

Cheshire East Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2021 – 2024

**Cheshire East
SEND Partnership**



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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, including SEND and specialist support teams, and staff within educational settings
- Early Help and Social Care professionals in Children's and Adults' Services
- Health professionals within the Clinical Commissioning Group and provider services
- All members of the 0-25 SEND Partnership Board and workstreams.

1. Glossary

Term	Meaning
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is a condition that affects people's behaviour. People with ADHD can seem restless, may have trouble concentrating and may act on impulse.
ASC	Autistic Spectrum Condition is a condition related to brain development that impacts how a person perceives and socializes with others, which can cause problems in social interaction and communication.
ASD Pathway	Autistic Spectrum Disorder Pathway describes the expected practice in relation to people whose needs may fall within the Autism Spectrum Disorders.
CAMHS	The name for the NHS services that assess and treat young people with emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties.
Child's Electronic Case Record	This refers to the electronic social care case management system used by the Local Authority. It is often referred to as Liquid Logic.
Coproduction	This is an approach whereby professionals, children and young people and their families work together as equal partners to plan services that affect them. In Cheshire East this is committed to our 'TOGETHER' values which support open and clear communication and accountability to all involved in providing support to children and young people with SEND.
EHC	Education, Health and Care
EHCP	An Education, Health and Care Plan is a legal document that sets out a child or young person's special educational, health and social care needs. It describes the extra help that will be given to meet those needs and how that help will support them to achieve what they want to in their life.
Engagement Session	Sessions where children and young people, parents and carers and members of the SEND partnership come together to share their views and ideas about the strategy.
First Concerns	Children and young people who have been identified as having emerging difficulties.
High Needs Funding Block	The funding allocated and received from central government by Local Authorities for pupils with SEND and high needs
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. This is an assessment of how well the health and wellbeing needs of children and young people living in Cheshire East are being met.
Local Offer	The Local Offer lets parents and young people know what special educational needs and disabilities services are available in the borough, and who can access them.
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills is responsible for inspecting the effectiveness of local area services for children with SEND.

OT	An Occupational Therapist's role is to help people overcome the effects (physical, psychological, social and environmental) of disability so that they can carry out everyday tasks or occupations.
Parent Carer Forum	The Cheshire East Parent Carer Forum is a voluntary group who work in partnership with professionals within the Cheshire East Local Authority area to ensure the voice of parents and carers with children that have additional needs is heard throughout the decision-making process of service initiatives.
Quality Assurance	The maintenance of a desired level of quality in service delivery by routinely evaluating stages in the process.
Quality First Teaching	A style of teaching that emphasises high quality, inclusive teaching for all pupils in a class.
Resource provision	A mainstream school receives additional funding to provide extra specialist support or facilities for children with SEND.
SALT	Speech and Language Therapy helps people who have speech and communication difficulties. They also help people with eating, drinking and swallowing problems.
SEN	Special Educational Needs (SEN) covers a wide range of needs. These include behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, speech, language and communication, hearing impairment, visual impairment, multi-sensory impairment, physical disability and autism
SEN Support	The process by which schools assess the needs of children, and then provide appropriate support.
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. The SENCO is responsible for the operation of a school's SEN policy and coordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plan.
SEND	A child or young person who has a learning difficulty and/or a disability that means they need special health and education support, which is shortened to SEND.
SEND Partnership	A multi-agency partnership arrangement which leads and drives developments around support, processes and provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) aged 0-25 years in Cheshire East.
SEND Partnership Board	A group made up of senior representatives that drive and monitor the work of the Partnership in line with our joint SEND strategy.
SEND Passport	A tool used by the Council to aid and capture the voice of children with SEND through 1:1 and group participation.
SEND Toolkit	Explains the responsibilities, outlines the provision and support that the Local Authority expect to be in place in all educational settings which support Cheshire East children and young people with Special educational needs.
Written Statement of Action	A document which sets out the actions that are needed to address the significant areas of weakness in a local area identified by Ofsted and/or the Care Quality Commission following inspections.

2. Introduction

This **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy** has been written after taking the views of all partners at the SEND Partnership Board, three engagement sessions with partners, and one session with Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) throughout March to May 2021, and also by listening to children and young people through completion of their individual SEND Passports. The engagement sessions have been supplemented with email correspondence from across partners. The Strategy also takes account of our previous SEND Written Statement of Action, along with data and intelligence gathered through a range of feedback routes.

All our engagement to develop the Strategy and our delivery of support for SEND is premised on our TOGETHER principles of co-production. 'TOGETHER' in Cheshire East is outlined in the poster on the right, and was created by our children and young people, in conjunction with a range of professionals and parent carers, as they didn't understand the word 'co-production'.

Every attempt has been made to write the strategy so that the many people who are interested in how SEND works in Cheshire East can easily understand it. Throughout the strategy the word 'we' has been used many times on purpose because, without us all working TOGETHER, we won't achieve the excellent outcomes that we want for our children and young people with SEND.

In this strategy, 'we' includes: parents and carers, children and young people, the Local Authority, Health, education settings, providers etc.



3. Our Vision

“Together we will make Cheshire East a great place to be young”.

We believe that...

- Children and young people are best supported within their families and their communities.
- All children and young people should enjoy the best education which prepares them to thrive in adulthood.
- Cheshire East families and communities are strong and resilient, with the right help, from the right people, at the earliest opportunity.

