

# Suffolk's SEND Strategy 2024-2029

This strategy is our plan for how services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in Suffolk will be delivered

# Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Our Vision</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>What is it like to be a...</b>	<b>5</b>
Child or young person with additional needs in Suffolk?	5
Parent and Carer of a child with SEND in Suffolk?	7
Practitioner working with children and young people with SEND in Suffolk?	10
<b>Our work so far</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Our work moving forward</b>	<b>14</b>
Co-production	14
Our Commitments: Objectives and Impact	15
How will we ensure we stay on track?	22
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>23</b>
Appendix 1: SEND Strategy 21/23 Review	23
Appendix 2: Co-production Promise	27
Appendix 3: Co-production Timeline	29
Appendix 4: Children's Outcome Framework	30
Appendix 5: Links to further information	33



**Kathryn Boulton**

Chair of the SEND Improvement Board



# Foreword

Firstly, I'd like to take the opportunity to thank our Young People's Network and Suffolk Parent Carer Forum, who work tirelessly with us, to provide their honest and valuable feedback. I'd also like to thank our partners across health, education, social care and the voluntary sector for supporting the development of this strategy.

As the new chair of the SEND Improvement Board, I am proud to present the Suffolk Strategy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Drafted by colleagues across the Suffolk Local Area Partnership, this ambitious new strategy sets out how we will work together to build strong relationships, create opportunities and remove barriers to enable our children and young people to feel included, fulfilled and supported to live their best lives.

This updated strategy will drive a significant programme of work co-produced and overseen by the Local Area Partnership, which includes Suffolk County Council, NHS Suffolk and North-East Essex Integrated Care Board, NHS Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board, and Suffolk Parent Carer Forum.

Put very simply - SEND is everyone's business. Only by working together will we achieve the change that is needed. And by together, I mean professionals working with children and young people and their families to deliver the services that will best meet everyone's needs. This approach is critical to the success of the SEND strategy. We will also continue to work closely with our schools, colleges, and early years settings to provide children and young people with the best support possible, ensuring that they receive a good quality level of education, whilst also feeling included in their local community.

I recognise that partners haven't always got it right and that not all children and young people, and their families, have received the service they need. Going forward, our actions must speak louder than words with a commitment to ensuring that positive change is felt by everyone and must build on what works well for children, young people and families.

Our services are operating in the context of increasing local need, significant challenge and a changing national policy environment. We are ready to meet these challenges.

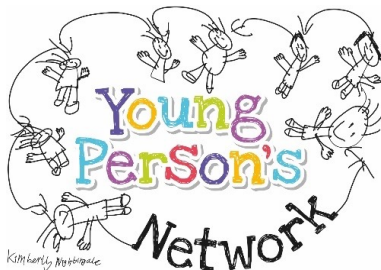
**Thank you.**

# Our Vision

*Together we will understand and support children and young people so that they feel included, supported, and fulfilled to live their best lives.*



Co-produced with





# What is it like to be a child or young person with additional needs in Suffolk?

“I feel nervous when I go to assemblies, because I am different to everyone else, I don't want to stand out in a crowd or in front of my friends or peers.”

Young person

“You can't hide yourself, you have to be yourself.”

Young person

“An unknown story.”

Young person

“Mental health is still an issue when you have a disability or a SEND need.”

SENDIASS CYP 2023 Survey

“...listening to me and giving me the right support is important.”

SENDIASS CYP 2023 Survey

“It is a hassle to get some people to talk to you.”

Young person

## What is important to children and young people in Suffolk?

- Learning to drive and using public transport
- Social clubs/safe places to socialise and do activities
- Relationships
- Spending time with family and friends and making friends
- Where they live
- More equality and less stigma
- Bringing visibility to invisible disabilities
- Being outside/ exercise
- Getting a job and help with money
- Responsibility
- Taking part in discussions and sharing their views

“Going to town.”

“My college life.”

“Saving money.”

“Making my own decisions.”





Ebony, Ben, Millie, Archie, Holly, Ben and Emily letting us know what getting it right would feel like to them.

“Living in Suffolk as a young person with undiagnosed additional needs is extremely hard...My lack of diagnosis, the lack of awareness and support in my community, and my awareness of my needs make me feel like less of an autistic person, because so many people stereotype autistic people, and I don't fit their stereotype.” Young person

“Unique.” Young person

“I'm scared of going to high school, I'm scared about being bullied.” Young person

“We need time to process information.” Young person, shared with SENDIASS

“Ok if you know the right paths to take as you move forward in life.” Young person

“There are teachers that will get you (support) if you need extra help.” Young person

### To achieve their ideal future, young people have told us they need support with:

- Money and budgeting
- Help to get to new places on their own, and help with travel
- More information around what they would like to do; leaving school/ college, volunteering, work experience and jobs
- Mental health, anxiety and self confidence
- Physical health
- Finding information
- Gaining timely diagnoses. When this doesn't happen, it can cause distress to young people and their families
- Accessibility
- College and learning spaces
- Flexible choices and student support

“Make neurodivergent people feel as good as everyone else.”

“More independence.”



# What it is like to be **Parent** **and Carer** of a child with SEND in Suffolk?

“Being a special educational needs and disability (SEND) family in Suffolk can be like an unplanned journey without a map or a compass. What makes the difference is the people we meet along the way, those that build quality bridges and help us across the difficult streams rather than letting us get swept away in the current.

Being a parent carer can be lonely and isolating. Many have lost friends, relationships and employment to give their all to their caring responsibilities. Too many parent carers feel judged, trapped, unsupported, gaslit and hopeless. SEND parents are the best friends a parent carer can make. We hold each other's hands through the hard times and celebrate joys that only other SEND parents understand. Joys such as your child eating a new food, being included, wearing a different item of clothing or a successful school run.

Things that are everyday occurrences to other parents. The joy of finding a professional who understands and wants to help is like winning the jackpot. These people exist and we need more of them. We desperately hope that their great example is seen by others and those wonderful qualities bring about culture change.

We all want our children to have an education but too many find barriers make it difficult such as lack of support, missed provision, discrimination, no school place, or the wrong school place. We then feel we are labelled as bad parents when our child can't attend. We really worry about our child's education but more than that, we worry about their mental health. Our children and young people should be achieving their best possible outcomes educationally and otherwise.



