related to supporting children and young people in mainstream schools, requesting an EHC needs assessment, and providing resources and support via an EHCP to children and young people. This has ensured that these processes are robust, fair, transparent, streamlined, are clear for practitioners and families, support best practice, and ultimately support achieving the best outcomes for our children and young people.

We are currently developing an SEND Toolkit on the Graduated Response that will give clear, consistent guidance about the levels of support and strategies that should be used in educational settings at different levels of need. It will provide guidance on the SEN funding that is allocated to educational settings and schools, outline when educational settings should consult with external professionals, and also clarify when an EHC needs assessment and/or specialist support may be required. This is being developed by local SENCOs and education providers in order to share local best practice and improve consistency of support across Cheshire East. This document will be launched in November 2017 and will be made available to everyone, including parents, via the Local Offer. All future training relating to supporting children and young people with SEND in education will use this guidance document, including training sessions for new SENCOs to ensure a consistent approach.

"As a parent I feel there is now much more clarity and transparency and I am now better informed of the processes. The fog has lifted."

Parent

There has been significant investment from Eastern Cheshire CCG to address the long waiting lists for Autism Spectrum Condition and ADHD diagnostics as an interim position while further work is done to develop multi-agency pathways and further improve the pathways for children and young people neurodevelopmental conditions.

What we plan to do

To build on what we have achieved so far we will:

- **Finalise and launch the SEND Toolkit**, which will include the **Graduated Response and guidance** (including clear expectations for education providers at SEN Support)
- Work with early years providers and educational settings to implement **a consistent approach to the Graduated Response**, in identifying, recording and meeting needs
- **Align multi-agency referral and assessment pathways**, and criteria for eligibility for assessments
- Develop an **integrated single assessment and plan**
- **Develop guidance and deliver training for professionals on completing EHC assessments and plans**
- **Define the principles of person-centred practice** and deliver training on this for practitioners
- Review and develop **multi-agency quality assurance** for assessments and plans

3. Preparing for Adulthood

Why this is a Priority

We want all our young people with SEND to benefit from **a seamless transition process**, which builds on high aspirations as they become adult citizens. We want our young people to be fully equipped to move into adulthood and lead fulfilling lives. We want to ensure that planning for transition to adult services takes place from when young people are 14 years of age, ensuring support can be planned and resourced in advance. Preparing for adulthood is a key thread running through all the elements of the SEND reforms, including the Local Offer, 0-25 coordinated assessment and EHCPs, multi-agency working, personal budgets and joint commissioning.

In Cheshire East, we want to promote high expectations and aspirations for our children and young people with SEND, including paid employment, living independently with choice and control over their lives, and participating in society.



What we have achieved so far

To date, we have reviewed the Transition to Adulthood arrangements and drafted a new policy. We have strengthened Independent Specialist Placement procedures to ensure we are compliant with the SEND Code of Practice and Children and Families Act, and make the best use of our resources to achieve improved outcomes for our young people.

We have developed a Preparation for Adulthood vision with stakeholders, which is:

‘All Cheshire East young people with SEND will benefit from a seamless transition process, which builds on high aspirations as they become adult citizens.’

Our young people have described what preparing for adulthood means to them in [this video](#).

We have established a practitioners’ forum for both children and adults workers, so professionals can come together to share best practice and raise any concerns regarding transition.

We have developed four working groups to map our provision in Cheshire East against the four Preparing for Adulthood outcomes to help us to clearly identify what provision is available locally, and where there are any gaps. The four working groups are Employment (including supported internships); Independent Living; Community Inclusion; and Health.