Our vision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is the same as for all children and young people - that they achieve well in all aspects of their lives and are happy, fulfilled and play an active role in their communities. For children and young people and their parents and carers, this means that their experiences will be of a system which is supportive of everyone and we ensure our resources and energy are applied efficiently. Their special educational needs and disabilities will be picked up at the earliest point with support routinely put in place quickly, and their parents and carers will know what services they can reasonably expect to be provided. Children and young people and their parents and carers will be fully involved in decisions about their support and what they want to achieve.

4. Our commitment

As a SEND Partnership, all relevant organisations in Cheshire East are committed to providing the best quality education and support for children and young people.

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

Happy and healthy

Achieving their potential

Part of their communities

Independent as possible, making choices about their future.

5. What we face

We are publishing this strategy as we come out of unprecedented times due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Children with disabilities and their families / parent carers in particular have experienced significant pressures from the impact of COVID on them and their support services. There is significant pressures on resources across the SEND system (including a high needs funding block under extreme pressure) and children and young people and their parents/carers expectations quite rightly remain high. 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 their best possible outcomes. Our SEND revisit in May 2021 by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission scrutinised whether we had made sufficient progress in addressing two areas of significant weaknesses identified at a previous inspection in 2018, which were:

- the timeliness, process and quality of education, health and care (EHC) plans; and
- establishing an effective autism spectrum disorder (ASD) pathway and in reducing waiting times.

Inspectors found that, since their last visit, the timeliness, process and quality of EHC plans have been transformed, saying that by early 2020, almost every needs assessment was completed within the 20-week deadline, compared to less than one in six in 2018.

Regarding support for children and young people with autism, inspectors found that more children are starting nursery and school with their needs understood and met. Families have also been offered support and training, so they can better understand and support their child. In terms of waiting times, in 2018 more than 200 children and young people were waiting more than 12 weeks for their first assessment, but by March 2020, this had reduced to two weeks.

The improvements identified in our revisit and the feedback from inspectors to improve our communication with parents and carers surrounding our improvement journey is captured within this strategy. This will be monitored and scrutinised on a bi-monthly 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 three years

to ensure we continue to develop our services in response to what is most important and what makes the most difference to our children and young people with SEND and their families.

We will only achieve a stable, creative and personalised offer for children and young people with SEND by maximising our capacity and resources available to support children and their families. Early identification of support needs and strategies to prevent those needs escalating should be a key focus.



6. Local and National drivers

National drivers

- The Children and Families Act (2014)
- The SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- The Care Act (2014)
- The Mental Capacity Act (2005)
- NHS Long Term Plan (2019)
- NHS Mental Health Investment Standard (2020)
- NICE Transition from Children's to Adults' Services for young people using health and social care services (2016)
- Equality Act 2020
- Autism Strategy
- Outcome of the current national SEND Review

Local drivers

- Children and Young People's Plan (2019-2021)
- Cheshire East Corporate Plan (2021-2025) and Medium-Term Financial Strategy
- Cheshire East Partnership 5-Year Plan
- Access to SEND services Framework
- Multi-agency Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) Strategy
- Children's Joint Commissioning Strategy (2021-2023)
- SEND Partnership Sufficiency Statement (2020) and SEN Provision Plan (2020-2023)
- NHS Cheshire CCG Plan (2019/20)
- Cheshire East All-Age Autism Strategy (2020-2023)
- 'My Life, My Choice' Cheshire East Learning Disability Strategy (2019-2022)
- Cheshire East All-Age Mental Health Strategy (2019-2022)

7. What our children and young people tell us

Local children and young people with SEND shared their views on what is important for this strategy through the completion of individual SEND Passports with sections on different topics. All of their individual contributions were captured and have been summarised below.

Area	What is working well?	What's not working well?	What would make it better?
Education, Health and Care Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My Plan helps people to understand me, to think about all of my needs, and to know what I need help with. • I feel listened to and that my views are heard, and I am involved in meetings. • The support I get in class/college/my support internship is helpful, and I am enjoying college/my supported internship. • I feel there are people I can talk to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Coronavirus pandemic has made some things more difficult, e.g. finding work experience, starting new support from organisations etc. • Anxiety needs can be a barrier to attending meetings or can be triggered by certain class/course subjects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More subject options and work opportunities. • More support around anxiety needs. • More opportunities to do things on my own at an earlier age to make me a little bit more independent. • Recapping what my EHC Plan says and what the next step will be.
My Education and Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having support from different places to prepare for the world of work, including job coaches and organisations being proactive in looking for work experience. • I have a good plan in place for what I want to do when I'm older/after school or college, and how to get there. • I am enjoying my classes/course and am happy to be working towards milestones and targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some difficulties in finding suitable options and work experience placements, especially due to the Coronavirus pandemic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More support for employers to encourage more of them to offer job opportunities, and more options for older young people. • Being able to visit colleges and providers, and access my placement, when Covid-19 restrictions ease. • Improved communication, such as people repeating instructions about tasks or giving me specific dates about when things are going to happen.
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am able to get the health appointments and treatments that I need and can book appointments fairly quickly and know how to do this. • I have been referred to, or have received, a diagnosis, and appreciate the support I have from different professionals to manage my health needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may need more support or specialists to meet my health needs fully. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier access to some services, and shorter assessment times.
Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I get the support and help I need to meet my care needs. Support is given by different people, including school/college staff, social workers, job coaches, carers, personal assistants and family. I also do self-care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I sometimes need more support with practical issues, e.g. to resolve issues with manoeuvring a frame around pot holes, or being able to hear in noisy places. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For people to give me more independence. • More deaf awareness in the general population.