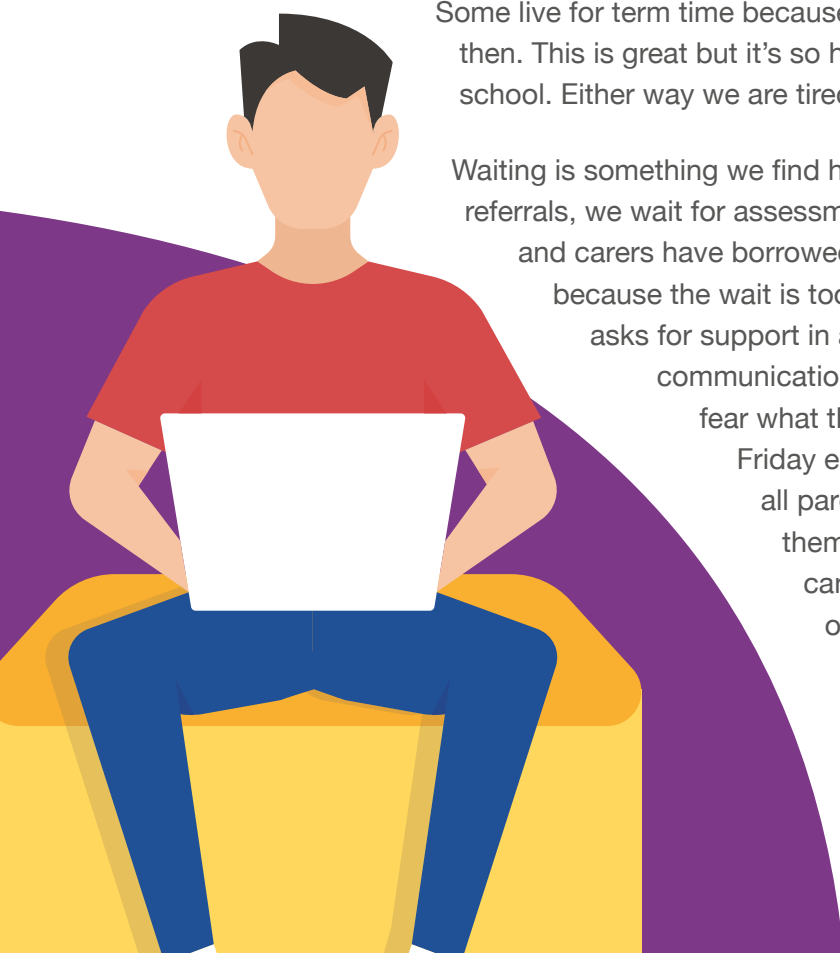
We worry about our child every day and every night. We are told our child should be more resilient or gets labelled as naughty but what they really need is the right support at the right time so that they can thrive. Accessing mental health services is slow and very often not enough. We sometimes hear of children and young people getting excellent care and we want that too. We are really happy for those parents and carers, but we don't want to have to fight for it, we need that energy for the person we care for. Too often it feels like no one wants to help.

When we reach the point of applying for an Education, Health and Care plan for our child after a long period of trying to get support through other means, we feel the chances of success will depend on how hard we pursue it. We enter a legal world we have never experienced before. Mediation, appeals, tribunals and more. We find ourselves seeking support from SENDIASS and in some cases, legal advice. When we get an Education, Health and Care plan many of us find it's incorrect in some way and find it difficult to get it put right. Getting a school to follow a plan is often the next challenge we face before the annual review comes around and we are met with missed time scales or even completely missed reviews. There should be no missed opportunities and the importance of reviews and transitions should never be underestimated. Some people call Education, Health and Care plans a golden ticket. To many they are a necessary evil. It exhausts us. Too often this process leaves us feeling unheard, traumatised, and frustrated. Getting the right school placement for our child can feel like a battle too. There is a lack of special school places and trained staff to meet our child's needs. We long for the good practice we hear about to multiply so that all our children can have the equality of great support.

Many of us live for the weekend. Friday evening can feel as if we are decompressing from the week, but Sunday evening brings tension, fear, tears and worry for the week ahead. We generally don't receive negative news of refusals to assess, support or provide a service on Saturdays and Sundays. Our phones don't trigger us the same at the weekend.

Some live for term time because their child is getting the support they need then. This is great but it's so hard when the support is missing out of school. Either way we are tired. Physically and mentally tired.

Waiting is something we find hard. We wait for everything. We wait for referrals, we wait for assessment, we wait for support. Many parents and carers have borrowed money to pay for private assessments because the wait is too long and support is needed now. No one asks for support in advance of needing it. We also wait for communications. Emails, calls, letters but at the same time fear what they might bring. We dread the late afternoon Friday emails and those that arrive encrypted. Not all parents and carers have the technology to open them. Anxiety builds about their content until we can open it or forward it to someone who can open it for us.



Some of us will complain and be vocal about how our child has been let down and failed. It doesn't mean we feel good about it. It weighs heavily on us. These parents and carers are frustrated and exhausted, many have been in this situation a long time and face let down after let down. They feel angry, overlooked, and disempowered. Some of us are quiet. That doesn't mean we don't feel those feelings too. Some of us are new to the world of SEND and are learning. Some of us have our own needs too, physically, or mentally but we find we have to neglect our needs to care for and fight for our children. We can feel like a problem parent for complaining and requesting statutory rights. Sometimes we feel gaslit and silenced by the handling of complaints. If we need to take the complaint to the ombudsman, we know it will be an even longer wait for a remedy.

There are many support groups both nationally and locally that make a big difference to parents and carers. There are also many parents and carers who give up their free time to support others, whether it's signposting, advice or a listening ear. Parents and carers are grateful for this support and their value should be recognised.

Every parent and carer is on their own unique journey and at different points in that journey. Some are new, lonely, and taking any bit of learning they can. Some have been on this journey a long time. They are frustrated, but willingly do all they can to support others to have better outcomes. Sadly, some are bereaved. This is the worst possible outcome. Learning must come from these heartbreaking cases, so others don't have to experience that devastation.

