

Suffolk Area SEND Partnership Self-Evaluation Summary

This is a summary for parents, carers and practitioners across education, health and social care services about the impact of our local area partnership arrangements on the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Our SEND Journey in Suffolk

- Currently there are 7,200 children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC plan). 4,500 of them are in schools. A further 14,500 young people are on SEN Support registers in school. Suffolk have around as many children and young people with an EHC plan and SEN Support as other comparable Local Authorities.
- For Suffolk, and nationally, there has been a big growth in the number of children and young people with an EHC plan. This has put a lot of strain on the whole SEND system and has meant that many families have not yet felt the impact of the changes we have been making to improve things.
- Since the 2014 national SEND reforms, Suffolk have put in place key building blocks, some of which are shown in the diagram, to improve support for children, young people and families.
- In 2020 Suffolk recognised that there was continued dissatisfaction with aspects of SEND Services, particularly with the EHC plan process, and that too many parents and carers do not have trust and confidence in the system. In response, leaders commissioned the Independent Review of aspects of SEND Services carried out by Lincolnshire in July 2021.
- An Integrated Plan was developed to drive our SEND strategy. This is now making tangible progress. We know support for children with SEND hasn't been good enough, but we are now making progress and are determined to continue to work together to improve the experience and outcomes for children and young people. We recognise that parents and carers may not yet be feeling the impact of the changes being made.

Key Building Blocks



Building on Better: Suffolk's SEND Strategy 2021-23

Our Vision

Working together, we will support all children and young people with SEND to meet their potential and to live active, healthy and fulfilling lives as part of their communities. Children, young people and their families will be listened to, included and empowered, and will have access to the right support at the right time from the right people.

Our SEND Priorities For 2021-23

1

Priority One:
Communication

2

Priority Two:
The Child/Young
Person's Journey

3

Priority Three:
Commissioning and
Services

4

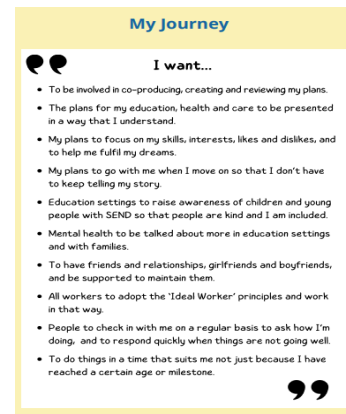
Priority Four:
Preparing for Adulthood

Working with Young People and Families

- The [Suffolk County Council Engagement Hub](#), along with health services help co-ordinate a range of active groups of young people that help us understand [what young people want, and what will make a difference in their local communities and in areas they are interested in.](#) Representatives from the SEND Young Persons Network meet with the SEND Programme Board every year.
- [Suffolk Parent Carer Forum](#) are our strategic co-production partner. They provide robust, continued and valued challenge, making a vital contribution to service improvements and ensuring SEND Area Partners hear about the lived experience of families.
- Healthwatch Suffolk ['My Health, Our Future'](#) survey, now in its 6th phase which focussed on CYP with SEND, has had more than 50,000 responses from children and young people about their physical and mental wellbeing. This will help inform our ongoing transformation work in health services.
- We publish a ['You said....we did'](#) to help track the impact, small and large, of actions we have taken in response to feedback.
- The Assistant Director Inclusion publishes a regular Open Letter in [Local Offer News](#) for Parents and Carers to update on the progress of our journey to improve the experience and outcomes of young people with SEND and their families.



We worked with our Young Person's Network to ask young people what was important to them.



We worked with our Young Person's Network to find out what makes good support for young people with Autism



Children and young people's needs are identified accurately and assessed in a timely and effective way

Some of the things we have done

- Health Visitors undertake a Schedule of Growing Skills or a WELCOMM Speech & Language assessment to help identify additional needs or delayed development.
- The Early Years brokerage team can help you find suitable funded childcare.
- Our network of 29 [Family Hub](#) buildings across Suffolk are an important local resource to access a range of services.
- Special Education Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) in schools can get help from the Inclusion Support Line and Inclusion Support Meetings. We have had positive feedback about this.
- We have invested £700,000 per year in a [Neurodevelopmental Pathway](#) for children with ASD, ADHD and similar conditions. This includes providing early support through a range of community services without the need for diagnosis.
- Half of schools in Suffolk will have direct access to Mental Health Support Teams in Schools by January 2024. All children and schools have access to wider support from, for example, Primary Mental Health Workers and School Nurses.
- The [Emotional Wellbeing Hub](#) East & West Suffolk and the [Just One](#) service in Waveney provides a wealth of on-line resources to help. The backlog from Covid is much improved.
- Over 7000 children and young people in Suffolk now have an EHC plan. A sample of EHC plans are internally and externally audited promoting better quality of practice.