Area	What is working well?	What's not working well?	What would make it better?
People who help me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are lots of different people who are aware of my needs that I can speak to and ask for help if I need it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some struggles with friendships and being in lockdown during the Covid pandemic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People to continue to treat me as a young adult. Being able to attend social groups and clubs again in person.
Opportunities and Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I spend time with my friends and family. I access different activities, such as virtual youth groups, attending a Duke of Edinburgh group, sports clubs, dance lessons etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no youth club activities, or activities for people with learning disabilities, where I live. Covid-19 has stopped me doing things. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I hope some of the activities that I did before Covid-19 will restart soon, and that we can meet in person when it is safe. Local groups or opportunities to socialise with people in our area.

8. What parents and carers tell us

"Honest and open communication using clear language with children and young people and their parents"

"A single point of contact who provides support during and after the initial assessment and timely / effective communication"

"Kindness, understanding and empathy demonstrated in all communications"

"Parents, children and young people are central to all discussions and contribute as equal partners"

"Information and support are provided to enable children, young people and parents to engage meaningfully"

"Clear information on the role of the local authority and partners in monitoring provision"

"To truly understand the needs of children and work collaboratively to develop a person centred plan"

"Understanding of current legislation with regular training to ensure everyone is up to date"

"Children, young people and their parents will proactively be asked to provide feedback"

"Children and young people have the support they need"

"Settings deliver what is in the plan and parents are happy with provision"

"A greater range of provision is available"

9. Need in Cheshire East

There are approximately **84,200** children and young people under 19 in Cheshire East, which is 22% 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.

9.1. Needs are increasing and changing

As at January 2021, **5072** children and young people receive SEN Support in Cheshire East, and **3145** children and young people aged 0-25 in Cheshire East have specialist needs and have an Education, Health and Care Plan. 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 changing in the range and complexity of need they require support with. Proportionally more children and young people with SEND are eligible for free school meals: this equates to just over 25% of pupils with SEND compared to 9.5% children and young people with no SEND in Cheshire East (25.5% of pupils receiving SEN Support and 25.8% pupils with an EHCP are eligible as in the School Census, January 2020).



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10. Three stages of system confidence

This Strategy sets out the important building blocks to achieve our vision and commitment to children and young people with SEND and their families. We will utilise the analogy of riding a bike to explain the Strategy in a straightforward manner. The principles of riding a bike from a young age are:

Riding a bike	SEND
Good stabilisers and confidence	Our partnership is clear on its priorities, has sufficient resources that are used effectively, and everyone is confident in our work together.
Right frame and servicing	As children show signs of needing support, they are supported early and effectively. As needs grow, a person-centred approach is taken, and this is checked with parents on a regular basis.
Personal touches	Children are at the centre of all we do; regular co-production and personalised communication ensures children and young people's hopes, and aspirations are met.



A group of our parents and partners got together and listed all the important things we should remember when working together (co-producing) on SEND. The results are shown as 'visual minutes' on the following page. Although a strategic discussion with our Parent Carer Forum these minutes can be used as the basis for improving co-production across the wider body of parents and carers.

We will hang this in every office, clinic, school and setting across our partnership, along with our TOGETHER principles, as a constant reminder of putting children and families at the centre of all that we do.



In order to build on this piece of work, a charter for how the SEND Partnership and parents and carers work together will be developed to build on the mantra of 'co-production, co-production, co-production'.

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GOOD STABILISERS AND CONFIDENCE

CULTURE – *“Culture eats strategy for breakfast”* - the culture across our SEND partnership will determine the success of our drive to improve the outcomes and life-chances for children with SEND. By putting children and young people at the heart of all we do and supporting their **individual** needs and what is important to them, both now and in the future, we will achieve success. A positive / transparent culture across the SEND partnership and improved communication with parents and carers will build confidence and trust in all we do.

INCLUSION - children and young people are supported to access the same services, activities, and opportunities as their peers wherever possible.

FLEXIBLE AND WELL-TRAINED WORKFORCE - training the whole workforce and parent and carers **Together** will create a skilled and cohesive force for achieving good outcomes. Given the increase in demand and complexity of needs, it is even more important that our workforce can respond proactively and flexibly to patterns of demand.

Co-production, Co-production, Co-production is embedded and **Together principles applied** to ensure 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.

SUFFICIENT LOCAL, GOOD QUALITY SEN SCHOOL PLACES - children and young people can access their school place, support and activities within their local area wherever possible, and they are part of their local community.

DEMAND MANAGEMENT AND BEST USE OF RESOURCES - support is planned to meet the needs of children and young people in our area so we have the right types of support, with the right amount of availability, that are delivered effectively through multi-disciplinary teams. We are creative and innovative in meeting children and young people’s needs. Needs are met early to prevent escalation.

GOOD INTELLIGENCE - targeting support effectively and efficiently based on comprehensive, good quality, timely data and feedback from as many sources as possible.

SUPPORT - the best quality support is underpinned by good quality, timely, child and young person-centred processes, assessments and plans.

ASSESSMENT - a strong SEN needs assessment enables us to determine what support is needed, and a good quality EHCP ensures all the key parties are involved in developing a solution together. 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.