“A fantastic college tutor who will do anything to help my son”

Parent

“I have [professional’s name] at college and she is amazing and really understands my needs because of my ECHP”

Young Person

“More apprenticeship opportunities”

Young Person

What we plan to do

To build on what we have achieved so far we will:

- **Complete a mapping exercise and gap analysis in line with the four Preparing for Adulthood outcomes:** independent living (including supported internships); apprenticeships, training and employment; community inclusion; and good health.
- **Develop good case study examples and ensure a personalised approach to Preparing for Adulthood and transition**
- Develop **practice guidance** for practitioners on Preparing for Adulthood and Transition
- Develop **arrangements to support effective planning for transition**, such as ICT reports on young people approaching transition
- Ensure information on support for young people with SEND to prepare them for adulthood and support transition is **published within the Local Offer**

4. Joint Commissioning, Sufficient SEN Provision and Effective use of Resources

Why this is a Priority

Joint commissioning is essential in ensuring we effectively meet the needs of the whole person, and make the most of our resources as a partnership. There are gaps in our continuum of SEN provision in comparison with other areas. Cheshire East has a shortage of resourced SEN provision and special school places in relation to the needs of our children and young people. This was a concern echoed by our parents and carers. As a result, we are over-reliant on out of borough, independent and non-maintained provision which is often far from the pupil's home. One in five pupils attending specialist provision have a journey over 45 minutes each way, and half of those attending a special provision attend outside our borough. These placements are also frequently higher cost, which is not the best use of our resources in the long term.

Through developing our provision, we want to:

1. Achieve the **best possible outcomes for children and young people**
2. Ensure there are **the right number and type of places** to meet children and young people's needs
3. Ensure that children and young people can have their needs met **within their local community** wherever possible
4. Make the **best use of our resources**

"Why do children have to travel to schools so far away to get help at school?"

"Lack of provision at all levels of education"

Parent

What we have achieved so far

In order to support us to plan and develop our provision, we have produced a SEN Sufficiency Statement which assesses the local needs of our population against our current provision, and identifies where we need to develop additional places to meet needs.

We have developed a comprehensive **Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA)** on SEND alongside our Sufficiency Statement. We now have a good understanding of the needs in Cheshire East and the current and future demands for provision.

To support the creation of more places in our local area, Cheshire East Council has been successful with an Expression of Interest to establish a new Special Free School in Crewe to support pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. Work is also underway with a number of schools to increase their capacity. This is detailed in the **SEN Sufficiency Statement**. There will be a follow up piece of work to map existing health provision against the work in this document.

Developing the sufficiency of our provision is not just about increasing the number of available specialist places, it is also about ensuring that we build capacity and sustainability within support services, by effectively supporting schools to meet their pupils' needs through the use of specialist services such as Educational Psychology, the Cheshire East Autism Team (CEAT) and health and social care specialists. The work on the SEND Toolkit will also support our work in this area, ensuring that children and young people's needs are met at the right level as early as possible.

We have developed a Joint Commissioning Strategy across partners which sets out our commitment to jointly planning and commissioning services to make the best use of our resources.

The Joint Commissioning Leadership Group has been working on developing joint arrangements for:

- Multi-agency decision making panels
- SEND mediation and dispute resolution services
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Positive Behaviour Support Services for children and young people with Autism and learning difficulties
- Specialist equipment
- Sensory Occupational Therapy
- Workforce development
- Autism.



What we plan to do

To build on what we have achieved so far we will:

- **Explore opportunities for joint commissioning** of services to make the best use of resources
- **Develop our provision over the next three years** in a phased approach
- **Hold workshops in Summer 2017** with schools to jointly plan the next steps for developing our provision
- **Develop an action plan** which will set out the steps we need to take to increase capacity, and which will allow us to drive, track and evaluate progress.
- **Ensure the special educational needs of pupils are considered within all placement planning activity**
- **Revisit and refresh our SEN Sufficiency Statement annually** to ensure we have an accurate and up to date understanding of our pupils' needs, and that we continue to evaluate our provision against what our pupils need.
- **Continue to work with schools** who are seeking support to further develop provision.
- **Further develop the use of Personal Budgets** for children and young people with SEND

5. Effective and Supported Workforce

Why this is a Priority

We want to ensure that we have a knowledgeable, flexible, and integrated workforce in order to deliver the best quality support to children and young people.

