

# SEND Improvement Update



## Update on Progress since the May 2021 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Revisit undertaken by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC)

Birmingham City Council and the CCG take the findings of the Local Area (Council and NHS) revisit extremely seriously and are working to make immediate and long term improvements with our Accelerated Progress Plan. In order to keep you up to date with those we are **producing regular termly updates on progress** made to improve our services for children and young people with SEND.

The Commissioner has recently published his report on his findings in Birmingham; his letter and report can be found here: [www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/ofsted2021/ofsted-revisit-outcome/](http://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/ofsted2021/ofsted-revisit-outcome/)

We are grateful to the commissioner for his work in Birmingham and believe that his report offers a fair reflection of the service.

The Government has also now published a more accessible Green Paper on the SEND which is currently out for [consultation](#), which you can be part of. Please do express your views on the proposals; the deadline is 22nd July.

The following outlines the progress that has and is being made by the SEND partnership on the areas of weakness identified by inspectors.

## Newsletter Highlights

Termly update on SEND progress

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The improvement plan for Birmingham SEND

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Co-production agreement

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Improving SEND support in Mainstream schools

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Waiting List improvements

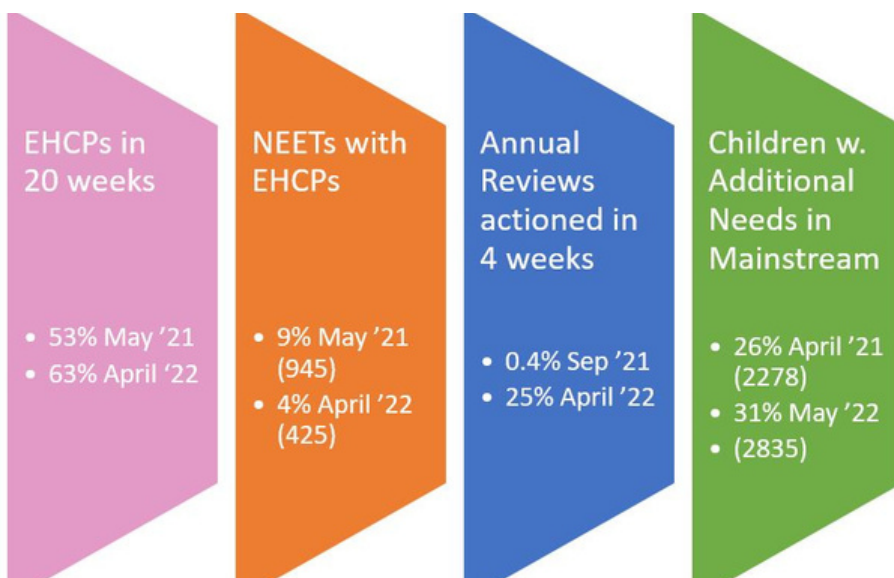
## SEND strategies are being updated and improved

- We are working on a refreshed SEND strategy in co-production with partners. The Strategy is being co-produced as a partnership piece of work and will link with the Inclusion Strategy the SEND Sufficiency Strategy and the overarching Children's Plan.
- If you wish to be part of the consultation for this work, please contact Olabisi Romeo - [Olabisi.Romeo@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:Olabisi.Romeo@birmingham.gov.uk). The final draft of these strategies will be available in November 22.
- A new Communications and Engagement strategy has been co-produced with partners and will be shared with the SEND Improvement Board in July.

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## SENAR processes have been improved

- The ECHP template and all associated documentation has been reviewed and improved. We plan to have these in place by September with the new case management system.
- The school phase transfers statutory deadlines were met in February 2022 which means that every SEND child transferring to a new school in September knows where they are going at a much earlier stage
- The Quality of EHCPs is being addressed through the new Quality Assurance Framework which comes into use this month and will be available on the SEND Local Offer website.



## Process improvements Year on Year



## Co-production/Engagement has improved and is being embedded

- A Parent Carer Survey was undertaken in May 2022, which has 788 responses (compared to 378 in 2019 and 226 in 2018)
- A definition of co-production has been agreed on and work is taking place to embed co-production across the SEND partnership
- The SEND Local Offer website is being improved and refreshed (72% of people using it say it is useful – May 22) 65% of parents and carers asked had not heard of it
- Regular SEND newsletters and SEND Improvement updates are now being issued to all stakeholders



## Working well together processes have been put in place

- The partnership has co-produced a Co-production Framework and Charter and is working on a Mapping Report (how to plan to embed Co-production). These will be available on the SEND Local Offer website once they have been approved at the SEND Improvement Board.
- A Joint Working Protocol has been agreed in principle (for Education Health Care Needs Assessment process) and the local senior leaders from Health, Education (Birmingham City Council) and Social Care (Birmingham Children's Trust) are all committed to working more effectively together. Once finalised, this will be available on the SEND Local Offer website – end of August 2022.
- A suite of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) is being created with some already in place and being used and others needing to evolve before being implemented. Once finalised, this will be available on the SEND Local Offer website – end of August 2022.