OVERARCHING REQUIREMENTS

How we ensure good stabilisers and confidence is achieved:

- Regular checking in with children and young people, parents/carers & settings and clear routes for constructive feedback that maintains relationships.
- Timely, effective Annual Reviews of EHC Plans.
- Quality Assurance.
- Reflection on feedback and making the necessary changes.

RIGHT FRAME AND SERVICING

SEN SUPPORT - support is tailored to the needs of the individual child. A graduated approach 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.

A GRADUATED APPROACH - 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. Quality First Teaching and Learning, as well as effective health and social care services is the key.

MAINTAINING STABILITY OF SCHOOL PLACE - our support teams are well trained, proactive and flexible to meet the changing profile of needs. Our teams work in a multi-disciplinary way and make best use of our Cheshire East Toolkit for SEND.

DIAGNOSIS AND PATHWAYS (e.g. AUTISM, ADHD) - assessment processes and diagnosis are timely, and communication along the way is effective. It is important that pre and post diagnosis support is person-centred, and evidence based, not based on what support/skills we have available. We should avoid silo pathways as needs commonly co-exist.

JOINT COMMISSIONING - we need to make the most of our resources as a partnership to meet the needs of individuals and groups of children and young people. We utilise all the rich intelligence and feedback to plan the purchase/redesign of support needed, and constantly review that outcomes for children are being achieved.

EARLY EFFECTIVE PLANNING FOR KEY TRANSITION POINTS - from Early Years through to Post-16 preparation for adulthood, each transition point should be carefully thought through for each young person, taking account of the different environment they are moving on to, clear and timely data sharing between settings, and sharing of good practice.

EARLY PLANNING FOR PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD - to ensure young people have time to adjust and feel comfortable with their preparation for adulthood, allowing time to build the right Post-16 offer that recognises the wide range of young people's goals and unique solutions to achieving them.

OVERARCHING REQUIREMENTS

How we ensure the right framework and servicing is achieved:

- Regular checking in with children and young people, parents/carers & settings and clear routes for constructive feedback that maintains relationships.
- Timely, effective Annual Reviews of EHC Plans.
- Quality Assurance.
- Reflection on feedback and making the necessary changes.

OFFICIAL

PERSONAL TOUCHES

BESPOKE OUTCOMES THAT ARE ASPIRATIONAL - we aim high for children and young people with SEND, and every plan, review and action to support has the lived experience and outcome for the child at the heart.

PERSONAL BUDGETS - an amount of money to deliver the provision set out in an Education, Health and Care Plan where the parent or young person is involved in securing that provision, increasing personalisation of support and involvement of families in decision making.

EVERYONE FEELING A GENUINE PART OF THE SEND FAMILY - if we let it, SEND can feel complicated and lonely for children/young people and their families. We will look for every opportunity to act as one SEND family working TOGETHER, embracing feedback, views and input from parents. We will welcome it as the useful gift it is and use it effectively to improve support and outcomes.

KNOWING THE INDIVIDUAL CHILD AND PERSONALISED COMMUNICATION - ensure support teams contacting families have familiarised themselves with the young person before engaging. Ensure learning from complaints changes practice and changes are visible to parents.

OVERARCHING REQUIREMENTS

How we ensure that personal touches are achieved:

- Regular checking in with children and young people, parents/carers & settings and clear routes for constructive feedback that maintains relationships.
- Timely, effective Annual Reviews.
- Quality Assurance.
- Reflection on feedback and making the necessary changes.

11. Potential Risks

The Local Authority and NHS Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group have invested significant financial resources into the SEND teams and support for autism, emotional and mental health over the past two years. This has provided a basis for good improvement across SEND; however, the demands at SEN Support, levels of EHC needs assessments, and Education, Health and Care Plans, continues to put pressure on the whole SEND system.

As with many local authorities across the country, Cheshire East Council's high needs funding is projecting a £10m - £12m deficit over the coming three years and we are currently working with the Department for Education on a Recovery Plan.

In 2021-22 the government is set to announce the findings of a national SEND Review and our SEND Strategy will have to flex and respond to the recommendations.

12. Governance

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.