In the consultation events, parents wanted reassurance that professionals involved in supporting their child or young person had appropriate knowledge and experience levels in relation to SEND. This applied to all agencies, but there were particular concerns in relation to the SEND knowledge of social workers following the dissolution of the specialist Children with Disabilities team in 2015.

In addition, parents felt that staff within education settings, such as SENCOs, Teaching staff and Teaching Assistants, would benefit from additional training to increase their understanding, awareness and experience of SEND. In particular, it was felt that an increased understanding of the full spectrum of Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) was required, along with further awareness of potential 'masking' of need by children and young people.

"everyone at my son's school have been supportive, flexible and positive"

What we have achieved so far

A specialist Children with Disabilities Team has been re-established within social care. This team is supporting children and young people with complex needs, and also offering specialist advice and training to other social workers and family support workers to improve the support provided to children and young people with SEND and their families.

To support a more child and family centred service, we have restructured the Statutory Assessment and Monitoring Team, which is responsible for EHC needs assessments and the development of EHCPs. Additional capacity has also been introduced to the team as a result of the restructure with the addition of two new posts: SEND Team Leader and SEND Quality and Inclusion Officer.

The SEND Quality and Inclusion Officer role has been created to support mainstream schools to provide effective support for children and young people with SEND. This post will also lead on developing a Quality Assurance framework across the partnership. This will be used to evaluate the quality of our services, determine areas for further development, and ensure that the support provided is consistent across the partnership, appropriate to need and in line with the SEND Toolkit.

"We often are told that teachers (and teaching assistants) don't have, but would like, training for helping children with ASC [Autistic Spectrum Condition], so staff are reliant on extra training"

Parent

"My daughter has complex needs and the health professionals that have supported us have always been brilliant"

Parent

implemented a full Continuous training programme for the next 12 months, with one day a month assigned for CPD. This

has been developed as a joint training programme for Local Authority officers, staff in educational settings (including SENCOs) and parent/carers, and was coproduced by a multi-agency group, which included parents. It includes awareness training, and training on tools to support children and young people with various needs, including ASC. We will continue to review our training programme to ensure we are responsive to the training needs of our workforce and the learning from feedback from children, young people, parents and carers.

A comprehensive Performance Scorecard has also been developed which is supporting effective monitoring and challenge on performance. As a result of this improved monitoring and focus, the completion of EHCPs within the required 20 week period has significantly improved. We are looking to add data regarding health services submitting reports within the statutory six week period to the scorecard.

What we plan to do

To build on what we have achieved so far we will:

- **Review the offer to schools from the specialist teams** to ensure schools are effectively supported to meet children and young people's needs across the SEND continuum
- Coproduce and deliver **joint sessions for parents and professionals to explore and develop understanding of a 'day in the life of' each other**
- **Review the learning areas from complaints** to inform our training offer

- Deliver our **multi-agency Workforce Development and Training Programme**, responding to the needs of the workforce and learning from feedback from children, young people, parents and carers
- Develop a **quality assurance framework** for SEN Services
- **Continue to review, develop and share the SEND Performance scorecard** to support us to monitor how well we are performing and allow us to respond to any areas that need improvement



4. How we will achieve this

O-25 SEND Partnership

This is an ambitious programme which cannot be achieved without the full commitment from all the key partners at every level, from strategic directors to frontline practitioners within Social Care, Education, and Health across children's and adult services.

We have taken a whole system approach to improving support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) across Cheshire East. This work is being driven by the **0-25 SEND Partnership Board**. The Board is responsible for developing and delivering our SEND Strategy, in order to maximise life opportunities and positive outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families. It includes representatives from the local authority, primary and secondary schools, further education providers, CCG and health provider services, early years, and the Cheshire East Parent Carers Forum.

There are five main work streams for the five priority areas which all report to the 0-25 SEND Partnership Board.

Due to the energy, commitment and dedication of all parties involved in this work, we have already moved a long way towards achieving our aims, but we still have more to do to ensure that we achieve the best possible outcomes for our children and young people.

The action plan within the appendix sets out the key actions we will carry out to achieve our priorities. Progress against this plan will be reviewed termly by the 0-25 SEND Partnership Board to ensure we achieve our priorities.