Parents and carers all have different wants and needs but what we all want, and need is change. We need our voices and our children's and young people's voices not just to be heard but listened to and absorbed. We need inclusion, quality, timely support and statutory rights. We don't want a fight. We want to see our children and young people thrive, feel the best they can, achieve their dreams, be part of the community and for us all to experience improved mental health and a better quality of life. This should not be negotiable. This change cannot wait."

*Written by*

**Suffolk Parent Carer Forum**

[suffolkpcf.co.uk](http://suffolkpcf.co.uk)



# What is it like to be a practitioner working with children and young people with SEND in Suffolk?

## What do you like about working in Suffolk to support children and young people with SEND?

- Teamwork
- Keeping children safe
- Supporting children and young people and their families as a whole family unit
- Shared Values/Supportive network
- Giving the young person the best opportunities
- Diversity of needs
- Rewarding
- Able to use skills to improve outcomes for children and young people
- Being able to nurture children's strengths

“Keeping children SAFE.”

“I like feeling that I make a positive difference to the lives of children and young people with SEND and their families and that I have developed a degree of expertise over the years. I rarely if ever get up and don't want to go to work.”

“When we get things, right children often go on to reach their potential and thrive in education.”

“Lots of really dedicated people who know their stuff!”

“Virtual Schools are amazing with the support they offer.”

“Making a real difference for CYP.”

“That we're trying to improve the immediate wellbeing and long term outcomes of those we support.”

“Giving CYP a chance to be heard.”

“Being part of wonderful team with joint values and shared passion.”

“Suffolk has a large amount of passionate and devoted practitioners who want to help children and young people with SEND. Suffolk also has a voluntary sector that provides a lot of support to people.”

“The opportunity to support someone's development and journey by ensuring they can access suitable environments.”

“Sharing solutions with others, knowing together we can make a difference.”

“The rewarding work.”

“Helping children.”

“Being a key person involved in the child's care.”

“Supporting the family unit as a whole.”

KEY indicates which area of the local partnership these comments came from:

- Education
- Health
- Social Care



## What is challenging about working to support SEND services in Suffolk?

- Time pressure
- Communication
- Staff capacity / Training / Knowledge
- Lack of funding and resources
- Lack of specialist places / Lack of suitable provisions

“Changes to staff groups to maintain working relationships and having good consistent communication and messaging.”

“Schools (or academy trusts) are often very quick to exclude children, despite it clearly not being in children's best interests at times.”

“Lack of specialist provision spaces for children with the most complex levels of need.”

“Severe lack of communication.”

“The limited funding for schools and Local Authorities to provide the best for the Children and Young People we support.”

“The number of hoops to jump through for parents.”

“Lack of coordinated and joined up working/ thinking across services.”

“Not enough input from the young people.”

“The language used is not always conducive to solutions, lots of blaming others rather than reflecting and admitting when we have got it wrong.”

“Limited funding and resource.”

“The challenge of supporting schools to meet healthcare needs of children. Fear and a lack of support can create resistance.”

“Lack of appropriate education provisions for young people with needs. Particularly in younger age groups.”

“Criticism - feels hard to make a positive difference with so much negativity in the system.”

“Lack of support for families around choosing education placements.”

“Lack of recognition for girls (who are) Neuro Divergent.”

“Family Services staff do not meet the child or family face to face anymore, meaning they don't get a full view of the situation and the challenges facing Suffolk young people.”

“Communication between different services can be challenging at times and not streamlined.”

“Lack of funds available.”

“The lack of resources and support services for individuals and their families. Particularly those who are 18+ and out of education. The lack of joint working between services is also a challenge.”

KEY indicates which area of the local partnership these comments came from:

- Education
- Health
- Social Care

## What would you like to change about SEND Services in Suffolk?

- Improve partnership communication
- Increase staff capacity
- Improve staff retention and wellbeing
- Improve access to support services regardless of postcode
- Improved accountability and transparency
- Improved partnership working
- Improved staff knowledge/training
- Improved communication
- Reduction in exclusions

“ Holistic approach to provision. Smaller alternative provisions within all areas of the county. ”

“ Improved access to mental health for all pupils, not dependent on where you live. ”

“ Better lines of communication with education services. ”

“ Improved knowledge in schools about their responsibilities. ”

“ More joint working across the system to avoid escalation. Improved integrated working, especially around complex cases. ”

“ Improve staff retention. ”

“ Education being easier to contact for colleagues (National Health Service), parents and schools. ”

“ More of the service extending to support mental health in schools. ”

“ Improved access to mental health for all pupils, not dependent on where you live. ”

“ More provisions in specific areas (e.g. Lowestoft). ”

“ Specialist Family Support Practitioners' trained to deal with SEN behaviours and needs. ”

“ To think system-wide and working closer together and placing the child/yp at the centre. ”

“ A commitment to genuine person-centred planning that is ambitious and flexible. Proactive not reactive. ”

“ More time to strategically create/develop joined up working opportunities to strengthen process/systems upstream within early intervention. ”

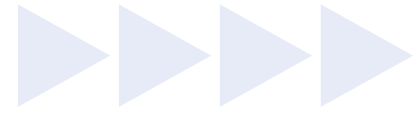
“ Celebrate Neuro Diverse! The SEND crisis makes it look like being Neuro Divergent is a problem. Companies are employing Neuro Divergent people deliberately due to the link in increased profit! It starts with Suffolk County Council! ”

“ Better links and networking opportunities between services. ”

KEY indicates which area of the local partnership these comments came from:

- Education
- Health
- Social Care

# Our work so far



The previous Suffolk SEND Strategy covered the period 2021-23.

To view or read [www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk/news-and-developments/improving-send-in-suffolk/our-send-strategy](http://www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk/news-and-developments/improving-send-in-suffolk/our-send-strategy).

The SEND Strategy 2021-23 set out 4 priority areas in which work was completed; we are committed to continuing to improve within these areas and have taken this into account when developing our SEND Strategy 2024-29.

The Local Area Partnership recognises that under the previous SEND Strategy not enough children, young people and their parents and carers' lived experiences of SEND in Suffolk saw improvement. The SEND Partnership will continue to build on the strengths to improve the impact and better outcomes for children and young people, using the learning from the previous strategy.

It has been recognised that partnership working has improved, with more effective collaborative working and data sharing between services, providers and education settings across the system. Collaboration throughout the partnership has supported discussions about our strengths, and what we need to build on moving forward.