## Parent and Carer SEND services Survey – A Thank You

Thank you to the many parents and carers who have taken the time to complete the Birmingham SEND Parent Carer Survey. The survey has received over 780 replies, many more than we expected.

Work will be done in partnership with the Parent Carer Forum, over the coming weeks to carefully analyse the responses and comments received. Once this is completed the report and findings will be published on the SEND Local Offer Website ([www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk](http://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk))

## Academic Progress & Outcomes

### Improving Progress and Outcomes

- The pilot is complete and the project which allows all schools to track and compare progress of SEND pupils is currently being rolled out.
- This is the first time schools have been able to track and compare progress in SEND pupils and is a huge step forward in improving the education for SEND pupils.

### Developing Local Provision

- Developing Local Provision (DLP) is a 2 year programme whereby schools and settings in localities are working together to identify needs, resource and provision to improve mainstream SEND provision and improve SEND pupils progress and outcomes.
- DLP is delivered through the 6 Secondary school networks, 16 primary school consortia and the 10 early years districts. There is also a post 16 DLP project with schools, colleges and Aston University involved.

A special school outreach service has also been set up to support delivery of this project and to improve mainstream provision.

Many Secondary and Primary Projects have evidence of good impact on pupils' outcomes e.g. Improvement in attendance, reading ages, reduction in part timetables etc. across their locality/partnership of schools.

Headline figures for a North West Consortia Placement

#### Headline figures- 6 week placement:

1. 13.33% increase in attendance
2. 1 year and 8 months increase in reading and comprehension age (Accelerated Reader)
3. 8.1 increase in standardised score for reading comprehension (Lucid Exact)
4. An average of 1 band increase (Birmingham language and literacy SEN toolkit)
5. 0.4 grade increase in wellbeing for pupils (SEMH 5 point emotion scale)
6. 0.9 grade increase in parental satisfaction for SEND provision



**DLP**

DEVELOPING LOCAL  
PROVISION





## A Review of children out of school process for children and young people, with EHCPs is underway

14-29 Review of Employment Pathways for Young People with SEND + internal review to ensure that Children and Young People pathways are correctly tracked is underway.



## Improvements in the Health Service



### Speech and Language Therapy (SLT)

- SLT average waits for an initial assessment for children who are called to first appointment in the local health centre is 4.9 weeks. Efforts continue to focus on reducing waits to package of care (POC). The wait to POC has reduced from 22 weeks to 17 weeks.
- SLT Staff have been moved internally to support the reduction in waiting times for those children on waiting lists for other teams within SLT (i.e. for children who are seen in nursery, home or in special school)
- Additional temporary Speech and Language Therapists were recruited to support work to reduce waiting times, on fixed term contracts and locums. Seven of these posts have now been made permanent.
- Transformational work has continued moving Birmingham towards a “balanced system” approach to meeting local speech, language, and communication needs (SLCN). This model of working will support the reduction in SLT waiting lists by embedding a system-wide approach, with a wider workforce better equipped to meet SLCN needs.

### Waiting times

The total number of children on the caseload at the end of April 22 is 1135 compared to 1633 in April 21:

- Waiting times have improved since April 21:
- Reduction in the overall waiting list (Clinic & Outreach) by 31%
- Reduction in the average wait times (Clinic & Outreach) by 55%
- Reduction in the longest wait times by (Clinic & Outreach) 46%



## Improvements in the Health Service

### Occupational Therapy (OT)

OT average wait has reduced from 11 weeks (provided at the previous update) to 9 weeks (March 2022). This is for new referrals into the service waiting for initial assessment/first appointment.

### Waiting Times

The total number of children on the caseload at the end of April 22 is 827. This shows the following movement since April 21:

- Reduction in open referrals (total caseload) by 17%
- Reduction in average wait times for initial assessments (New Appointments) by 36%
- Reduction in longest wait for initial assessments (New Appointments) by 42%

### Physiotherapy

- The average wait for physiotherapy has reduced from 29 weeks to 27 weeks (March 2022). This is for new referrals into the service waiting for initial assessment/first appointment.
- A new 'Patient Initiated Follow Up (PIFU)' function has been implemented within the physiotherapy service, which gives families more control over re-accessing services quickly if needed, after a package of care ends.