Who's Involved



Strategic decision makers through the **0-25 SEND Partnership Board**



Operational leads and parent carer representatives through the **five multi-agency work streams**



Additional parents and carers through the **Cheshire East Parent Carers' Forum**



Professionals across the partnership; health, education and social care through **consultation events**



All our children and young people with SEND and their families through **consultation events, satisfaction surveys and feedback on the Local Offer**

5. How we will we know if we are successful?

Measuring Success

Ultimately we will evaluate our success against the difference we make to the lives of our children and young people. We will use the following sources to inform us on how well we are performing, what's working well, and where we need to take action to achieve change. A quality assurance framework for SEND will be developed as part of the delivery of this Strategy.

Qualitative Measures

Multi-agency audits will be developed to evaluate the quality of our work to support families across the partnership. Findings from these audits will be reported to the 0-25 SEND Partnership Board.

Performance Measures

An SEND scorecard is in place which is reported to the 0-25 SEND Partnership Board for scrutiny. This scorecard considers a variety of information, such as the number of children and young people with Statements of SEN and EHCPs by primary need, age group and locality, the number of requests for EHCP assessments, and the timeliness of completion, and where children and young people access education.

Feedback from Families

Feedback surveys, consultation events, work with the Cheshire East Parent Carers' Forum, and feedback on the Local Offer will continue to inform further service developments. Mechanisms for gaining feedback

on EHC Assessments and Plans, and our Local Offer (both our provision and the quality of support) will be developed and established.

Feedback from Practitioners

Practitioners' views will continue to be sought through consultation events.

Reviewing our Progress

Due to the energy, commitment and dedication of all parties involved in this work, we have already moved a long way towards achieving our aims, but we still have more to do to ensure that we achieve the best possible outcomes for our children and young people.

Progress against this Strategy and our plan will be monitored and scrutinised on a termly basis by the 0-25 SEND Partnership Board to ensure we achieve what we have set out in this Strategy. We will revisit and refresh our priorities in two years time to ensure we continue to develop our services in response to what is most important and makes the most difference to our children and young people with SEND and their families.



Appendix

A number of abbreviations have been used in this document:

SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and/ or Disabilities
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
EHC	Education, Health and Care
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
ASC	Autistic Spectrum Condition
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder

Key aspects of the SEND Reforms:

Replacing Statements of SEN with Education, Health & Care Plans

One of the major changes introduced by the Children and Families Act 2014 is the replacement of Statements of SEN with new Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). Education, Health and Care Plans will also be extended to young people aged up to 25 to support young people into adulthood.

Services Working Together

Children and young people with SEND need well-coordinated, coherent support across education, health and social care to help them achieve their agreed outcomes. Under the Act, Local Authorities and other key agencies will be required to **co-ordinate and jointly plan services** for disabled children and young people.

Birth to 25 years

The Act extends the SEND system from birth to 25 years, which will support young people into further education, employment and independent living.

Personal Budgets

Parents of children, or young people themselves, with an EHCP have the right to request a personal budget for their support. A personal budget is an amount of money identified by the local authority to deliver the provision set out in an EHC Plan where the parent or young person is involved in securing that provision. Personal budgets are simply one way of increasing personalisation of support and involvement of families in decision making, as part of the wider, person-centred EHC needs assessment process.

Local Offer

Every council is required to publish details of the local support that is available for children and young people with SEND. The Local Offer provides clear and accurate information about local education, health, care and leisure services.

Engaging Parents, Children and Young People

Local authorities **must** ensure that parents, children and young people are involved in discussions and decisions about every aspect of their care and support, planning outcomes and agreeing services and activities to meet those outcomes. They must also take steps to ensure that parents and/or young people are actively involved in and co-produce assessments, plans, and reviews of their EHCPs. In addition, Early Years providers, schools and colleges should fully engage parents and/or young people with SEND when drawing up the plans and policies that affect them.