The Local Area Partnership's review of the previous SEND Strategy details what was achieved, and what will continue to be addressed in the SEND Strategy 2024-29. The review can be found within [Appendix 1](#).



# Our work moving forward

## Co-production

Co-production is when children, young people, parents, carers and practitioners work equally together to make decisions about designing, evaluating, and improving SEND services across education, health and social care.

This strategy has been co-produced following these principles. Further information about co-production within the SEND partnership can be found in [Appendix 2](#).



# Our Commitments: Objectives and Impact

For full details of how we will measure the impact of work towards these objectives please refer the live action plan.

## Communication and Information Commitment

### This is a priority for us because:

- The voice of children and young people, parents, carers and practitioners are important and valuable to us.
- Children and young people, parents, carers and practitioners report that it is difficult to contact services and this needs to improve.
- Children and young people, parents, and carers report that they do not always know what services are available to them.
- Delays in communication lead to less joint working and poorer outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- The Local Area Partnership wants to support the growth of Suffolk Parent Carer Forum (our strategic co-production partner) to enable the voice of parents and carers across Suffolk to improve inclusivity of any under-represented parents and carers.
- Communication between services and partners are not always effective.

### Ofsted and CQC Reported

Suffolk Local SEND Inspection found: The local area partnership should engage effectively and widely with children and young people and their parents and carers, developing effective communications systems, and acting to address parents' and carers' concerns at an early stage, to reduce dissatisfaction and reduce the need for parents and carers to have to follow formal routes.

### Objectives:

1	Children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers understand what services and support are available and know how to access them.	<b>If we do this well:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will have improved communication and reach across Suffolk through community settings such as GPs, libraries, family hubs and digital platforms to ensure children, young people and their parents and carers are aware of services and the support available.</li> <li>• Children, young people and their parents and carers will feedback that they are able to access resources and useful information.</li> <li>• Services will receive appropriate referrals because there is available and accessible information for children, young people, parents and carers and practitioners.</li> </ul>
---	--	--

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **I am in control of my life.**
- **I feel supported.**
- **My voice is heard.**

2	We will maintain and develop opportunities to hear the voice of children, young people, their parents and carers and practitioners to inform and co-produce improvements across the SEND Partnership.	<b>If we do this well:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will develop parent carer focus groups, working alongside the Suffolk Parent Carer Forum (SPCF), and supporting the Engagement Hub to extend their reach to children and young people across Suffolk.</li> <li>• Children, young people and their parents and carers will tell us that they are able to share their experiences and have their voice heard.</li> <li>• Children, young people, parents, carers and practitioners will see improvements identified through their experiences and feedback embedded as systems change.</li> </ul>
---	---	--

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **My voice is heard.**
- **I feel supported.**

## Communication and Information Commitment continued

### Objectives:

3	Effective communication across the SEND Partnership will enable needs to be understood and met in a timely fashion.	<b>If we do this well:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children, young people, parents, and carers will report that they are informed of progress for assessments via their preferred communication method.</li> <li>• There will be a reduction in complaints regarding communication.</li> <li>• Telephone responses will be answered within the agreed time commitments set out in the communication charter.</li> </ul>
---	---	--

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **My voice is heard.**
- **I feel supported.**
- **I can learn.**

4	Information about resources and support will be available to children, young people and their parents and carers, and practitioners in a range of formats including written information, digital and through face-to-face meetings and events.	<b>If we do this well:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children, young people, parents, and carers will find it easier to access resources on websites, social media, and online portals as well as newsletters.</li> <li>• Children, young people, parents, and carers will feedback that they have improved oversight of progress through statutory processes as a result of the Education, Health and Care portal as a communication tool.</li> <li>• Information shared will be better promoted and be more accessible to all children, young people, their parents and carers and staff working across the SEND partnership.</li> </ul>
---	--	---

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **My voice is heard.**
- **I am in control of my life.**
- **I am happy.**





## Preparing for Change Commitment

### This is a priority for us because:

- Children, young people, parents, and carers report that transition planning (at all stages) is often rushed or inconsistent, and that information is not always shared between settings.
- There are too many young people with SEND who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- Children and young people are not sufficiently involved in preparing for adulthood in terms of their education, independent living skills, involvement in their communities and having good health.
- Children and young people need to be supported to prepare for changes big and small.

### Ofsted and CQC Reported

Ensure consistently good processes supporting transition from early years to primary, primary to secondary and secondary to further education.

### Objectives:

1	Develop a multi-agency Suffolk-wide "Preparing for Change Charter", outlining how we will work with children, young people, parents, and carers to prepare young people for times of change to ensure they feel supported and can go on to each new chapter with confidence.	<b>If we do this well:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Ideal worker' principles will be applied, ensuring children and young people's voice are clear and inform the help they receive.</li> <li>• Children, young people, parents, and carers will feedback that they were informed of and understand the options open to them at each point of change.</li> <li>• The charter will be communicated and used to support children and young people as they progress through phases of change.</li> </ul>
---	--	--

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **My voice is heard.**
- **I feel supported.**
- **I can learn.**
- **I am happy.**
- **I am safe.**
- **I am in control of my life.**
- **I am healthy.**

2	Children and young people will be supported to successfully navigate times of change including starting education, moving between services or phases of education and preparing for adulthood.	<b>If we do this well:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase transfers with named education settings will happen by statutory deadline dates to allow sufficient time for children, young people and their parents and carers to plan for and receive the support they need to enable a good transition.</li> <li>• Children, young people, parents, and carers will be better supported at times of transition – including important decisions being made in good time to allow for multi-agency planning and preparation with the child and young person involved.</li> </ul>
---	--	--

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **My voice is heard.**
- **I feel supported.**
- **I can learn.**
- **I am happy.**
- **I am safe.**
- **I am in control of my life.**

3	Post 16 providers and system partners will be supported to develop and deliver education and training opportunities so that young people are prepared for employment, independence, and inclusion within their communities and to manage their health and wellbeing.	<b>If we do this well:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of young people with SEND in post 16 education (including apprenticeships and supported internships) will rise.</li> <li>• The number of young people with SEND who are NEET will drop.</li> <li>• Young people with SEND will be supported to be active within their chosen communities and build meaningful relationships.</li> <li>• Young people will be better prepared to gain independence in adulthood and manage their health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Services will embed use of the Preparing for Adulthood plan in collaboration with practitioners supporting young people to set and achieve goals.</li> </ul>
---	--	--

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **My voice is heard.**
- **I feel supported.**
- **I can learn.**
- **I am happy.**
- **I am safe.**
- **I am in control of my life.**

## Timeliness and Quality Commitment

### This is a priority for us because:

- Too many children and young people with SEND and parents and carers are not having their assessments completed within the statutory timescales.
- Too many children and young people with SEND do not have their Education, Health and Care plans reviewed every year to make sure the provision set out in their plan is meeting their needs.
- Children, young people, parents, and carers report that waiting times across the partnership are too long.
- Our current quality assurance and audit processes are not robust enough in all areas.
- Delays in children and young people accessing the right support can cause frustration and a lack of confidence for children, young people parents, carers and providers.

