

SEND Strategy

2022 – 2025



Contents

Foreword	1
Introduction	2
Our Vision	3
Purpose of the SEND Strategy	4
Context - Where are we now	5
Co-Production	10
Our SEND Ambitions	11
How will we deliver and by when?	22

Foreword – Jenny Coles

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against 86.3%
national average
of schools achieved a
“good” or “outstanding”
Ofsted rating in 2021.

Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire & West Essex Integrated Care System and Herts Parent Carer Involvement (HPCI) are pleased to present this Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy.

We believe SEND is everyone’s business and through the new SEND Strategy 2022 – 2025 we would like to share with you our vision, aspiration and priorities for developing support and provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and their families.

Our services strive to support and encourage our young people with SEND to reach their full potential including, living independent lives where possible. It is important that we continually improve our services to reflect this and also to ensure that we can adapt to any increases in needs.

Critical to the success of the SEND Strategy is the important role parents and carers have in their responsibilities to shape the experience of their CYP. Involving young people the “experts by experience” is also a key part of coproducing this strategy. We believe that by working together with HPCI and families and young people across Hertfordshire we will deliver the developments that will meet the needs of young people in line with the SEND ambitions in this document.

Our services are operating with increasing local need and amid significant challenge, within the wider context of a changing national policy environment. Hertfordshire has an extensive and rich range of inclusive education provision, from Early Years through to Further Education with dedicated and tailored specialist provision. Our ability to develop and increase provision in line with demand will be essential to meet the outcomes of our CYP in the future.

We are proud of our collaborative working with our education provisions that provide exceptional education and pastoral care for our children and young people with SEND, 87.9% against 86.3% national average of schools achieved a “good” or “outstanding” Ofsted rating in 2021.

Our safeguarding children’s partnership recognises that children and young people with SEND will often face multiple challenges and may at times be at risk of harm, abuse and exploitation. Our joined up approach seeks to deliver support and intervention at the earliest stage to ensure they are protected.

We recognise that many service providers, partners and community groups play an important part in supporting our young people into adulthood. We want to continue to strengthen relationships with our partners including adult service providers, clinical commissioning groups, health service providers, district councils, community groups and Hertfordshire education settings.

We would like to extend our gratitude and thanks to all those engaged in supporting young people with SEND and their families in Hertfordshire.

This strategy identifies our SEND Ambitions and our coproduced priority objectives across education, health and social care which will be monitored and delivered through an action plan overseen by the multi-agency SEND Leadership Group. There will be an ongoing review of both the strategy and the action plan to ensure that we remain focussed on the right priorities and make solid progress to achieve them, so to improve outcomes for CYP with SEND in Hertfordshire.

Introduction

CYP achieve better outcomes when we have a clear focus on working together. This vision is at the heart of our refreshed five year SEND Strategy which builds on the achievements of the 2018 – 23 SEND strategy action plan.

Our SEND strategy demonstrates the collective commitment and responsibility between our parents, community, Local Authority (LA) education and social care support services and settings, including health services across the spectrum of health provision. Parents and the voluntary sector have a shared commitment to the strategy and are partners in ensuring that it meets the needs of CYP.

We will regularly report and share through the SEND Local Offer website the outcomes, achievements and impact of the SEND Strategy.

Co-production and partnership working with families is at the core of SEND service development and delivery across education, social care and health.

We will ensure that the outcomes of the SEND Strategy action plan are taken forward and a summary of the achievements of the workstreams, how the work is being embedded and how the impact is being monitored are regularly reported and shared with families and professionals on the Local Offer.

All partners are represented on the SEND Leadership Group driving and monitoring the strategy.

The Hertfordshire 'Outcome Bees' framework applies across Children's Services and all partners. It is at the heart of the SEND Strategy connecting it with the vision, delivery and outcomes of the overarching objectives for children, young people, young adults and their families, identified in the Hertfordshire Children's and Young People Plan 2021 - 2024.



Our vision

In Hertfordshire we want all CYP with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to be included and valued, so that they can live happy and fulfilling lives. We will have services that will make a difference to families because they are joined up, inclusive, easy to access, close to home and adapt to meet individual's needs. Hertfordshire will be a county where we're proud to say that SEND is everybody's business.

The SEND Strategy is underpinned by our Professional Promise to the CYP of Hertfordshire. Our promise for how children, young people & young adults (CYP) with special educational needs and /or disabilities and their families should be treated:

Hertfordshire's Professional Promise

- **We will be honest about what can be achieved**
We will be clear from the start about what we can do allowing for time, resources and the law. We will be clear why things are happening.
- **We aim to get it right first time and continue to learn from our experiences to inform changes**
We will try hard to make things work and if they don't we will try to understand what went wrong so that we can make sure it doesn't happen again.
- **We will have the skills to do the job or sign post elsewhere when needed**
We will make sure that all of our staff are well trained and that they know who is the most suitable person to help if they can't.
- **We will work together in an open and honest way**
We won't let the fact that we are from different organisations stop us from working well together to help you achieve the best outcomes.
- **The views of the child and young person and family will be at the centre of everything we do**
We will listen to what is important to you, build on your ideas and always remember that we are working to help you get the outcomes you want.
- **We will recognise the strengths and abilities of children, young people and young adults and we will build on these**
We will focus on what works and what you are good at so that we can build on this.
- **We will communicate clearly and appropriately and in the way that CYP choose**
We will talk to you about how you like to give and receive information and together find a way that will work.
- **We will work together towards positive solutions and outcomes**
We will be creative and open to considering new ideas to help you get the outcomes that you want.

Purpose of the SEND Strategy:

In Hertfordshire, SEND is everyone's responsibility. Our SEND Strategy is our manifesto, developed with families and professionals to clearly set out our approach to identifying and supporting SEND in Hertfordshire in line with the Graduated Response to educational support and provision. It takes into consideration all our legal duties as laid out in relevant legislation and identifies our priorities to ensure we're continuously improving support for CYP 0 – 25 with SEND and their families over the next 3 years.

This includes those with additional needs with SEN Support, those undergoing an Education, Health and Care needs assessment through to those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). It makes clear what we intend to do to achieve our stated aims and objectives.

Who is the SEND Strategy for?