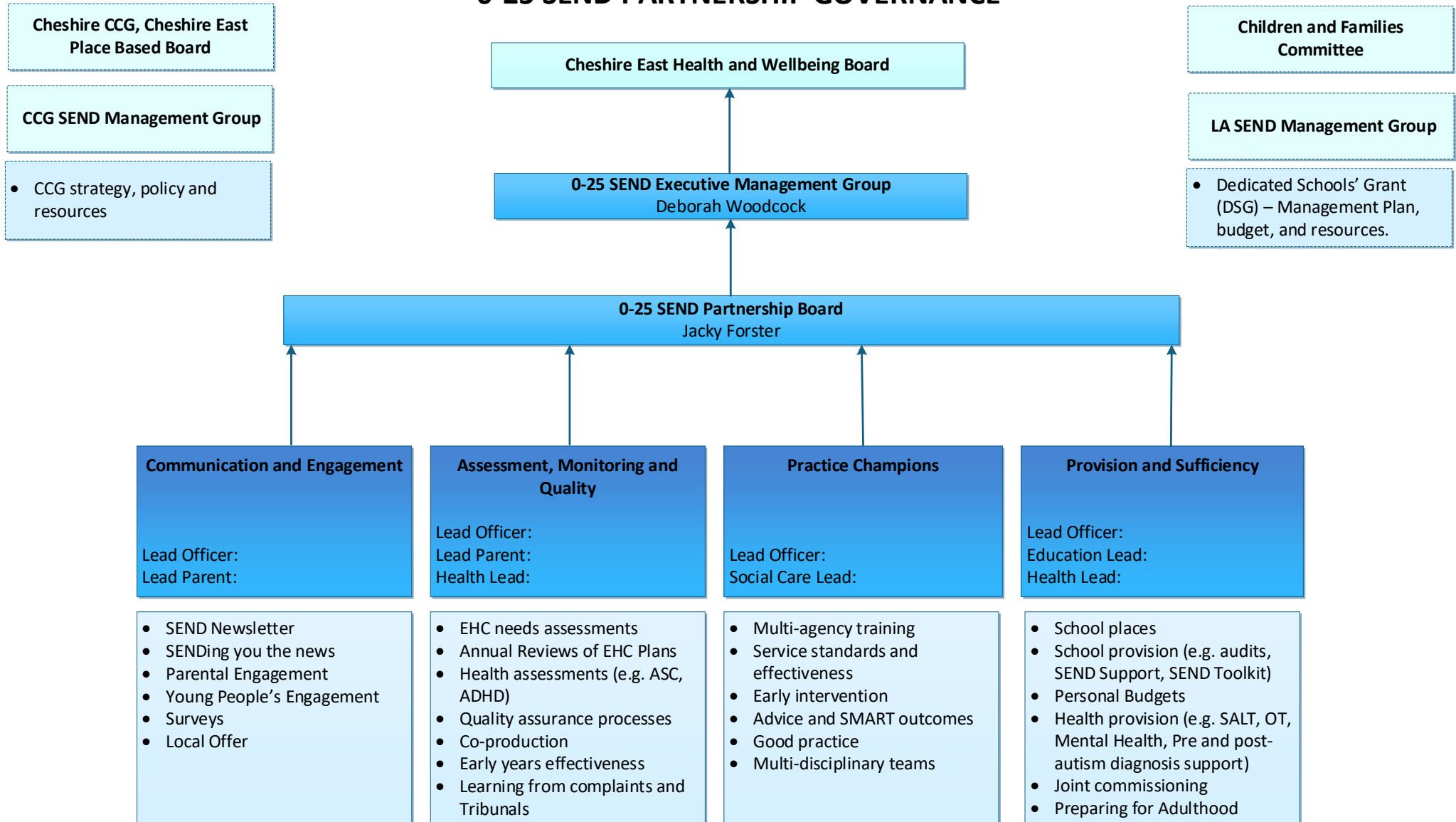
The whole SEND system needs to work together effectively in order to improve the support for children and young people with special

educational needs and disabilities (SEND) across Cheshire East. This work is being driven by the 0-25 SEND Partnership Board.

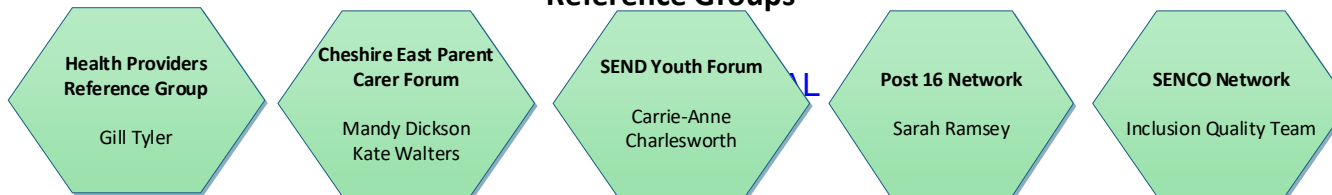
The Board is responsible for developing and delivering our SEND Strategy, in order to maximise life opportunities and positive outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families. It includes representatives from the local authority, primary and secondary schools, further education providers, CCG and health provider services, early years, and the Cheshire East Parent Carer Forum. A governance structure for the SEND Partnership is shown on the following page.



0-25 SEND PARTNERSHIP GOVERNANCE



Reference Groups



13. Impact

13.1. How will we know we have succeeded?

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 our priorities and in evaluating what difference we are making.

Ultimately, we will evaluate our success against the difference we make to the lives of our children and young people. We will use our Quality Assurance Framework alongside 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:

13.2. Qualitative Measures

Multi-agency audits will be used 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.

13.3. Performance Measures

A 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 Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans by primary need, age group and locality, the number of requests for EHC needs assessments, and the timeliness of completion, and the performance of various health services.

13.4. Feedback from Families and Practitioners

We will embed a culture and structure of listening to families and practitioners to ensure effective recording and monitoring of all feedback and queries. Clear and transparent structures will be in place to evidence learning from feedback and where this has prompted change and further service developments. Mechanisms for gaining feedback on EHC needs assessments and Plans, and our Local Offer (both our provision and the quality of support) will be further enhanced and embedded.

14. Action Plan

It is important that the delivery of the priority actions from the previous SEND Strategy, and the momentum that has been achieved, is not lost as we move to a new SEND Strategy. A significant amount of improvement has been achieved over the last three years and as you would expect across SEND, many of the improvements require further ongoing attention to ensure they are fully embedded and monitored to ensure their positive impact is a reality for children, young people and their families. The SEND Partnership Board structures will **continue to focus** on the following areas:

- Improving the quality of EHC Plans. Ensure a clear focus on SEND outcomes, and on what impact support is having for children and young people and how this is supporting them to achieve their aspirations.
- Sufficiency of local, good quality SEN school places.
- Improvements in the timeliness and transparency of the autism assessment pathways from referral, first appointment, assessment to receiving an outcome. Ensuring a continued focus on the support provided pre and post diagnosis.
- Ensuring co-production is at the heart of all we do.