### Ofsted and CQC Reported

The Local Area SEND Inspection found: Local area partnership leaders should cooperate to take urgent action to improve the timeliness and quality of the statutory Education, Health and Care plan processes, Education, Health and Care plan needs assessments, and Education, Health and Care plans and annual reviews, particularly using annual reviews to amend the quality of existing Education, Health and Care plans where required. This should ensure that plans meaningfully capture the views and aspirations of children and young people with SEND and their families, so that they get the right support at the right time.

### Objectives:

1	Individuals working with children and young people with SEND will receive appropriate training for their areas of work to be more competent and confident.	<b>If we do this well:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New staff will receive induction training, and existing staff will have the time to undertake continuous professional development.</li> <li>• Staff will tell us they feel more confident.</li> <li>• Feedback from children, young people, parents, and carers will indicate quality is consistently good for Education, Health and Care plans and service delivery.</li> <li>• The voice of children and young people will be evident in Education, Health and Care plans.</li> </ul>
---	--	---

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **My voice is heard.**
- **I feel supported.**
- **I am safe.**

2	Improve staffing levels and ways of working to strengthen quality, person centred planning and co-producing to increase positive outcomes for children and young people whilst also improving statutory timeliness and service targets.	<b>If we do this well:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers will get quality assessments, plans and reviews on time.</li> <li>• Children and young people with Education, Health and Care plans will get the support and provision they need to meet their needs without delay.</li> <li>• The attainment and progress of children and young people with SEND will improve because their educational needs are identified, and provision is adapted to meet more quickly.</li> </ul>
---	---	---

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **My voice is heard.**
- **I feel supported.**
- **I can learn.**
- **I am happy.**
- **I am safe.**
- **I am in control of my life.**
- **I am healthy.**

## Timeliness and Quality Commitment continued

### Objectives:

3	Create quality Education, Health and Care plans and reviews by assuring good practice through robust audit processes and feedback mechanisms.	<p><b>If we do this well:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The collaborative audit process will be strengthened to regularly sample children's files, incorporating multiagency partners, young people and parents and carers' views to improve services.</li> <li>• Audits will evidence the voices and ambition of children and young people and evidence the progress they are making.</li> <li>• The impact of audit outcomes will be strengthened across the partnership, helping to improve the quality of our Education, Health and Care plans and reviews and identify best practice and areas for improvement.</li> <li>• Staff will be working more efficiently, improving timeliness alongside quality.</li> <li>• Children, young people, parents, and carers will receive Education, Health and Care plans of higher quality, promoting better outcomes.</li> </ul>
---	---	--

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **My voice is heard.**
- **I feel supported.**
- **I can learn.**
- **I am safe.**
- **I am in control of my life.**

4	To have effective processes and practices across the partnership.	<p><b>If we do this well:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance and impact data will be utilised through further developments of audits, learning from complaints and feedback and using internal systems to manage workload.</li> <li>• We will see a reduction in children, young people, parents, and carers unhappy with the quality of their plans or service.</li> <li>• Children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers will experience the delivery of quality services within the set time frame.</li> </ul>
---	---	---

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **My voice is heard.**
- **I feel supported.**
- **I can learn.**
- **I am happy.**
- **I am safe.**
- **I am in control of my life.**

## Right Support, Right Time Commitment

### This is a priority for us because:

- Early intervention across the partnership is essential to better meet children and young people's needs.
- Inclusive practice is not always consistent across all settings and areas.
- There is high demand for specialist services, bespoke and alternative provision.
- Children, young people, parents, and carers continue to report delays in accessing services and provision.
- Some schools report not feeling confident or able to meet the needs of all their children and young people.
- The partnership wants to ensure there are good high-quality services within Suffolk that have the capacity to meet need.
- Children, young people, parents, and carers have told us they are not getting support early enough, leading to crises and children's needs escalating.

### Ofsted and CQC Reported

Suffolk Local SEND Inspection found: The partnership must agree and embed clear expectations for co-ordinated multi-agency working of children and young people's cases across the Area SEND Partnership.

### Objectives:

1	Across the partnership systematically plan effective services and use resources to meet children and young people's needs.	<b>If we do this well:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An increase in children, young people and their parents and carers getting earlier help and increase accessible specialist services for those who need additional specialist support.</li> <li>• There will be improved coordination of data and information across the system to better establish and maintain our understanding of the needs of children and young people with SEND as fully and early as possible.</li> <li>• Needs will be met whilst children, young people, parents, and carers are awaiting specialist placements.</li> <li>• Children and young people's individual needs will be understood, and they will be able to access holistic support to meet those needs.</li> <li>• There will be more inclusive schools supported by specialist services to better meet the needs of children and young people through whole school approaches.</li> <li>• Children, young people and their parents and carers will provide positive feedback about the services they receive.</li> </ul>
---	--	---

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **My voice is heard.**
- **I feel supported.**
- **I can learn.**
- **I am happy.**
- **I am safe.**

2	To provide support at the earliest opportunity through the accurate identification of the needs of children and young people with SEND.	<b>If we do this well:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of the Suffolk Inclusion Toolkit with schools will be embedded.</li> <li>• Opportunities such as the two and a half year health check will be utilised.</li> <li>• Mainstream schools will feel increasingly confident in meeting the needs of children and young people on their rolls.</li> <li>• Fewer children and young people will be suspended or excluded.</li> </ul>
---	---	---