The SEND strategy is for all staff working in SEND in Hertfordshire, across education health and care and the range of 0 – 25 services and provision, who are working together to action and achieve the ambitions set out here. It's also for families and young people in Hertfordshire, to understand the actions Hertfordshire County Council and partners in health are making to deliver inclusive, person-centred services across SEND.



Context - where we are now

National Context for SEND:

The Local Authority and its partners work within the statutory requirements and guidance of the Children and Families Act, 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice and the clear agenda of SEND reform and culture change:

- a person-centred, joined-up approach to identifying and meeting the needs of children, young people and their families;
- increased engagement and participation of young people and families so that they have greater choice and control, are listened to and their concerns are resolved swiftly;
- a published local offer of support, services and provision, how to access it and how to raise concerns or seek redress;
- the use of effective practice, data and wider intelligence and independent assessment to drive improvement;
- clearly-defined and understood roles and responsibilities; and
- increased integration of services and joint commissioning across the LA and Health.

The national priorities in implementing the reforms three years on were highlighted at the November 2017 Parent/ Carer Forum national conference by Ann Gross, Director of Life Skills, Disadvantage and SEND at the Department for Education:

- Ensuring SEND covers SEND Support, not just those CYP with Education, Health and Care Plans
- Improving quality and outcomes
- Funding and value for money
- Inclusion in the context of increasing diversity of schools and colleges
- Working with partners

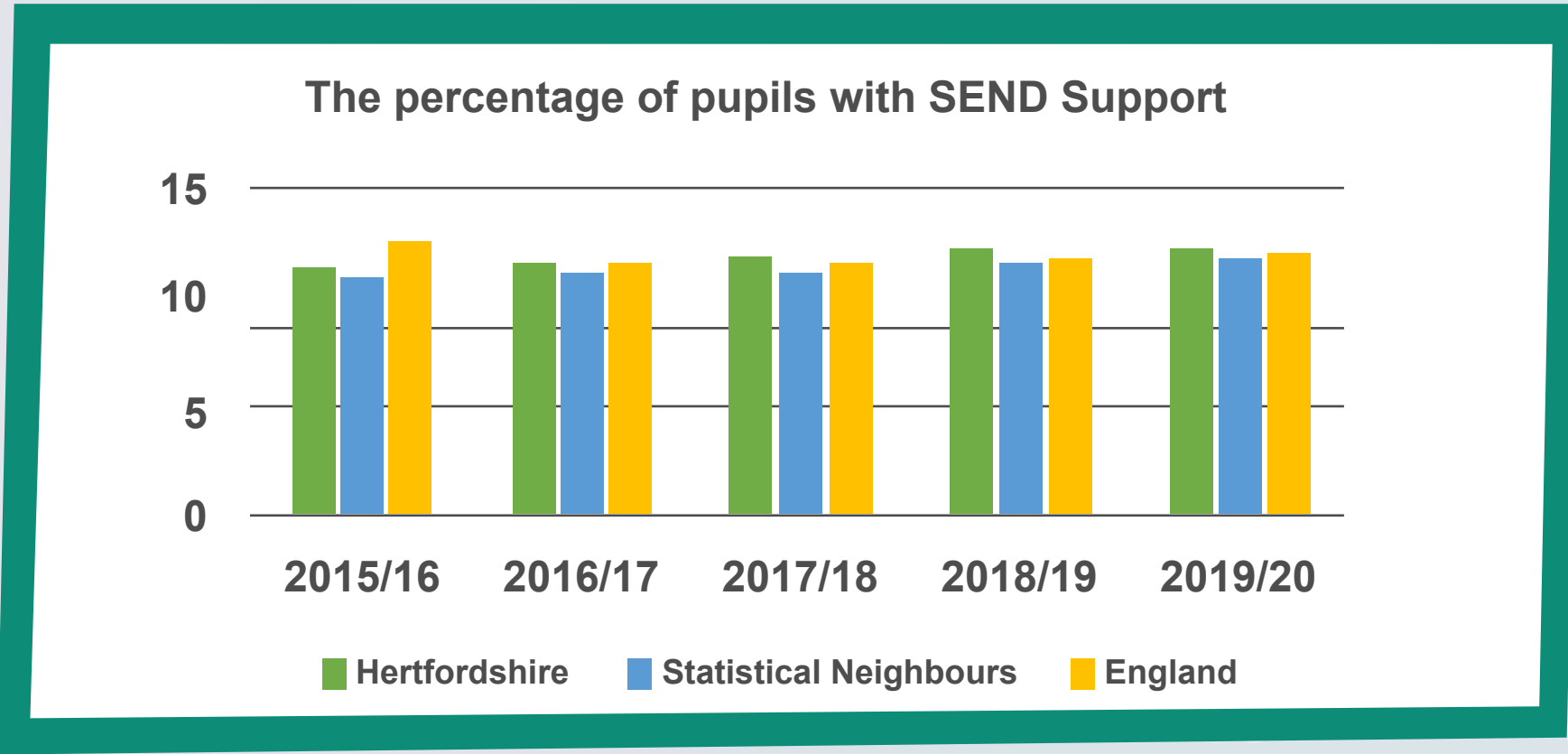
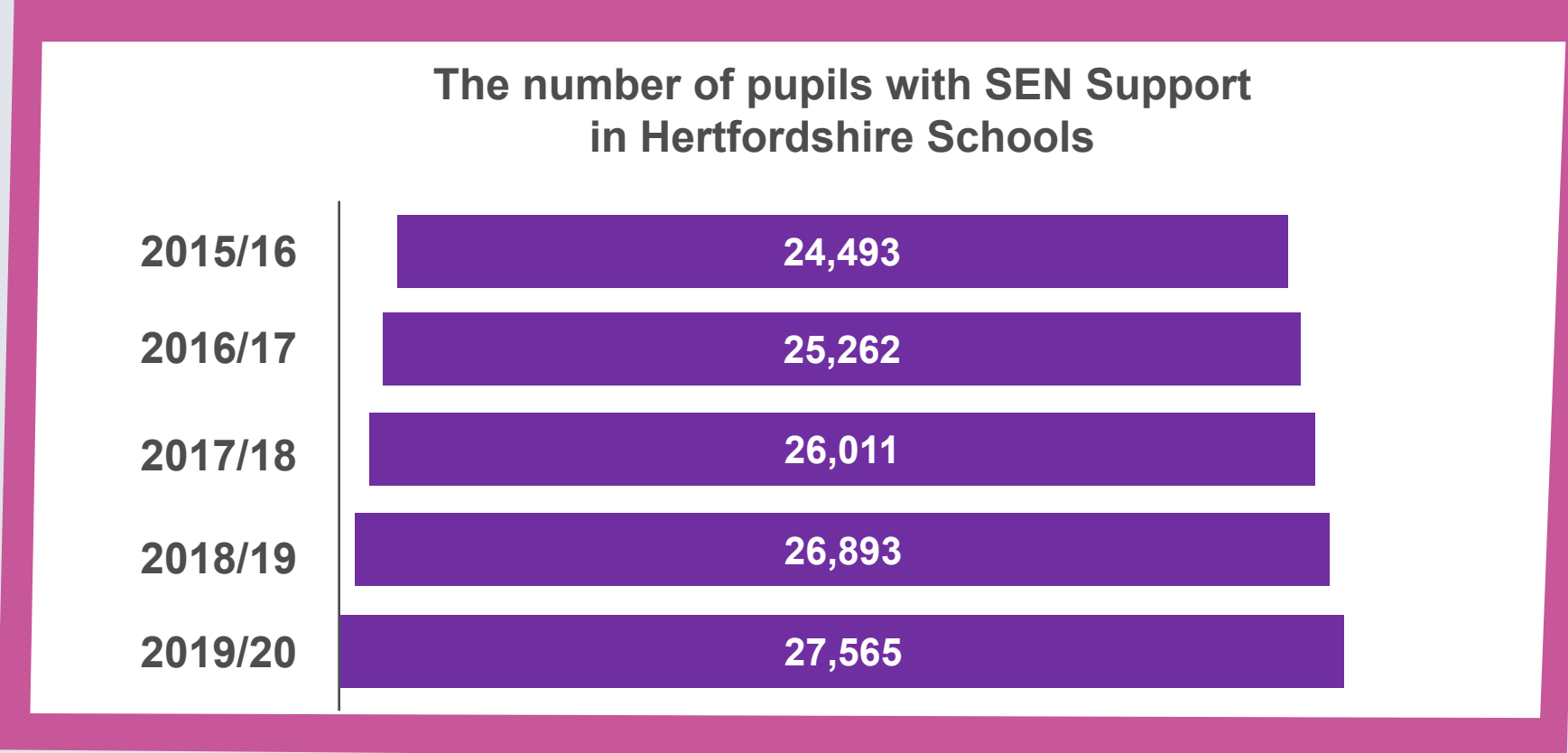
The national SEND Review into provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities is set to be published in 2021 and we will ensure recommendations and direction from this report are acted upon and inform our SEND Strategy delivery.