Resolving Disputes

Local authorities must make clear how disagreements will be resolved and how complaints will be dealt with. Local authorities and health commissioners must make independent mediation and disagreement resolution services available for parents and young people with SEN.

Transfer of Statements to EHCP

All children and young people with a Statement of Special Educational Needs are required to be transferred to more holistic EHCPs.

More detail can be found in the [SEND Code of Practice January 2015](#).

SEND Strategy Action Plan

Ref	Action	Who's Responsible	Complete by
1. Working Together with Families and Improving Communication			
1.1	Develop an effective communication strategy to promote the work of the 0-25 SEND Partnership and engage and update key stakeholders on progress. This includes the publication of a regular SEND newsletter	Communication and Engagement Work Stream	Dec 2017
1.2	Work with children and young people with SEND to develop ways to involve children and young people in shaping our services	Youth Support Service Manager	Sept 2018
1.3	Develop a guide to coproduction with families to support practitioners	Communication and Engagement Work Stream	June 2018
1.4	Develop a mechanisms to capture and share best practice and person-centred work	Communication and Engagement Work Stream	Sept 2018
1.5	Continue to develop and strengthen effective relationships with the Parent Carers' Forum as well as explore how we can widen our engagement with all parents and carers	Chairs of the Cheshire East Parent Carers Forum	April 2018
1.5	Establish a regular feedback process for the Local Offer – both on our provision and the support provided through the offer	SEND Project Manager	April 2018
1.6	Establish a regular feedback process for Education, Health and Care Assessments and Plans, including requests for assessments	Communication and Engagement Work Stream	Dec 2017
1.7	Continue to develop our online resources in partnership with families to ensure information on our Local Offer, the support for children and young people with SEND, and their families, is clear and accessible	SEND Project Manager	Sept 2018
1.8	Hold a 'Meet our Local Offer' Day event to raise awareness of the support available for families	SEND Project Manager	Oct 2019

2. Child and Young Person-Centred Assessments and Plans

2.1	Finalise and launch the SEND Toolkit, including the Graduated Response and guidance, including clear expectations for education providers at SEN Support	Head of Service: SEND and Inclusion	Nov 2017
2.2	Work with early years providers and educational settings to implement a consistent approach to the Graduated Response, in identifying, recording and meeting needs	Head of Service: SEND and Inclusion	Nov 2018
2.3	Align multi-agency referral and assessment pathways, and criteria for eligibility for assessments	Assessment and Planning Work Stream	Dec 2017
2.4	Develop an integrated single assessment and plan	Assessment and Planning Work Stream	Dec 2017
2.5	Develop guidance and deliver training for professionals on completing EHC assessments and plans	Assessment and Planning Work Stream	April 2018
2.6	Define the principles of person-centred practice and deliver training on this for practitioners	Assessment and Planning Work Stream	Jan 2018
2.7	Review and develop multi-agency quality assurance for assessments and plans	SEND Quality and Inclusion Officer	April 2018

3. Preparing for Adulthood

3.1	Complete a mapping exercise and gap analysis in line with the four Preparing for Adulthood outcomes.	Sub Group Leads for Employment, Health, Inclusion and Independent Living	Jan 2018
3.2	Develop good case study examples and ensure a personalised approach to Preparing for Adulthood and transition.	Area Delivery Manager: Youth Support	Jan 2019
3.3	Develop practice guidance for practitioners on Preparing for Adulthood and Transition	Social Worker in Adults' Social Care and Independent Living	Jan 2018