More that we need to do

- 89% of EHC plans were issued within 20 weeks in 2021, however a shortage of Education Psychologists, has led to this performance falling to 21% in 2022. We have commissioned external Educational Psychology resources and a recruitment and retention plan in place to help resolve this.
- Valuing SEND (VSEND) is being rolled out across Suffolk in 2023 to further support schools with early identification of needs and tailored support.
- We know we have more work to do to ensure the Neurodevelopmental Pathway works well.
- 2 additional Mental Health Support Teams in Schools in 2024



Suffolk Local Offer
Support and services for children and young people with SEND

Contact the Local Offer Advisor
for help on 0345 606 1490



www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk  @Suffolk_LO  /SuffolkLO

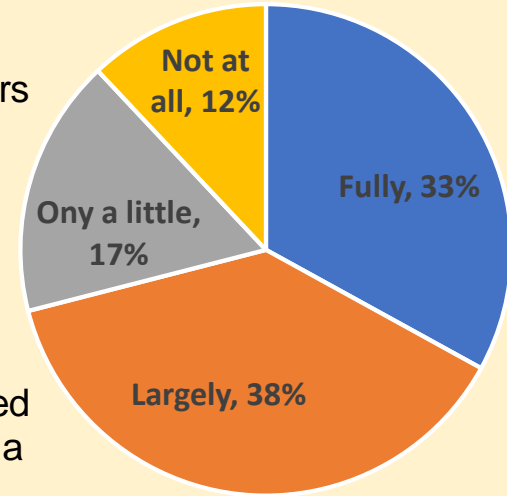
Children, young people and their families participate in decision-making about their individual plans and support

Some of the things we have done

- The [Local Offer website](#) and '[The Source](#)' website, which is co-produced young people, have continued to be developed to provide a range of impartial information, advice and support to help inform and involve young people and families.
- [Suffolk SENDIASS](#) is a well-used and valued service providing impartial advice on the law and rights of children and families. The EHC needs assessment/plan process, SEN Support and exclusion/suspension are the largest categories of reasons for contacting the service.
- EHC plans are created with families, but the level of co-production is not consistent. We have invested an extra £1.8m per year in recruiting and training more staff across Suffolk County Council Inclusion Services which will support improving communication with families.
- From November 2022 dedicated staff have been proactively contacting parents / carers about their experience with the EHC planning process which will inform development and training.
- In April 2023 we implemented a new IT system which will allow parents/carers to identify their allocated caseworker, track progress against statutory timescales, message their allocated worker and view forms and documents published to the portal.

Data

- From our survey of parents/carers following EHC plan, 71% of respondents felt that the final EHC plan largely or fully took account of their views.
- Auditing of EHC plans show that children and young people's views were gathered and included in 65% of cases and partly so in a further 15%.
- In 2023 93% of CYP in the transition years between early years and reception and primary to secondary met the 15 February deadline for their EHC plan to be finalised following an annual review.



More that we need to do

- It is not as easy to find things as it should be on the Local Offer Website. We are moving it on to a better system in November 2023.
- Specialist Education Services are providing more support for transition between school phases and will be introducing termly visits for all schools.

Children and young people receive the right help at the right time

Some of the things we have done

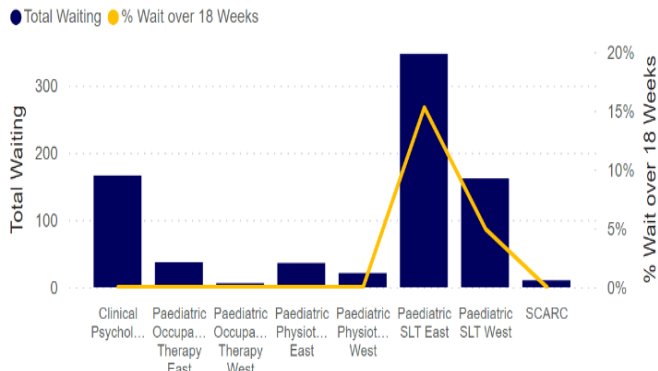
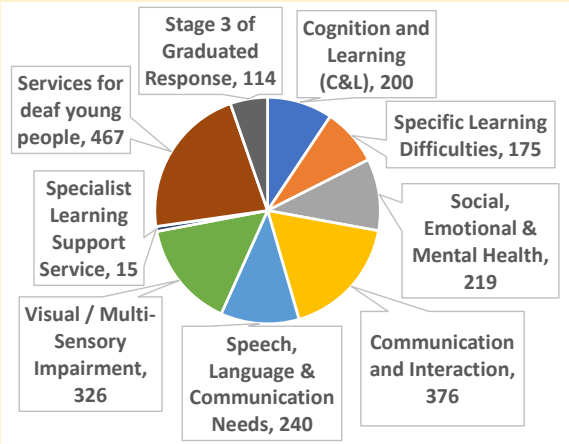
- A £60m capital programme has now delivered 679 of the 825 new specialist school places from Phase 1 of the programme. Through Phase 2 and 3 this will reach 1250 new places by 2025 helping ensure enough specialist places to meet the breadth of need across Suffolk.
- [Specialist Education Services](#) provides substantial direct support to schools. Case studies typically show quick positive progress is often made following an intervention.
- [Psychology & Therapeutic Services](#) support schools with inclusion and person-centred planning tools.
- Suffolk provide High Needs Funding to schools for around 2600 children and young people without the need for an EHC plan.
- New [CHRIS](#) team in east and west Suffolk stabilises young people in mental health crisis situations alongside improved wider support across services. A similar [CAIST](#) team works in Waveney.
- Waiting time for access to Community Paediatric Services including Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech & Language Therapy and Communication Aids is on an improving trend with most young people accessing help within 18 weeks.
- The new CAMHS Alternative to Admissions Team is preventing young people from needing in-patient admissions / re-admissions.