While national developments help steer our work, we will continue to identify the specific issues we need to address in Hertfordshire.

Local context for SEND in Hertfordshire: Children and Young People with SEND: The Hertfordshire Profile

Around 36,000 children and young people in Hertfordshire have an identified SEND need. This is equivalent to around 13.3% of pupils in Hertfordshire schools.

Hertfordshire has a slightly higher proportion of pupils receiving SEN Support compared to statistical neighbours and the England position overall (although this should be considered in the context of a lower rate of children with EHCPs).

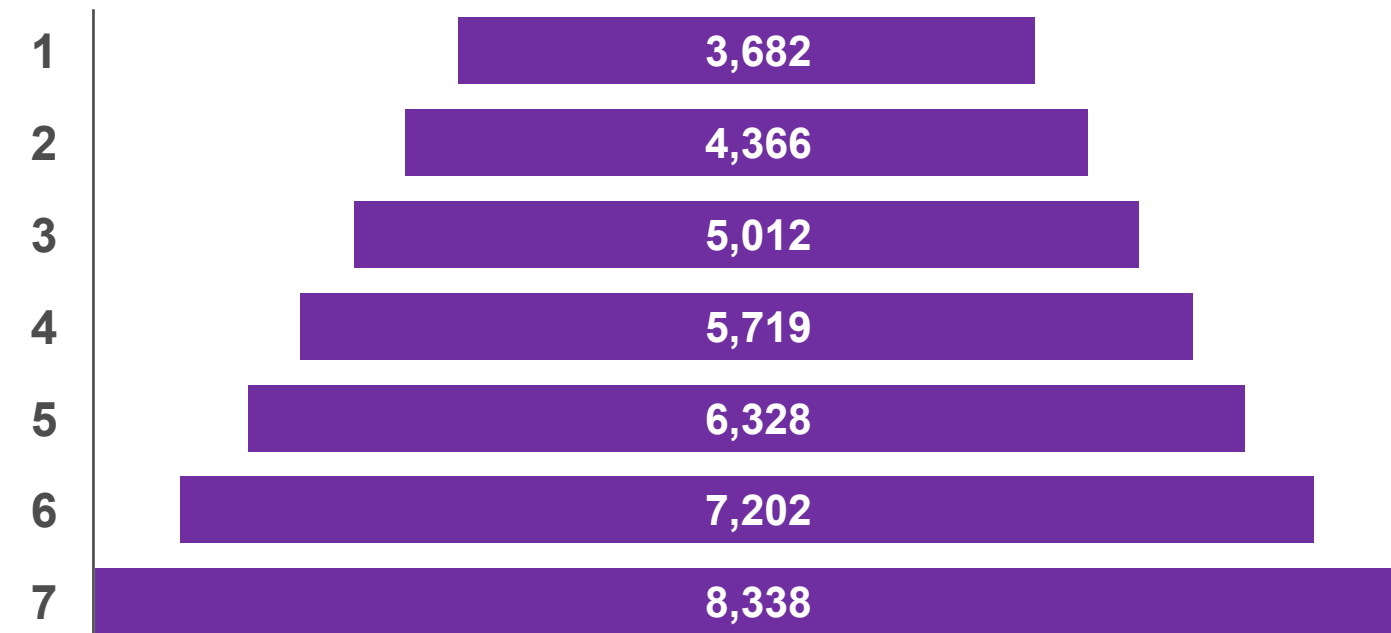


Local context for SEND in Hertfordshire: Children and Young People with SEND: The Hertfordshire Profile