Taking account of the continued work described above, and the detailed actions contained in our all-age strategies for Autism, Mental Health and Learning Disability, the priorities for 2021 – 2024 have been split into three years to ensure that the workload is spread and everyone

driving the improvements has a clear focus on achieving positive impact for children and young people.



1. Improving Communication and coproduction with families

We want to achieve:

- An embedded culture of co-production when planning support and services
- An embedded culture and structure of listening to families and effective communication and relationships between families and professionals
- Families have a clear understanding of the progress and achievements of the SEND Partnership
- Clear information for families on all aspects of the SEND system and in particular the range of support and services available

How we will know if we have achieved this:

- Multi-agency audits will show that plans are effective, person-centred, focused on the lived experience and tangible outcomes and that families have been fully involved in developing solutions to meet the child/young person's individual needs.
- Service developments, plans and strategies will clearly evidence the views of parents / carers, children and young people from a wide age range and ability and how they have been involved in shaping services.
- Families will provide positive feedback on the quality of service they receive and will report that there is good communication between themselves and professionals and that they were involved and informed throughout the process.
- Families will be able to see how their views have shaped services and will feel listened to and valued by the partnership.
- Professionals will report that they have good relationship with families, and there is good communication and strong links between their service and other professionals, and a good understanding and appreciation of each other's roles.
- Usage and feedback on the Local Offer will show that families find the information on our services clear, informative, and accessible.

1.1. Year 1 (September 2021 – August 2022)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's Responsible	Complete by
1.1.1.	Refresh the communication strategy to promote the work of the 0-25 SEND Partnership and engage and update key stakeholders on progress.	Our stakeholders feedback that they receive appropriate, timely and clear communication	Communication and Engagement working group	October 2021
1.1.2.	Refresh the SEND communication promise between professionals, parents/carers and young people with SEND.	Families tell us that support staff take a personalised and proactive approach when communicating.	Communication and Engagement working group	December 2021

1.1.3.	Develop a co-production charter with families to support working TOGETHER across the partnership.	Regular audits of the application of co-production confirm the charter is embedded in practice	Communication and Engagement working group	December 2021
1.1.4.	Develop a mechanism to capture and share best practice and person-centred work.	Practice workshops evidence that learning has been applied and changes are visible to parents.	Practice Champions	January 2022 (termly)
1.1.5.	Develop a termly e-newsletter for distribution to all parents and carers of children/young people with SEND through education and health settings.	Our parents and carers feedback that they receive appropriate, timely and clear communication	Communication and Engagement working group	November 2021
1.1.6.	Simplify key communications into 'at a glance' one-page summaries.	Parents and carers feedback that communication is user friendly	Communication and Engagement working group	Ongoing
1.1.7.	Develop a forward plan of joint training opportunities for parents and carers to up-skill together with support teams.	All stakeholders report that they have the right skills to succeed and there are fewer complaints, fewer queries and greater confidence	Practice Champions	February 2022
1.1.8.	Agree process for preparing and publishing annual Local Offer feedback and partnerships' response.	Effective plan in place that listens and acts upon feedback	Communication and Engagement working group	TBC
1.1.9.	Replicate Local Offer 'quick links' webpage on the Parent Carer Forum website.	To help facilitate parent carer use of the Local Offer for SEND and ensure that parent carers can easily access relevant information.	Communication and Engagement working group	September 2021

1.2. Year 2 (September 2022 – August 2023)				
Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's Responsible	Complete by
1.2.1.	Implement Parent / Carer access to Child's electronic case record (Liquid Logic).	Parents and carers feedback they are confident with the approach to share information from all SEND areas	Assessment, Monitoring and Quality	September 2022
1.2.2.	Embed joint training opportunities for parents and carers to up-skill together with support teams.	All stakeholders report that they have the right skills to succeed	Practice Champions	Ongoing
1.3. Year 3 (September 2023 – August 2024)				
Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's Responsible	Complete by
1.3.1.	No new actions			

2. Access to Provision and Support

We want to achieve:

- Early and effective support at each level of a graduated response to children's needs
- Children and young people access good quality local schools
- Best use of resources across partner agencies which deliver good outcomes for children and young people
- Effective monitoring and quality assurance of settings and support services that ensures continuous improvement of services and proactive use of feedback from all stakeholders

How we will know if we have achieved this:

- Feedback from children and young people, parents / carers, settings, professionals and providers on the lived experience of children and young people and their families
- Fewer parental needs assessment requests
- Fewer crises and better outcomes for children and young people.
- Children and young people are in the most appropriate setting. The rationale for children and young people that attend independent non-maintained special schools is complexity of need, location of most appropriate school and links to SEN code of practice

2.1. Year 1 (September 2021 – August 2022)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's Responsible	Complete by
2.1.1.	Ensure effective joint commissioning arrangements in place	Every opportunity is taken to join commissioned delivery of services and make best use of resources	Sufficiency and Provision Workstream	Ongoing
2.1.2.	Review of Resource Provision to ensure sufficiency of provision is aligned to need (initial focus on HI and SALT)	HI and SALT Resource Provisions impact on children and evidence best use of resources	Sufficiency and Provision Workstream	December 2021
2.1.3.	Ensure sufficient and sustainable pre and post Autism Support	Children and young people and their parents, Providers and settings feedback that support is effective / timely and has a positive impact on ongoing lived experience	Sufficiency and Provision Workstream	October 2021