## Autism Assessment

### School age children:

- Healios (online provider of Autism assessments) were funded to help reduce ASD assessment waiting times for children who are aged 7 and over in Birmingham. By the end of June 2022 Healios will have completed 2215 ASD assessments. 94% of parents from the fourth phase of the additional capacity from Healios (which was completed at the end of Dec 21) were happy with the service and would recommend it. The average waiting time for school aged children is now 32 weeks and there are 357 children waiting.

### Pre-school children:

- There are still significant children waiting for an autism assessment – 2097 with the average wait being 53 weeks.
- Additional capacity has been commissioned from clinical partners. All 100 children have been contacted and their first appointments booked in between Sep 22 – March 23.
- Across all community therapy services:-
- The 'Cross Border Working Principles 2021' have been put into place between Birmingham and Solihull, to ensure smooth and timely access to the appropriate bordering services and support for the child, reducing waiting times. Initial discussions have started to expand these principles to other areas bordering Birmingham and Solihull.



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### Update on All Age Autism support service

The All Age Autism (AAA) support service grant website was launched on the 25th May, and over a £1m will be available to Community Organisations to create bids to provide services around five key themes identified by our experts by experience, these are:

- Sleep - Sensory - Training - Social Groups - Emotional support

## Improvements in the Mental Health Service

### Out-of-hours support for Mental Health crisis - Children and Young People with Learning Disabilities and Autism

Within Forward Thinking Birmingham (FTB) the Disability Intensive Support Enhanced (DICE) team focus on the reduction of crisis, for children and young people with Learning Disability and/or Autism and their families, by providing specialist early intervention work. This service is to be expanded to allow them to offer more support and the service specifications are with the parent carer forums for approval.

Further information about the service <https://forwardthinkingbirmingham.nhs.uk/>



### Support is available for families that are waiting for therapies

- Advice lines have continued to provide information, advice and guidance to families and professionals. Where these were newly created as a response to Covid they have stayed in place following positive feedback received by families. For details of the advice lines please see: <https://www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/patients-public/children-and-young-people/services-parent-portal/>
- The OT service has introduced parent/carer workshops to support families. If a child needs therapy as part of their package of care, specific workshops have been developed for support. Information can be found here: Parent Workshops : Birmingham Community Healthcare ([bhamcommunity.nhs.uk](http://bhamcommunity.nhs.uk))
- The community therapy services continue to promote the range of support, advice, and guidance videos that were developed for specific needs to support families while they wait, these are available on the Trust webpages.
- The community therapy service webpages contain a range of resources, flyers, and links to further support families while they wait for their child's appointment, which are actively promoted with families.

Further information and contact details:-

Occupational Therapy – 0121 683 2325 Occupational Therapy telephone advice line : Birmingham Community Healthcare ([bhamcommunity.nhs.uk](http://bhamcommunity.nhs.uk))

Speech and Language Therapy – 0121 466 6231 <https://www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/patients-public/children-and-young-people/services-parent-portal/birmingham-slt/>

Physiotherapy – 0121 466 5193 <https://www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/patients-public/children-and-young-people/services-parent-portal/paediatric-physiotherapy-service/>





## Hearing Support Team (HST) Teaching Assistant Support Group

There are currently over 590 children and young people with a hearing loss being supported by the Hearing Support Team across educational settings and family homes in Birmingham. Teaching Assistants offer invaluable support to enable children and young people with hearing loss to make progress, develop their independence, and experience successful inclusion.

The Teaching Assistant Support Group was set up by the Hearing Support Team, in response to the needs of the schools and the students. Teams' specialist Higher Level Teaching Assistants have formed a support network and a forum for sharing good practice to improve the quality of support offered to pupils in mainstream settings.

The work of the HST team with designated Teaching Assistants in mainstream settings is vital to ensure that they are given the tools and strategies to empower children and young people with hearing loss to fully access the curriculum and extra-curricular activities in and out of school settings and to be as independent as possible on their journey towards adulthood.

Through this group mainstream Teaching Assistants have gained advice and support on a range of topics such as:

- Deafness and Autism.
- Social Interaction Groups
- Behaviour strategies
- Management of hearing technology including Assistive Listening Devices (radio aids)
- Specialised Language programmes
- A presentation from NDCS to give an insight into their charity



The most recent meeting covered the significant impact of Covid on children's language development and knowledge of the world and the negative impact of wearing masks on children being able to hear and understand well, see lip patterns, and facial expressions.

Two video clips made by HST were shown during the session. The first, 'Supporting baby's language development', demonstrates how language develops in deaf children in the pre-school years and the role of families in supporting this.

The second video, 'Unlocking our deaf world', was created by Birmingham secondary aged deaf pupils, and demonstrates their feelings and thoughts about being deaf in a mainstream school.

[Supporting Your Baby's Language Development - YouTube](#)

[LISTEN! Unlocking Our Deaf World - YouTube](#)