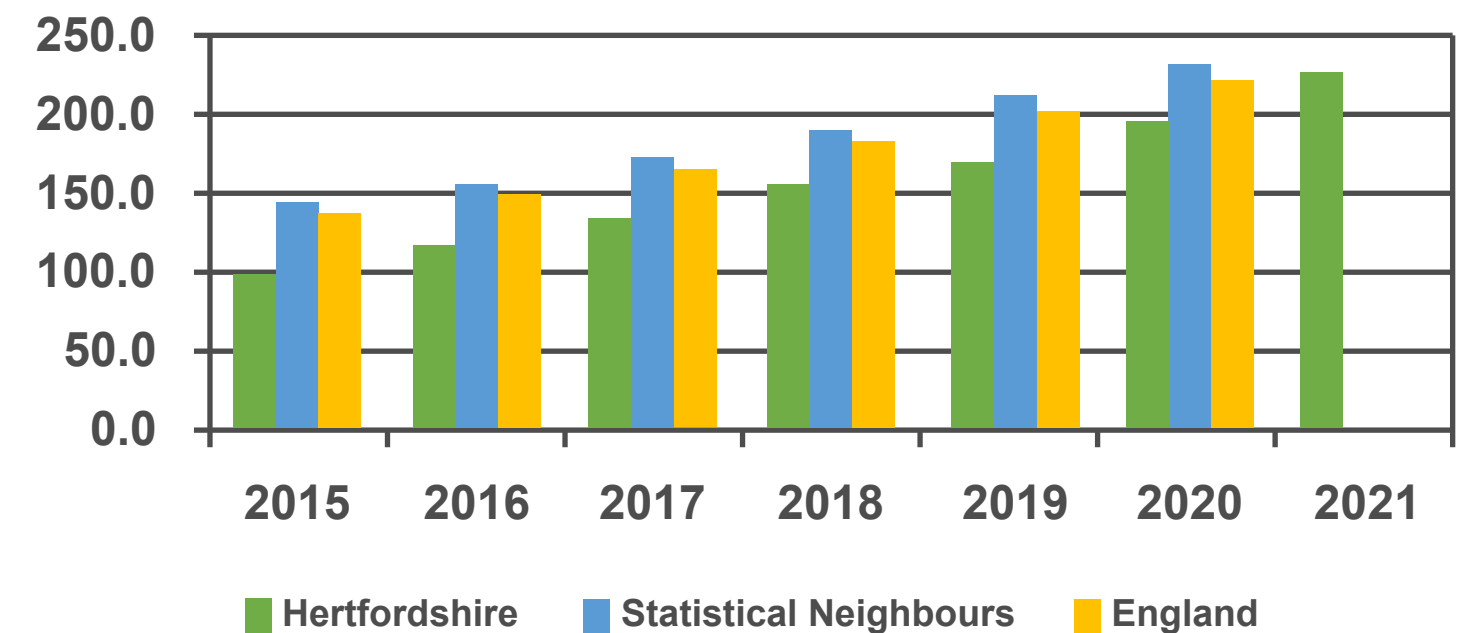
Since the introduction of the SEND Reforms in 2015, Hertfordshire has seen rapid growth in the number of children with EHCPs: a 127% increase 2015-2021 equivalent to around a 15% increase year on year.

However, even with these significant changes, overall, the proportion of children and young people aged 0-25 with EHCPs remains lower in Hertfordshire than both Statistical Neighbours and England comparatively.

The number of EHCPs in Hertfordshire



Total EHCPs as a rate per 10k of 0-25 population

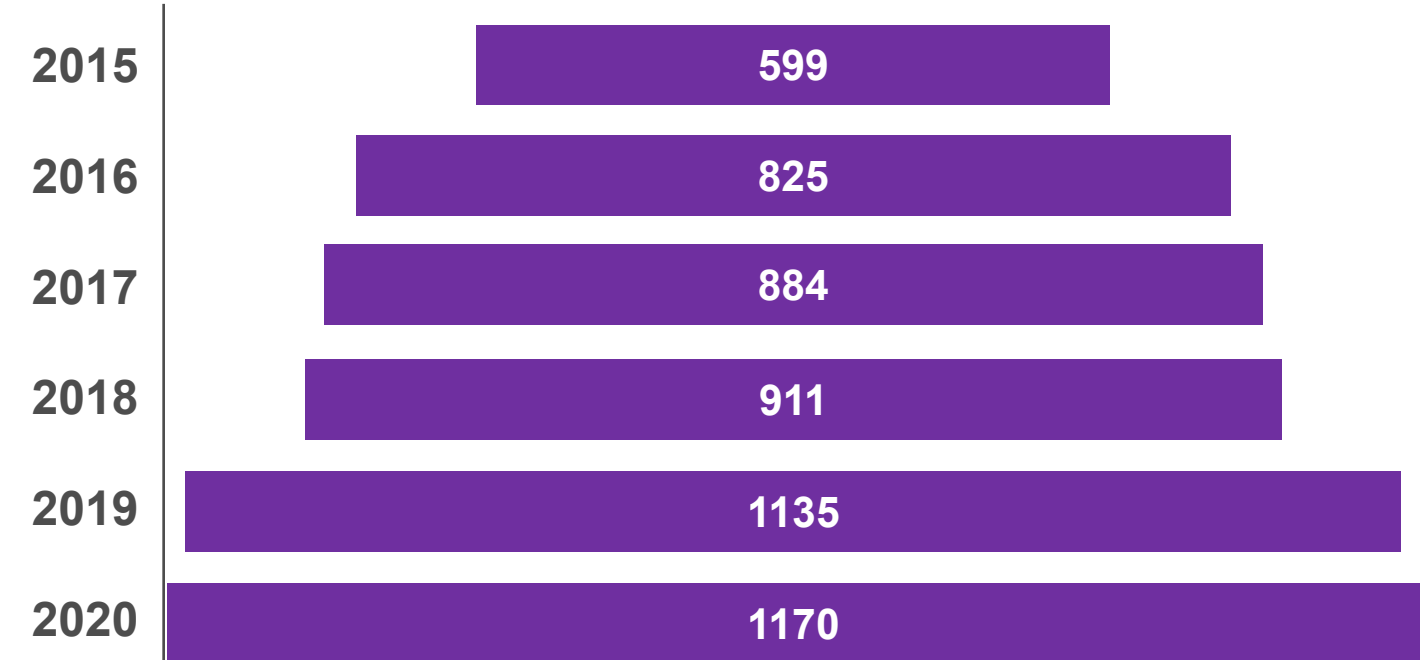


Local context for SEND in Hertfordshire: Children and Young People with SEND: The Hertfordshire Profile