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **My voice is heard.**
- **I feel supported.**
- **I can learn.**
- **I am happy.**
- **I am safe.**
- **I am in control of my life.**

3	Training and interventions that are known to be effective will be available to all settings that work with children and young people with SEND.	<b>If we do this well:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of settings accessing programmes such as 'Delivering Better Value, Raising Achievements' and the All-Age Autism Strategy will increase.</li> <li>• Education settings will feel confident in the delivery of effective interventions.</li> <li>• Evidence-based interventions will improve the skills and confidence of children and young people with SEND at an early age, preventing needs escalating.</li> </ul>
---	---	---

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **I feel supported.**
- **I can learn.**
- **I am safe.**

## Right Support, Right Time Commitment continued

### Objectives:

4	We will create 826 specialist places by September 2026, ensuring that sufficient health and social care provision is also available to support these places.	<p><b>If we do this well:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue with our SEND capital programme to create more specialist places attached to mainstream schools and special school places; to find out more information please see: <a href="http://www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk/news-and-developments/improving-send-in-suffolk/our-capital-programme">www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk/news-and-developments/improving-send-in-suffolk/our-capital-programme</a></li> <li>• More children and young people will be supported in settings to meet their needs closer to home.</li> <li>• There will be a reduction in waiting times for suitable placements for children and young people that require a specialist placement.</li> <li>• Children and young people will feel included within appropriate settings and have their needs understood and met.</li> <li>• Parents and carers will feel reassured that their child or young person's wellbeing and educational needs are recognised and can be met by their setting.</li> </ul>
---	--	--

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **I feel supported.**
- **I can learn.**
- **I am safe.**

5	We will improve support to meet the needs of children and young people who are neurodivergent (both with and without formal diagnosis).	<p><b>If we do this well:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children, young people and their parents and carers will receive support whilst waiting for assessments and diagnoses, including through the promotion of the Neuro Developmental Delay resource pack.</li> <li>• Parents and carers and practitioners across the partnership will report and demonstrate increased confidence in supporting neurodivergent children.</li> <li>• Waiting times for diagnoses will be within mandated timescales.</li> <li>• Children and young people, parents and carers will feel supported and valued and are able to access the services they need.</li> </ul>
---	---	---

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **My voice is heard.**
- **I feel supported.**
- **I can learn.**
- **I am happy.**
- **I am safe.**
- **I am in control of my life.**

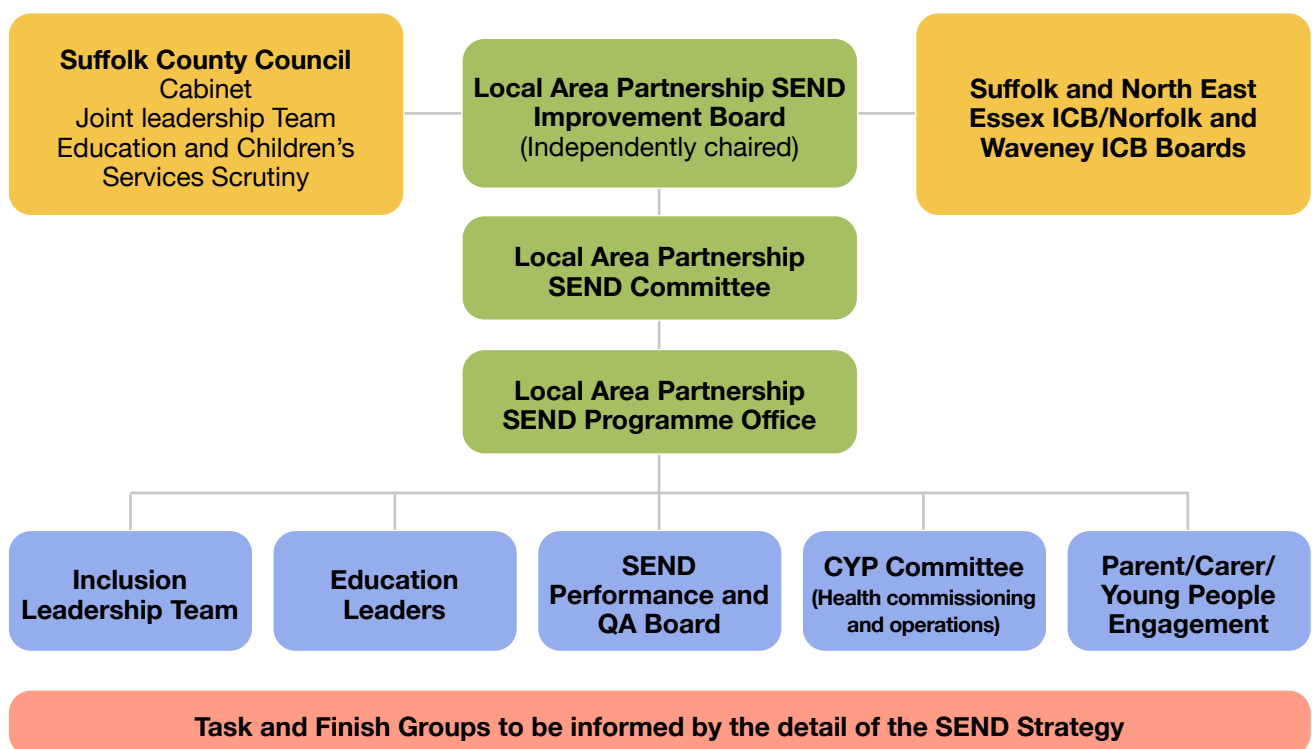
6	We will establish a holistic system wide approach to supporting the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers.	<p><b>If we do this well:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources will be available for parents and carers, schools, practitioners, and the voluntary sector, with direct support for children and young people and access to formal mental health pathways as appropriate.</li> <li>• Fewer children, young people, parents, and carers will need crises support. When crises support is still needed, it will be accessible and better meet needs.</li> <li>• The <a href="#">iThrive framework</a> will be adopted and established within the partnership.</li> <li>• Children and young people will feel understood, safe, and secure, and able to access and enjoy the wider aspects of their life.</li> <li>• There will be a reduction in children and young people who are not accessing education, employment, and training due to poor mental health.</li> <li>• Parents and carers of children with poor mental health will report positive change and improved outcomes.</li> </ul>
---	--	--

### This objective will help children and young people achieve the following outcomes:

- **My voice is heard.**
- **I feel supported.**
- **I can learn.**
- **I am happy.**
- **I am safe.**

# How will we ensure we stay on track?

## Local Area Partnership SEND Governance



These boards, committees and the independent chair will make sure the partnership stays on track and is doing the things they need to do, to make sure the partnership sticks to the commitment so that:

***Together we will understand and support children and young people so that they feel included, supported, and fulfilled to live their best lives.***



# Appendices

## Appendix 1: SEND Strategy 21/23 Review

Whilst the SEND Partnership acknowledges that not enough children, young people and their parents and carers are receiving or benefiting from the changes and improvements that the SEND Strategy 2021-2023 has made, it is important that we reflect on the previous strategy and our strengths to understand where we are now and how we move forwards.