2.1.4.	Review health provisions to ensure sufficient assessment capacity and provision to meet needs of children and young people. (OT, SALT, ASD, ADHD and CAMHS)	Performance management structures and parents and carers report that assessments across the range of needs are timely	Sufficiency and Provision Workstream	January 2022
2.1.5.	Ensure the SEND Toolkit is embedded to support SEN Support to make interventions more robust, trustworthy and enforceable, with clear escalation routes if Toolkit not being applied. The Toolkit should model the support required to enable children/young people to stay in mainstream as appropriate (SEMH should be a focus).	Fewer parental needs assessment requests. Needs assessment requests evidence that a graduated response and appropriate elements of the Toolkit have been applied. Children and young people are stable and progressing in their school place. Settings, professionals and Parent and carers feedback that early identification of needs and support strategies are effective.	Sufficiency and Provision Workstream	Ongoing
2.1.6.	Ensure sufficient SEN school capacity and wrap around services are in place to meet the increased demand through rising EHCPs.	Children and young people can access good quality local schools Travel time to school is minimised through increased sufficiency of local SEN places	Sufficiency and Provision Workstream	Phases over 3 years
2.1.7.	Implement the Multi-Agency Preparing for Adulthood Strategy	Young people tell us that that they feel prepared for adult life and continued analysis of destinations shows positive outcomes	Sufficiency and Provision Workstream	Actions over 3 years
2.1.8.	Review and make improvements to the early signposting of families with children with disabilities to the full range of support across community settings and provision. Extend the reach and content of coffee morning to ensure families are referred	Designated Social Care Officer, children and young people and parents and carers tell us that they are advised and supported early and when they most need it.	Short breaks team and Children's Commissioning	December 2021

	to services early and consistent / effective information is offered to parents about the full breadth of the short break local offer.			
2.1.9.	Recommission care at home to broaden the offer to families of children with disabilities.	A good range of support in the home is available to families	Head of Children's Commissioning	June 2022

2.2. Year 2 (September 2022 – August 2023)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's Responsible	Complete by
2.2.1.	Provide clear guidance on Education other than at School (EOTAS) and Personal Budgets.	Professionals across the SEND partnership and parents and carers tell us that arrangements surrounding EOTAS and access to Personal Budgets are clear	Sufficiency and Provision Workstream	October 2022
2.2.2.	Ensure Personal Budgets are offered to parents where this may be a preference.	Uptake of Personal Budgets increases	Sufficiency and Provision Workstream	Ongoing
2.2.3.	Develop a system of quality audits - ensuring settings deliver the provision in the SEN Plan and EHCP and checking out the lived experienced of children and families.	Partners understand the quality of provision and agree timely improvement plans with the setting as appropriate. We should see less escalation of need and better outcomes for children and young people and confidence in the system from the perspective of parents and carers.	Sufficiency and Provision Workstream	Ongoing
2.2.4	Review the process for school staff and parents to flag up concerns about meeting the needs of children in schools and delivery of provision in the plan.	The process is seen to be effective and has a clear understanding of context. Staff and parents feel supported and positive relationships are maintained	Sufficiency and Provision Workstream	November 2022

2.3. Year 3 (September 2023 – August 2024)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's Responsible	Complete by
2.3.1.	Enhance the online platform for education staff and SENCOs in different schools to collaborate, ask questions and share best practice.	SENCOs report that they feel connected	Sufficiency and Provision Workstream	September 2023

3. Improve timeliness and quality of Annual Reviews of EHC Plans

We want to achieve:

- All EHC Plans are reviewed in a timely manner and issued within statutory timescales (requirement!).
- Existing EHC Plans are updated to the same quality standards as new EHC Plans.
- EHC Plans better reflect the whole range of needs of children and young people with SEND.
- Preparing for Adulthood is a thread throughout all EHC Plans.

How we will know if we have achieved this:

- Parents and carers and children and young people tell us they understand the review process and expected impact.
- All stakeholders report fewer queries and complaints arising from different expectations.
- The best outcomes for individual children and young people are achieved

3.1. Year 1 (September 2021 – August 2022)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's Responsible	Complete by
3.1.1.	Increase capacity to process annual reviews following review meetings, through increasing capacity in EHC Plan Writers.	Children and young people receive an accurately updated EHCP following review in a timely manner	Assessment, Monitoring and Quality Workstream	December 2021
3.1.2.	Further develop our annual review tracker to ensure improved monitoring through the stages and ensure timeliness.	Children and young people receive an accurately updated EHCP following review in a timely manner	Assessment, Monitoring and Quality Workstream	September 2021
3.1.3.	Introduce non-negotiables for settings to support the annual review process.	Children and young people receive an updated plan that has full input from all those who know them	Assessment, Monitoring and Quality Workstream	October 2021