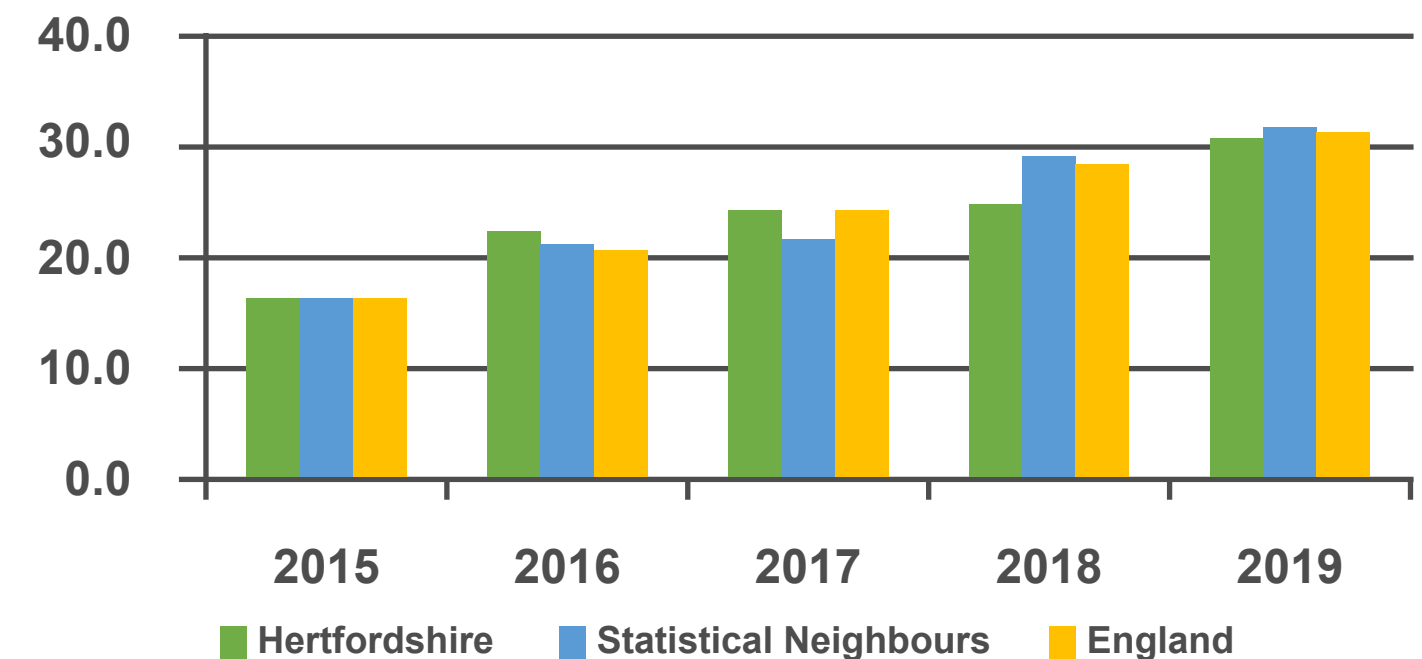
In part, the increase in EHCP numbers is due to the extension of provision from birth to age 25. However, the number of new EHCPs issued has also increased each year since the reforms were introduced. However, the number of new EHCPs issued has also increased each year since the reforms were introduced.

Hertfordshire's rate of new EHCPs as a proportion of the overall 0-25 population is broadly consistent with that of statistical neighbour or England comparators.

The number of new EHCPs by year



New EHCPs as a rate per 10k of population

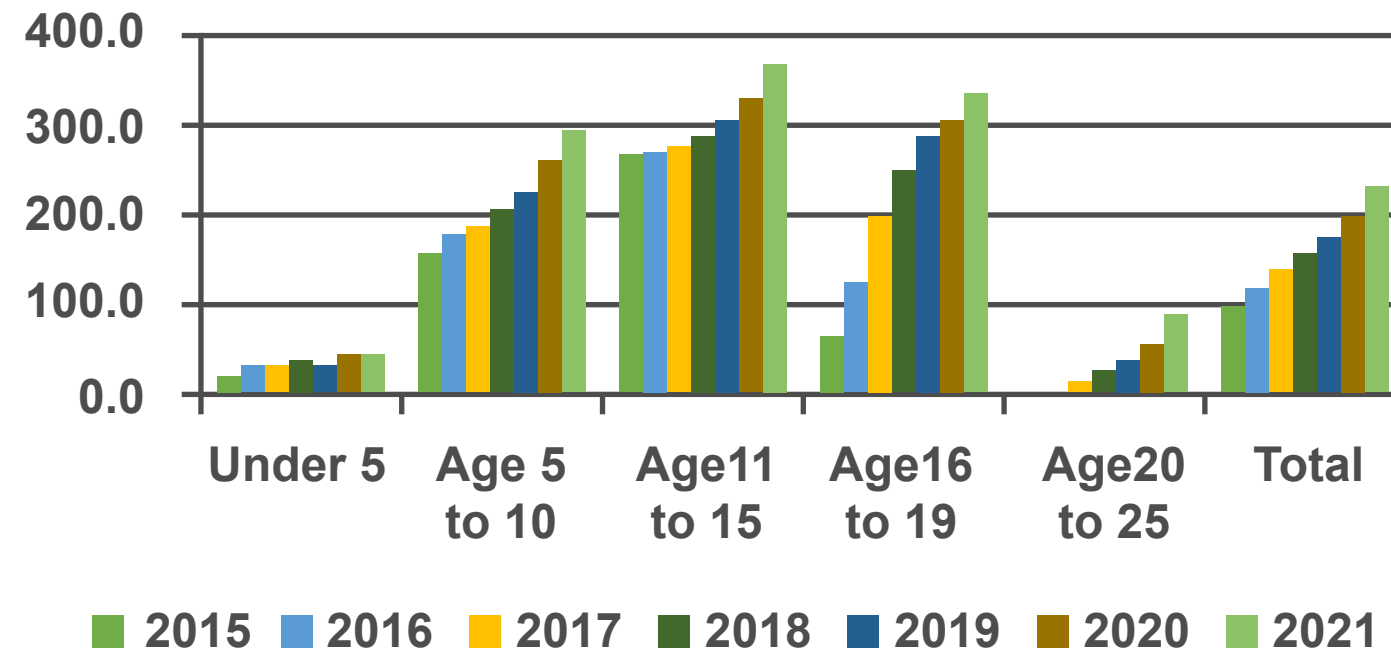


Local context for SEND in Hertfordshire: Children and Young People with SEND: The Hertfordshire Profile

Consistent with the national picture, the age groups with the highest proportion of EHCPs remains school-aged children. The relatively low rate in the 20-25 population suggests that the full impact of the extension of eligibility to 25 has not yet been reflected in the size of overall EHCP cohort.