More that we need to do

- The SEND Surveys completed by Parents/Carers and Young People do continue to report that needs are not being met in schools for some children. We will continue to work together to address this.
- Suffolk, along with many other areas of the country, has struggled with increased referrals for children and young people’s health services. The number of children and the length of time waiting for treatment by mental health services remains too high and a Recovery Plan with additional investment is now in place.
- A Designated Social Care Officer has been appointed to improve the consistency of social care input into EHC needs assessments. We intend to strengthen this further.
- Timescales for completing Annual Reviews need to improve.
- Development the commissioning of alternative school provision to better match needs.

Data

SES Caseload Autumn Term 22/23



Children are well prepared for their next steps, and achieve strong outcomes

Some of the things we have done

- Our high-level auditing of a small sample of children's files shows 66% of children are making progress against the outcomes in their EHC plans at their Annual Reviews with parents/carer input seen in the most reviews.
- A Preparing for Adulthood Plan is part of each child's Annual Review from Year 9, however, this is not yet completed consistently.
- Person-centred planning tools such as [PATH](#) and [MAP](#) at Stage 3 of the [Graduated Response](#) support young people with future thinking and planning.
- [Suffolk's Post 16 transition guide](#) provides accessible advice on planning for the future.
- Young Person's Workers and Coaches help sustain young people in Education, Employment and Training post age 16.
- An [Employer Handbook](#) has been published with supplements for [Specialist Support Opportunities](#) and being a [Disability Confident Employer](#).
- The co-produced [icanbea...](#) careers inspiration tool helps young people find work opportunities.
- A specialist Disabled Children and Young People's and a dedicated Adults Transitions Team support young people with complex and profound needs. This includes multi-disciplinary Complex Cases Panels and jointly-funded support with health services.
- A new Key Worker Function ("Navigators") works closely with vulnerable children and young people with learning disabilities and autism at risk of being admitted to hospital, to understand what they might need support with. The Waveney service is further advanced than that in east & west Suffolk.

More that we need to do

- We need to improve the completion of Annual Reviews, particularly for post age 16 young people and ensure Preparing for Adulthood plans and outcomes are completed and discussed.
- We need to help young people to be fully involved in assessments and review meetings.
- Work closely with schools to avoid exclusions and over-use of part-time timetables.
- We need to ensure that young people experience an effective transition from child to adult services across the county.
- Increase focus on young people with EHC plans remaining in education and training at academic age 16/17.
- In 2023/24 we will be supporting Suffolk schools with the implementation of evidence-based approaches to improve basic skills and confidence to help improve attainment and progress for children with SEND which is slightly below similar authorities.
- We are developing a 3-Year Supported Internship Strategy and Programme.

Children and young people are valued, visible and included in their communities

Some of the things we have we done

- The SEND Young Person's network have developed the Safe and Supported project to identify places in the community where they feel safe and supported.
- Community providers such as [Noise Solution](#) , [Green Light Trust](#), [Achieving Aspirations](#), [Access Community Trust](#) and the wide range of providers that are part of [Activities Unlimited](#) provide highly valued support that helps young people, including those with SEND, gain in confidence and be visible and valued in communities.



Data

- 3000 families are signed up to our Activities Unlimited service which provides access to short breaks and leisure activities to disabled children aged 0-25 in Suffolk.

More that we need to do

- An innovative 'Warm Handover' scheme is starting to be used in Children's Services to help busy practitioners connect families into local community resources and safely share information. This idea has been taken up by DfE with a national development in progress.
- There is more potential for the changing needs and readiness for travel training over young people's school life to be identified through Annual Reviews.
- Following a successful bid to the Department for Education, we are about to pilot a service to work with children with SEND who are struggling to engage with school by building their confidence through participation in activities and overnight short breaks.

Welcome to
LANDSEER PARK
"No boundaries in Play"



- Ipswich Borough Council are designing and installing play areas to be both inclusive and offer forms of universal play, so no child is excluded with facilities including an Ability Swing, Communication Board and sensory dome.
- Schools invite trainers in to discuss how Travel Training for young people with SEND works in Year 10 and 11, ready for Post 16 travel. An event was held in October to celebrate 500 Journeys being signed off.

We hope this summary about the impact of our local area partnership's SEND arrangements on the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND). If you would like to feedback, please do email localoffer@suffolk.gov.uk to share your views.