The previous SEND Strategy set out four priority areas within which work was completed; we are committed to continuing to improve within these areas and have taken this into account when developing our SEND Strategy 2024-29.

### Priority One: Communication

**Some of the things that worked well under the previous strategy to address our priority regarding communication were:**

- Local Offer website was relaunched, and the Source website was refreshed offering improved accessible content with an enhanced search facility. The feedback to date is that this is a positive step in the right direction.

*“Like the style of it and think it will be easy for families to read and navigate.”*

SENDIASS

*“It looks great and so much better than the current site, well done.”*

Practitioner

*“Looks smart, layout is, for the most part, clearer.”*

Parent

*“Overall, it is a very good starting point for the new local offer page and can be built upon. As mentioned, we like the ‘New to SEND’ section as well as what the ‘local offer’ is about. It is colourful and engaging as the information on some pages can be viewed in small chunks with the drop-down options.”*

SPCF (Suffolk Parent Carer Forum)

- Co-produced and embedded the ideal worker as part of the recruitment process.
- We continue to work with Young Peoples Network to award more places “Welcoming spaces” status. [www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk/preparing-for-adulthood/community-and-relationships/welcoming-places](http://www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk/preparing-for-adulthood/community-and-relationships/welcoming-places)
- Promoted awareness and understanding of SEND support services amongst practitioners, for example by introducing SEND champions and the SENCo Bulletin.
- Promoted awareness and understanding of SEND support services amongst parents and carers, for example by introducing time to listen events.
- More effective collaborative working and data sharing between services, providers and education settings across the system including the successful launch of the community inclusion forums.
- Quality assurance framework now involves more multi-agency professionals.

Within the SEND Strategy 2024-29 we will continue to develop communication with parents and carers increasing the awareness around support available and progress being made. We will continue to widen the reach of our children and young people's voice through the Engagement Hub, Young Persons Network and Particip8. We will also develop a wider reach of parent carer focus groups alongside Suffolk Parent Carer Forum and embed the Time to Listen events to capture the voice of parents and carers.

## Priority Two: The Child and Young Person's Journey

---

**Some of the things that worked well under the previous strategy to address our priority regarding the child and young person's journey were:**

- SEND Good Practice Guide now has a SEND area on My SCC intranet for staff.
- System changes and reporting enhancements have also been achieved, including the transition of the Family Services Team to a more robust case management system, alongside the creation of a manual in line with best practice processes.
- Embedded the graduated response, co-produced the Suffolk mainstream inclusion framework, and created the Suffolk Inclusion Toolkit to support early intervention and whole school inclusive practices.
- Created the Education, Health and Care needs assessment request team and reviewed the Education, Health and Care needs assessment panel to support the Education, Health and Care needs assessment process.
- The Keys to Inclusion training programme and person-centred planning training launched to support a person-centred planning approach across the partnerships.

- Developed a quality assurance framework to review the quality of new Education, Health and Care plans.
- Co-produced SEND Decision Making panels.
- The recruitment and retention of designated clinical officers and designated social care officer to support and strengthen joined up working across the SEND partnership.
- Created a new tribunal and resolution team.

Within the SEND Strategy 2024-29 we will continue to develop our partnership working arrangements and use of data, to inform decision making and strengthen multi agency working and auditing to support the child and young person's journey.

## Priority Three: Commissioning and Services

---

**Some of the things that worked well under the previous strategy to address our priority regarding commissioning of services were:**

- Phase 1 of SEND capital programme created 378 new places.
- Secured funding from cabinet for phase 2 and phase 3 of the SEND Capital Programme,
- Neurodevelopmental Disorder (NDD) pathway was repurposed in 2022, to support parents and carers via a number of different means.
- Additional resource of 700k annually for children, young people and their parents and carers to access a variety of different voluntary services. This additional investment for Speech and Language Therapy as set out in an Education, Health and Care plan has improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Successful implementation of transforming care navigator teams with dynamic support registers in place resulted in a measured reduction of inpatient stays for children and young people.
- The launch of the CHRIS and CATAT services to offer enhanced mental health support for children and young people.
- Significant investment in additional mental health services including mental health support teams in schools.

Within the SEND Strategy 2024-29 we will continue to develop the SEND Capital Programme to provide additional spaces at specialist settings. We will also continue to work to embed a system wide holistic approach to develop shared outcomes and support the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children young people and their parents and carers.

## Priority Four: Preparing for Adulthood

---

**Some of the things that worked well under the previous strategy to address our priority regarding preparing for adulthood were:**

- Review of the transition guide and co-produced version launched. To view or read [www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk/asset-library/preparing-for-adulthood-transitions-guide.pdf](http://www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk/asset-library/preparing-for-adulthood-transitions-guide.pdf)
- Through our Activities Unlimited offer grant funded leisure activities and personal budgets, open to all children and young people with SEND to access high quality, inclusive groups, clubs, and activities.

Within the SEND Strategy 2024-29 we will continue to develop opportunities for supported internships and employment opportunities for young people with SEND as well as opportunities for young people to develop independence, be included within their communities and manage their health and wellbeing.

**Find out more about the previous SEND strategy and how we have produced the new Strategy on the Suffolk Local Offer website:**

[www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk/news-and-developments/improving-send-in-suffolk/our-send-strategy](http://www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk/news-and-developments/improving-send-in-suffolk/our-send-strategy)



# Appendix 2: Co-production Promise

## What does co-production in SEND services look like?

Co-production is when children, young people, parents and carers work equally with practitioners and decision-makers to design, evaluate, and improve SEND services across education, health and social care.