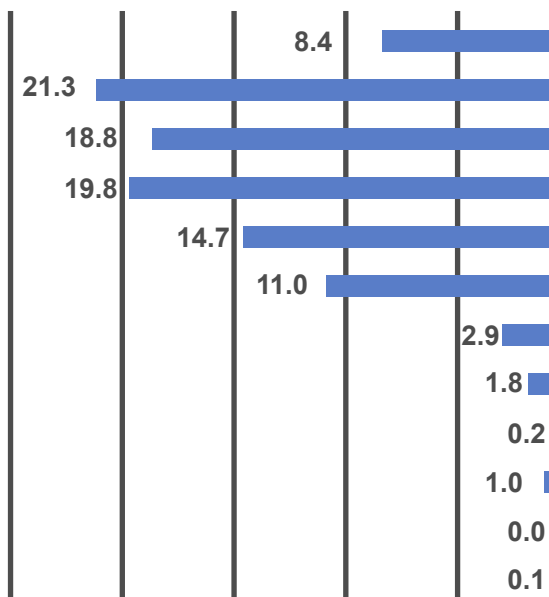
Around a quarter of school aged children with EHCPs have ASD as a primary need and represents a 48% increase in numbers between 2015 and 2020. SEMH is the next highest primary need (16.2%) and has seen a 33% increase in numbers in the same period.

Hertfordshire EHCP by Age as a rate per 10k of the population

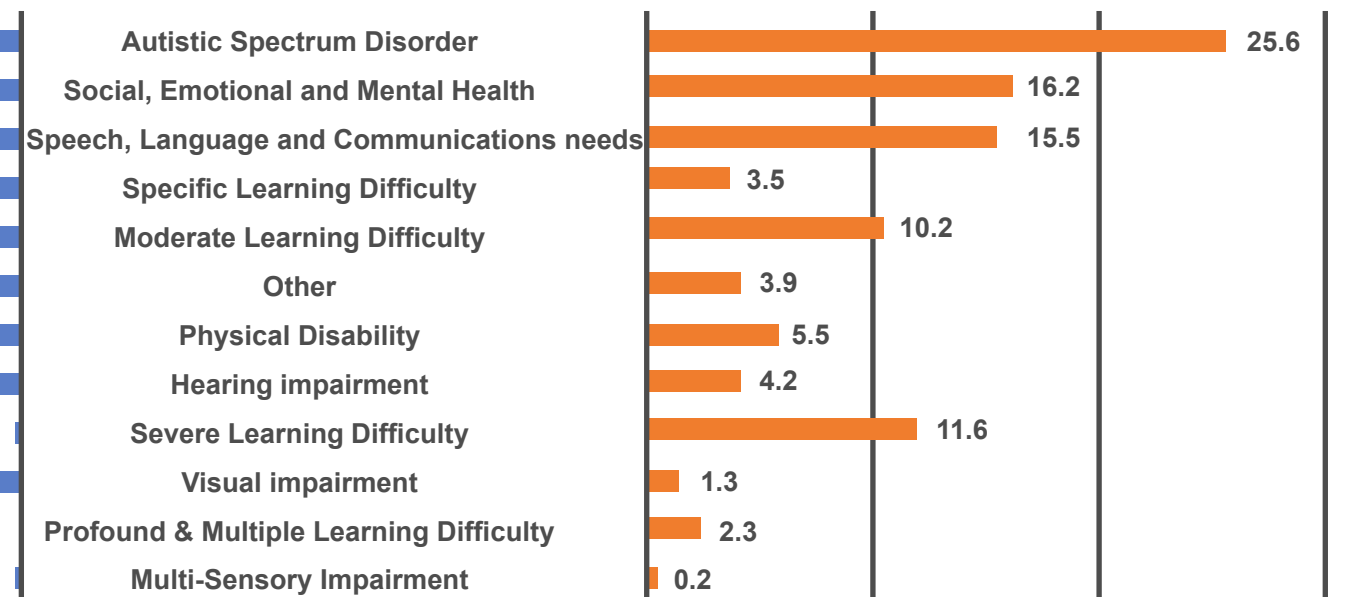


Distribution of identified SEN by primary need for school aged pupils in Hertfordshire Schools 2019/20

SEN Support



EHCP



Co-Production

Co-Production at the heart of how we deliver for children

In Hertfordshire, we are committed to strategic and individual co-production. This means that we expect co-production to take place both in the development of services, and in the delivery and planning of SEND services for individuals.

We work transparently and in partnership with Herts Parent Carer Involvement, our parent carer forum, who ensure there is representation for local families experience at every level of our SEND strategic governance. This is in line with national expectations from the Department for Education and the Department of Health and Social Care.

‘Co-production is fundamental to service development and delivery, continual, consistent collaboration with HPCI is pivotal in meeting the changing needs of our CYP and ensuring the child is always at the centre of every discussion and decision in how we take our services forward.’

Jenny Coles.

Additionally, we have an online feedback group of over 200 families who self-register to receive surveys, consultations and other tasks that support service development projects and initiatives. We also engage with other local community and voluntary groups as appropriate to specific workstreams.

Individual co-production:

All SEND professionals across all 0 – 25 SEND services are expected to work to our Professional Promise, and the continued embedding of this set of behaviours is an important part of delivering on our updated SEND strategy.

The co-production feedback loop:

We really appreciate the time and effort given by families in Hertfordshire, to support us in developing services. We also know how important it is to ensure that we communicate what we have learned from you, what we are doing as a result, and how your thoughts, experience and contributions have helped to shape things.