3.4	Develop arrangements to support effective planning for transition, such as ICT reports on young people approaching transition	Area Delivery Manager: Youth Support and Social Worker in Adults' Social Care and Independent Living	Dec 2017
3.5	Ensure information on support for young people with SEND to prepare them for adulthood and support transition is published within the Local Offer	Area Delivery Manager: Youth Support and Social Worker in Adults' Social Care and Independent Living	March 2018
4. Joint Commissioning, Sufficient SEN Provision and Effective use of Resources			
4.1	Explore opportunities for joint commissioning of services to make the best use of resources	Joint Commissioning and Resource Allocation Work Stream	April 2019
4.2	Develop our provision over the next three years in a phased approach	Joint Commissioning and Resource Allocation Work Stream	Sept 2020
4.3	Hold workshops in Summer 2017 with schools to jointly plan the next steps for developing our provision	Director of Prevention and Support	July 2017
4.4	Develop an action plan which will set out the steps we need to take to increase capacity, and which will allow us to drive, track and evaluate progress.	Head of Service: Children's Commissioning	Oct 2017
4.5	Ensure the special educational needs of pupils are considered within all placement planning activity	Head of Service: Education Infrastructure and Outcomes	Sept 2017
4.6	Revisit and refresh our SEN Sufficiency Statement annually to ensure we have an accurate and up to date understanding of our pupils' needs, and that we continue to evaluate our provision against what our pupils need. Expand the SEN Sufficiency Statement to consider the whole age range from 0-25.	Head of Service: Education Infrastructure and Outcomes and Head of Service: Children's Commissioning	April 2018

4.7	Continue to work with schools who are seeking support to further develop provision.	Head of Service: Education Infrastructure and Outcomes and Head of Service: Children's Commissioning	Sept 2019
4.8	Further develop the use of personalised budgets for children and young people with SEND	Head of Service: SEND and Inclusion	April 2019
5. Effective and Supported Workforce			
5.1	Review the offer to schools from the specialist teams to ensure schools are effectively supported to meet children and young people's needs across the SEND continuum	Head of Service: SEND and Inclusion	April 2018
5.2	Coproduce and deliver joint sessions for parents and professionals to explore and develop understanding of a 'day in the life of' each other	Workforce Development and Planning Work Stream	May 2018
5.3	Review the learning areas from complaints to inform our training offer	Workforce Development and Planning Work Stream	Dec 2017
5.4	Deliver our multi-agency Workforce Development and Training Programme, responding to the needs of the workforce and learning from feedback from children, young people, parents and carers	Workforce Development and Planning Work Stream	July 2019
5.5	Develop a quality assurance framework for SEN Services	SEND Quality and Inclusion Officer	Sept 2018
5.6	Continue to review, develop and share the SEND Performance scorecard to support us to monitor how well we are performing and allow us to respond to any areas that need improvement	Head of Service: SEND and Inclusion	Sept 2018

Table 1: Attainment for Pupils in Cheshire East with SEND compared to National

		Pupils receiving SEN Support		Pupils with a SEN Statement or EHCP	
		Cheshire East	England	Cheshire East	England
Key Stage 4	Attainment 8 in English	96%	97%	82%	55%
	Attainment 8 in Maths	96%	-	83%	-
	A*-C in English and Maths	21%	-	17%	-
Key Stage 2	English Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling Average Score	96.9	96.6	96.9	96.2
	Reading Attainment Average Score	96.5	95.8	96.7	95.6
	Writing Attainment, expected standard and above	14%	32%	12%	13%
	Maths Attainment Average Score	97.2	97.0	95.7	95.7
	Reading, Writing and Maths, expected standard and above	8%	16%	9%	7%
Key Stage 1	Teacher assessment of reading reaching the expected standard and above	29%	-	22%	-
	Teacher assessment of writing reaching the expected standard and above	15%	-	7%	-
	Teacher assessment of maths reaching the expected standard and above	27%	-	13%	-
Phonics	Achieving expected standard in Year 1	44%	46%	23%	18%
	Achieving expected standard in Year 2	70%	69%	46%	29%

Data as at November 2016 from RAISE Online

Table 2: Pupils with SEND living in the most and least deprived areas of Cheshire East

	All children and young people	No SEND	SEN Support	SEN Statement or EHCP
Living in the most deprived 20% of our lower super output areas	11.8%	11%	20.5%	15.2%
Living in the least deprived 20% of our lower super output areas	39.7%	41%	25.9%	34.9%

Data as at January 2017 from the School Census



Your thoughts matter

If you have any views on this Strategy or how we can improve our services, please do contact us at **SENDPartnerships@cheshireeast.gov.uk**