The co-production stages are described as a series of steps towards co-production. It supports greater understanding of the various stages of access and inclusion before full co-production is achieved. At Suffolk County Council we work with our strategic co-production partner Suffolk Parent Carer Forum to achieve this, whilst also recognising that within the partnership different groups will wish to participate at different stages.



## How will we achieve co-production in SEND services?

Getting involvement and collaboration with children, young people, parents, and carers relies on developing strong relationships with local people, building trust and respect. We will do this by co-producing activities with children, young people, parents, and carers in ways that work for them, supporting a range of opportunities, and enabling people to work with us in different ways.

- **Collaboration** – working together and creating a partnership that understands children, young people and their parents and carers experience.
- **Respect** – building trusted relationships between children, young people and their parents and carers and services based on inclusivity, mutual understanding, and accessibility so that everyone feels they belong in the conversation.
- **Listening** – taking every opportunity to hear the children and young person and their parents and carers experience, paying attention and being curious about what it means and acting on what we are told.
- **Equality** – we will ensure that a diverse range of voices are heard.
- **Transparent** – we will be open and honest about our activity, be clear about parameters and decision making.
- **Meaningful** – activity will be relevant and purposeful.
- **Influential** – all activity will seek to have impact and lead to positive change, quality improvement or better decision making.





# Appendix 3: Co-production Timeline

## September 2023

- Co-production work began on designing the consultation survey.
- Suffolk County Councils Assistant Director of Inclusion released an animated message to ensure consistent messaging during consultation.

## October 2023

Consultation launched. During consultation the survey was shared across the SEND Partnership.

## January - February 2024

- Thematic review of consultation results.
- Co-production events to produce first draft SEND Strategy.
- Short consultation on draft Summary.

## October - December 2023

Visited schools and colleges to work on children and young people's outcome frameworks. To read more about this, please see [appendix 4](#).

## March - April 2024

- Co-production working groups set up to work on the production of the final SEND Strategy 2024-2029.
- Equality Impact Assessment signed off.

## May - June 2024

- Quality Assurance signed off.
- Cabinet and Governance signed off.



To read more about the feedback received on the consultations please visit the Suffolk Local Offer website [www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk/news-and-developments/improving-send-in-suffolk/our-send-strategy](http://www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk/news-and-developments/improving-send-in-suffolk/our-send-strategy)

# Appendix 4: Children's Outcome Framework

During the Autumn term of 2023, we also visited 12 schools, two colleges and one home education drop in session to ask children and young people with SEND what things helped them to feel in control, supported, able to learn, safe, healthy, heard, and happy.



The feedback obtained from completing this activity with children and young people has informed our understanding of what getting it right will feel like to Suffolk's children and young people. This will be used to develop the Suffolk Children's Outcome Framework, influencing the measures and indicators for each outcome to determine how effectively we are supporting children and young people.

The above graphic uses a combination of quotes and images to reflect the themes the children and young people we spoke to associate with each of the outcome phrases.

## Children and young people told us that to be healthy is to:

- Get enough sleep.
- Eat healthy food.
- Think about mental health, mindset and feelings.
- Be active, exercise and take part in clubs and hobbies.
- Visit the dentist and doctors.
- Spend time outside.
- Be happy.

## Children and young people told us that to be safe is to:

- Be in a safe space.
- Be with, talk to, and listen to trusted people such as family, friends and teachers.
- Think about internet safety.
- Be sensible and think about surroundings.

## Children and young people told us that to be happy is to:

- Be proud of achievements and get rewards.
- Spend time with friends and pets.
- Laugh and hear jokes.
- Do hobbies such as play games, listen to music, create art, take part in activities and watch films.
- Eat favourite foods.

## Children and young people told us that to feel supported is to:

- Have people to help you and give advice, such as teachers, friends, and family, when you are struggling or are making choices.
- Get awards, praise, and congratulations from people.
- Feel ok to be yourself around others.
- Be listened to, and get encouragement from others.

## Children and young people told us that to be heard is to:

- Share ideas, views and opinions with others.
- Talk about things that are important.
- Get to make decisions and have a say through school council.
- Be listened to and respected.

## Children and young people told us that to be able to learn is to:

- Learn at their own pace.
- Learn through doing, and learn about things that are interesting or new.
- Be supported with work, learning and feelings by teachers, teaching assistants and tutors.
- Be able to use things that help with learning such as fidgets, games and music.

## Children and young people told us that to be in control of their lives is to:

- Have help, but make their own choices and decisions about actions, ideas and their future.
- Choose to take part in hobbies and activities.
- Be their own person, with control and responsibility over thoughts and feelings.
- Work towards future goals and dreams, including job choices and learning.



# Appendix 5:

## Links to further information

### **iThrive framework**

[www.implementingthrive.org](http://www.implementingthrive.org)

### **SEND code of practice**

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25)

### **All age autism Strategy**

[www.suffolk.gov.uk/care-and-support-for-adults/keep-well-and-active/autism](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/care-and-support-for-adults/keep-well-and-active/autism)

### **Suicide Prevention strategy Suffolk**

[www.nsft.nhs.uk/suicideprevention](http://www.nsft.nhs.uk/suicideprevention)

### **The Source**

[www.thesource.me.uk](http://www.thesource.me.uk)

### **Suffolk Local Offer**

[www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk](http://www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk)

### **Suffolk Learning**

[www.suffolklearning.com](http://www.suffolklearning.com)

### **SENDIASS**

[www.suffolksendiass.co.uk](http://www.suffolksendiass.co.uk)

### **Suffolk Parent Carer Forum**

[www.suffolkpcf.co.uk](http://www.suffolkpcf.co.uk)

### **Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board**

[www.suffolkandnortheastsex.icb.nhs.uk/about-us/joint-forward-plan/](http://www.suffolkandnortheastsex.icb.nhs.uk/about-us/joint-forward-plan/)

### **Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board**

[www.improvinglivesnw.org.uk/norfolk-and-waveney-5-year-joint-forward-plan](http://www.improvinglivesnw.org.uk/norfolk-and-waveney-5-year-joint-forward-plan)