All of the SEND strategy workstreams are outlined on our Local Offer website and a “You said, we did” page which is updated regularly, to illustrate the changes that are being made to services as a result of the things we learn from you.

Our Jointly Agreed SEND Ambitions :



Tailoring:

Personalisation: Plan and deliver services that are flexible and respect individual wishes and meet individual needs

When we get this right, it looks like:



- Children feel safe and heard. They have a clear pathway to achieving their goals and who will help them on this journey. They feel accepted, valued and equal to their peers – like their lives were more “ordinary”. Children’s needs are better met improving their life chances.



- Families feel heard without having to over repeat their situation and needs, wellbeing increases and stress decreases.
- Families know what services are available and how to access them - the right services are in place at the right time.



- The boundary between parent and professional is clear with defined expectations on both sides to ensure support around the child is seamless.

Actioning:

Having a range of good quality local provision and services that we can deploy flexibly and quickly in response to need

- Ensuring that we have enough capacity to meet the need
- Being accountable for ensuring that provision is providing value for money and that we are measuring impact of provision so that correct provision can be chosen in individual circumstances
- Ensuring that provision evolves with changing cohorts and that we are ahead of the curve with this
- Our developing approaches to joint triage will enable us to provide the right response at the right time. This is especially important where there are contextual safeguarding risks or health needs running concurrently with SEND.
- Clear pathways that can be tailored
- Local solutions
- Person-centred decision making with an increased emphasis on achieving a one

Having robust processes in place to measure and identify need so that provision is appropriately available – not over and not under

- Robust tracking and data systems that support this

A focus on communication in all interactions with families and each other

- A culture of listening and talking between professionals and families

Child Centred Planning focused on goals and outcomes

- Standardising tools
- A focus on empowering CYP and their families
- Achievable goals that include the route and stepping stones to achieving them

Shared accountability across education, health and care at strategic and individual level for child-centred practice

- Instilling a sense of common purpose across services
- Sharing of good practice
- Ensuring that services are working across settings so that strategies for children are consistent and inclusive

Measuring progress :

- The % of CYP whose needs are met locally (for both EHCP and SEN Support)
- The % of CYP views are recorded effectively in the EHCP Plan
- Number of staff accessing Diversity and Inclusion Training
- Forum for best practice sharing
- Established data systems that inform commissioning of provision and services
- Evidence of CYP involvement in strategic developments
- Evidence of lessons learnt from complaints

Enabling:

Workforce (Network): Continue to develop a skilled, learning workforce that strives for excellence and staff are proud of their own achievements and celebrate those of others.

When we get this right, it looks like:



- Our workforce across education, health and care are committed to a “team around the family” approach, with the right skillset to deliver services to our CYP at the right stage of their development
- Our workforce are ambitious for children - they have the autonomy to problem solve and they are never complacent
- Our workforce are confident in requesting help and support where needed



- CYP feel secure that staff are confident and successful in meeting their needs and can share who made a difference to them and how
- There is a shared focus on independence and creating successful citizens



- Families have trust and faith in their professional support group, that everyone is doing the best they can for their child
- Families feel that they are respected and valued rather than “passive onlookers”
- Families feel empowered to meet their children’s needs independently and in their local community wherever possible

Actioning:

Embedding a “listening” culture across education, health and care where strategic coproduction and individual partnership working with families are the norm, and always result in child centred planning

- Embedding the Professional Promise across all HCC service areas, including through service planning
- Improving opportunities to work together across services, and considering how decision making practices across services can be improved

Ensuring everyone understands the remit of the services available, and use this knowledge to work together for families

- Making time for each other as well as for the families we support
- Listening to each other and our families, taking time to reflect and make the right decision with the child at the centre
- Understanding each others roles and communicating this simply and in a straight forward way
- Implementing joint working between professionals where children access multiple services

Strong and joined up leadership

- Implementing performance monitoring approaches across services to ensure that our desired culture of working becomes embedded

Ensuring a strong learning and development approach to support good performance

- Measuring the impact of training to ensure that services are getting the best value and impact, and building on models which are most successful
- Provide opportunities for reflective practice across services
- Pool training and expertise across education health and care, and embrace new ways of training, including updating and refreshing resources regularly
- Training and network opportunities for parents and carers

Measuring progress :

- Number and percentage of providers rated outstanding or good in Leadership and Management by Ofsted
- Satisfaction of service users in the quality of services received
- Herts for Learning training offer evaluation feedback
- Reduction in conflict and tribunal action with families via dispute resolution and mediation
- Compliments and complaints received across Health, Social Care and Education
- Service self-evaluation and peer evaluation of implementation of professional promise
- Uptake of professional training identified as recommended across Health, Social Care and Education i.e. iLearn modules

Provision:

Supporting: providing sufficient and appropriate provision in Hertfordshire and within their community to meet CYP's needswishes and meet individual needs.

When we get this right, it looks like:



- Resources and provision that change with a child's needs – provision is available at the right place and right time. Clear and non-ambiguous provision options are available.
- Professionals work to actively coordinate next steps with families, particularly for those with the most complex needs.



- Families feel part of their community and receive good information and advice about the range of local provision available.
- Families feel secure about their support options and settings feel confident in their ability to support children, with appropriate resource available to them when a child's needs change.



- CYP have their needs met locally and feel that their lives are calm and “more ordinary”.
- CYP are safe and protected

Actioning:

Clear pathways in health, education and social care that enable intervention from services to be put in place in a timely way

- Clarifying “front door” processes and ensuring high quality information and advice is available to all families regardless of whether their child has an emerging or identified need
- A focus on early identification in the early years and later
- Dedicated support pathway for CYP that are vulnerable and out of education

Understanding our caseloads and having a proactive and evidence based approach to sufficiency of provision

- Integrated data-informed strategic planning across health, care and education with services evolving as our cohort changes.
- Effective monitoring of commissioned provision
- Community offers that are accessible no matter where you live
- Robust challenge when provision is not delivering what’s expected

Developing a spectrum of local provision that meets needs

- Building on and continue to develop local area provision across education, health and social care to meet the changing needs of CYP

Ensuring CYP with medical and special educational needs have access to a broad and balanced curriculum through developing provision

- Embracing different ways of delivering provision, particularly by using technology
- Integrated packages of support that are focused on the child’s need rather than what provision is available
- Supporting local schools to deliver truly inclusive provision which includes an understanding of whole school SEND and all staff seeing themselves as leaders or champions of children with SEND. ‘Every Leader is a Leader of SEND’

Measuring progress:

- Number of CYP placed out of county where educational needs cannot be met locally
- Number of CYP whose needs are not being met in an appropriate setting
- Overall absence levels and absence for pupils with SEND
- Numbers of fixed period exclusions for pupils with SEND
- Number of permanent exclusions for pupils with SEND
- Number of CYP waiting to access health care services across CAMHS, Therapies, Diagnostic Pathways eg ASD/ADHD
- Number of CYP waiting to access respite/ short breaks
- Number of CYP requiring out of county residential care

Collaborating:

Partnership: Working in partnership with other organisations to deliver the right services at the right time to prevent problems escalating.