3.1.4.	Develop and share guidance for parents on what to expect and how to maximise effectiveness of an annual review.	Parents and carers and children and young people tell us they understand the review process and expected impact. Cheshire East Information and Advice Service, SEND Team and Cheshire East Parent Carer Forum will report fewer queries and complaints arising from different expectations. Ultimately the measure of success is the outcomes for individual children and young people.	Assessment, Monitoring and Quality Workstream	December 2021
3.1.5.	Ensure that proactive forward planning is in place for all transition stages.	Children and young people and their parents and carers tell us that Annual Reviews have had a positive impact on transitions	Assessment, Monitoring and Quality Workstream	Ongoing
3.1.6.	Ensure annual reviews are holistic and that health, social care and other specialist services or providers contribute to reviews where appropriate.	Children and young people and their parents and carers receive an updated plan that has full input from all those who know the child	Assessment, Monitoring and Quality Workstream	Ongoing
3.1.7.	Develop and share clear guidance on when and how EHC Plans are ceased.	Everyone involved with a child understands the rationale and timing of a plan ending and what next and continuing safety nets / supports available	Assessment, Monitoring and Quality Workstream	February 2022

3.2. Year 2 (September 2022 – August 2023)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's Responsible	Complete by
3.2.1.	No new actions			

3.3. Year 3 (September 2023 – August 2024)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's Responsible	Complete by
3.3.1.	No new actions			

4. Effective and Supported Workforce

We want to achieve:

- A knowledgeable, flexible, and integrated workforce that is passionate and dedicated in all its work.
- Support and information for children and young people and their families, that is accessible, timely and of the highest quality.

How we will know if we have achieved this:

- Multi-agency audits will show that plans are effective (tracking the lived experience), integrated and person-centred, and that families have been fully involved in developing solutions to meet the child/ young person's individual needs
- Families will provide positive feedback on the quality of service they receive and the outcomes achieved. Families will experience integrated support and will report that they are confident that professionals are knowledgeable in supporting SEND.
- Professionals will report that they feel confident in supporting children and young people with SEND and fully explaining the sometimes difficult decision that need to be made.
- Children and young people and parents and carers appreciate the consistent, well informed responses that breeds greater confidence and fewer queries and complaints.

4.1. Year 1 (September 2021 – August 2022)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's Responsible	Complete by
4.1.1.	Introduce the Dedicated Social Care Officer role to further improve the assessment of wider social needs of children and young people and appropriate provision.	Better identification of wider social needs with provision specified in EHC Plans.	Practice Champions	October 2021
4.1.2.	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.	All partners have the same expectations and understanding of the SEND offer. Greater satisfaction, improved outcomes for children and young people and better staff and user confidence. All stakeholders report fewer queries and complaints. The	Practice Champions	Ongoing

		training programme is constantly adapted evidencing a learning culture that continually improves practice and is responsive to complaints, feedback and effectiveness		
4.1.3.	Tailored intervention and intensive support for individual settings based on data/intelligence collation.	All settings understand and deliver interventions in line with our Toolkit for SEND.	Practice Champions	Ongoing
4.1.4.	Create an Autism aware workforce and provider infrastructure through the implementation of the Autism Education Trust (AET) Training hub.	Autistic children and young people tell us they experience an Autism Friendly SEND partnership.	Practice Champions	Phased over 3 years
4.1.5.	Establish more early intervention strategies for behaviour support through Education Psychologists and SEND partners.	Settings understand and have the skills to manage appropriate inventions at SEN support and manage behaviour.	Practice Champions	February 2022

4.2. Year 2 (September 2022 – August 2023)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's Responsible	Complete by
4.2.1.	Co-produce and deliver joint sessions for parents and professionals to explore and develop understanding of a 'day in the life of' each other and improve early identification of SEND and support parents with new issues seen at home.	All Partners value the role and contributions of others and work within a positive solution focused culture.	Practice Champions	Sept 2022 and Phased over 2 years

4.3. Year 3 (September 2023 – August 2024)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's Responsible	Complete by
4.3.1.	No new actions			

5. COVID-19 Recovery

We want to achieve:

- A flexible, agile and effective SEND partnership that manages crisis situations well and takes the learning and positives and makes them the norm.

How we will know if we have achieved this:

- Children and young people and parents and carers regularly respond to say that our SEND Partnership is flexible, openly listens to service users and responds quickly.
- Our business continuity plans are independently assessed and deemed fit for purpose to manage any future crisis effectively.
- There is improved communications and open routes for services users to escalate concerns and queries.

5.1. Year 1 (September 2021 – August 2022)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's Responsible	Complete by
5.1.1.	Refresh business continuity plans in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and develop services utilising the learning, positive feedback and flexibility evidenced during the pandemic	A SEND partnership on the front foot. Children and young people and parents and carers regularly respond to say that our SEND Partnership is flexible, openly listens to service users and responds quickly. There is improved communications and open routes for services users to escalate concerns and queries where their experience didn't match the published expectations.	SEND Partnership	September 2021

5.1.2.	Embed the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Return to School resources and support team.	Children and young people feel healthy in mind when returning to school	SEND Partnership	September 2021
5.1.3.	Plan a workshop with NHS Cheshire CCG, mental health providers and other partners to assess best practice and gaps in support (with a focus on early identification and prevention, and anxiety training).	The SEND partnership recognises mental health needs are increasing as co-existing conditions alongside SEND and take action to improve support	SEND Partnership	November 2021

5.2. Year 2 (September 2022 – August 2023)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's Responsible	Complete by
5.2.1.	No new actions			

5.3. Year 3 (September 2023 – August 2024)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's Responsible	Complete by
5.3.1.	No new actions			



Your thoughts matter

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