When we get this right, it looks like:



- Partnership working would be consistently good. Families and professionals having a good understanding of what each service does, and how to access it.



- Families would be assured that services were working together to meet their needs as quickly as possible and wouldn't experience multiple *referral rejection* or being added to waiting lists.



- Professionals and families no longer feel alone as they “stand shoulder to shoulder”, confident in the knowledge of who is doing what by when and why with a shared commitment to achieve the agreed outcomes for the family.
- Reducing stress for families and empowering them to access services again should they need to.

Actioning:

Embedding a *no wrong door* approach into local practice and across services which recognises the value of the voluntary and community sector and maximises the opportunity to address contextual safeguarding needs for CYP with SEND.

Ensuring that joint commissioning underpins our work, which includes a robust needs assessment and demonstrates an understanding of how the whole system is working collectively to meet families' needs as early as possible while also supporting the management of long-term conditions

Designing, developing and implementing a local networked offer of support, including multi agency strategies such as PREVENT.

By increasing rigour in joint commissioning we are seeking to increase equitable and accessible across the county, informed by lived experiences, with identified features of effective partnership working.

Creating relevant and regular opportunities for the workforce (including families) to discuss emerging operational problems, supported by co-produced procedures

Measuring progress:

- Number and percentage of pupils that attend a state funded school in the same DSPL area as they live in
- Established networked system of consistent and easy to access school based-support services, linking to health therapies and social care support
- Established local SEND communities of practice
- Local strategic plans in place to implement local SEND priorities
- Increased / consistent hits on Local Offer webpages
- Increased engagement on SEND social media
- Increase in number of families supported by Families First Assessments and Support plans
- Increase in range of practitioners leading on Families First Assessment and Support plans
- Positive change in reported individual level outcomes reported by Outcome Star
- Evidence of lessons learned from complaints
- Increased positive feedback from families and reduction of complaints etc

Succeeding:

Outcomes: Supporting all CYP with SEND to achieve success in all areas of life understanding the impact of the pandemic and working to ensure our young people achieve their potential.

When we get this right, it looks like:



- All CYP with SEND feel they are in the right place - happy, included, heard, valued and trusted by those around them, fostering a sense of achievement within realistic expectations without feeling pressured. They are supported by those who know them best to eliminate barriers and achieve their own potential



- We will work to minimise the impact of the pandemic through understanding where Covid has impacted on our CYP's development and develop targeted interventions that are tailored to our young people's needs across all settings and services.



- All CYP with SEND are guided onto clear integrated and flexible pathways of support built to meet their needs, which are as uninterrupted as possible, and enable their progress to continue at an appropriate rate. All pathways prepare them to cope with what life throws at them, reducing anxiety and building confidence.
- Where there are multiple partnerships involved solutions are swiftly and effectively implemented so as not to impact on overall outcomes.

Actioning:

Clear and integrated pathways of support

- Networks and streamlined referral processes so that CYP are supported in a timely manner and in the right way
- Working together in partnership with professional respect to produce coordinated outcomes - we join up and have one cohesive approach taking responsibility for actions
- Having clarity around what is available to help all children with SEND succeed
- Accelerated learning programmes for those who need it
- Up to date EHCPs reflecting the next year of the CYP's achievements (all agencies contributing)

Good support in wellbeing and mental health

- Have a focus on the wellbeing of CYP
- Offering positive enjoyable experiences

Clear communication for all

- Keeping people informed of the plans and having good dialogue with families
- Communication transformed by closer links between health social care and education
- Close monitoring and awareness of vulnerable children and young people
- Using the best technologies available

Measuring progress:

- % of CYP that successfully transition to next stage and remain at the provision increases.
- %Percentage of children with SEND achieving a good level of development at Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Percentage gap reducing between children with SEND and those without achieving a good level of development at EYFS
- Percentage of pupils with SEND making sufficient progress at the end of Key Stage 2
- Percentage gap between pupils with SEND and those without working at the expected level in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2 reducing
- Increase in Percentage of pupils with SEND attaining a standard pass at the end of Key Stage 4 and those attaining a strong pass (Attainment 8)
- Increase in Percentage of pupils with SEND making expected progress at the end of Key Stage 4 (Progress 8)
- Increase in Post 16 : Percentage of CYP that successfully transition into Further Education
- Increase in Post 16 : Percentage of CYP that successfully transition into Higher Education
- Reduction in Post 16 : Percentage NEET CYP with SEND

How will we deliver and by when?

Strategic Delivery: Across Social Care, Education and Health

Professionals across Hertfordshire understand that for us to deliver cohesive, holistic support to our children and families we must work together around and with the child and family.

To enable this we are dedicated to working together to deliver the ambitions in this strategy, through embedding the ambitions into our service and delivery plans with clear outcomes to evidence delivery and through signing up to the Co-Production Charter we demonstrate that we are invested in further developing SEND services across Hertfordshire.

SEND Strategy Programme Delivery :

The SEND Strategy Programme is a transformation programme that has been implemented to give capacity and enable large scale development of SEND Services. This programme is integrated across the operational service areas to work with operational teams to enable effective change and Service professionals will lead projects that support the SEND ambitions in the strategy.

Governance process:

To monitor the effective delivery of the SEND ambitions the SEND Strategy action plan will be overseen by SEND Leadership Group. This group is attended by professionals across Education, Health and Social Care and parent representatives from HPCI. Regular reporting will also be taken on a quarterly basis to Children's Services Core Board and the joint HCC and Health Children's Executive group.

