



Walsall Council

Working together for better SEND and Alternative Provision (AP)

Special Educational Needs, Disability and Alternative
Provision Strategy **2023-2028**



Walsall SEND - Working Together Charter



Actively listen
at the first opportunity to ensure families receive the correct support.

Use Language that cares!

OPEN Communication

Be Transparent and CLEAR

Be OPEN

HONEST and RESPECTFUL in ALL communications

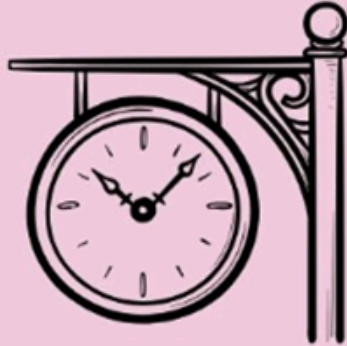


FEEDBACK...

**YOU SAID...
...WE DID!**

ALL partners are involved and **ACCOUNTABLE**

Invest **TIME** for working together



Feel welcomed and cared for

"ENSURE everyone's **VOICE IS HEARD**"



Prepare children and young people for adulthood

Prioritise children and young people's aspirations!



Celebrate

children and young people as they are



Feel Valued and Included

Early intervention and support



CARE

for and about families lived experiences

A shared understanding

Working in partnership



Involve Include **AGREE** outcomes **TOGETHER**



Forward

As an area partnership we believe supporting children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is everyone's business and we are committed to providing excellent alternative provision for those who need it.

We are determined to do everything we can to provide better experiences and outcomes for all our children and young people with SEND and those who attend Alternative Provision.

We are proud of the existing support available for children and young people in Walsall. This strategy sets out our ambitions over the next five years to continue to develop services and make continuous improvements. It demonstrates our commitment to ensure that we work closely with and listen to children, young people and their families.

We want all our children and young people with SEND and those attending Alternative Provision to be valued, visible and included within their local community, providing them with the opportunity to achieve their aspirations and outcomes, leading to a happy, healthy and fulfilling life.

We will provide access to services that will make a difference to families. These services will work effectively because they work together, are inclusive, easy to access, close to home, are adaptable for individual needs and aspirations whilst respecting the rights of children, young people and their families.

This work is supported by sharing information, innovative ideas and best practice to support children and young people to achieve. The area partnership holds a shared accountability for wellbeing, fairness and equity for all.

Our vision

We believe that every child and young person deserves, and should receive, an excellent education and the chance to fulfil their potential. This includes having a clear focus on providing the right support, in the right place, at the right time.

The area partnership sets out Walsall's strategy to continually develop and improve services for children and young people aged 0-25 years with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those using alternative provision (AP).

A child or young person has special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) if they have a learning difficulty and/or a disability that means they need special education, care and health support.

Alternative Provision supports children who need extra help to stay in and enjoy learning at their mainstream school, or provides specialist places and support for those who would benefit from spending time away from their school.

We recognise that many of the young people who use Alternative Provision will have SEND which is why we have unified our approach in this strategy.

We want to ensure that all children and young people have a sense of belonging and that they feel safe in their identity. We hold the ambition that every child and young person will have a sense of belonging in their education setting, when they attend health services for appointments, access Social Care support or join in activities and events in their local community.

This strategy has been co-produced with parents, carers and families (including FACE, Walsall's Parent Carer Forum); children and young people who have lived experience; early years settings; schools; colleges; frontline practitioners; the voluntary and community sector; and the NHS Black Country Integrated Care Board.



Walsall Council



FACE Walsall Parent Carer Forum

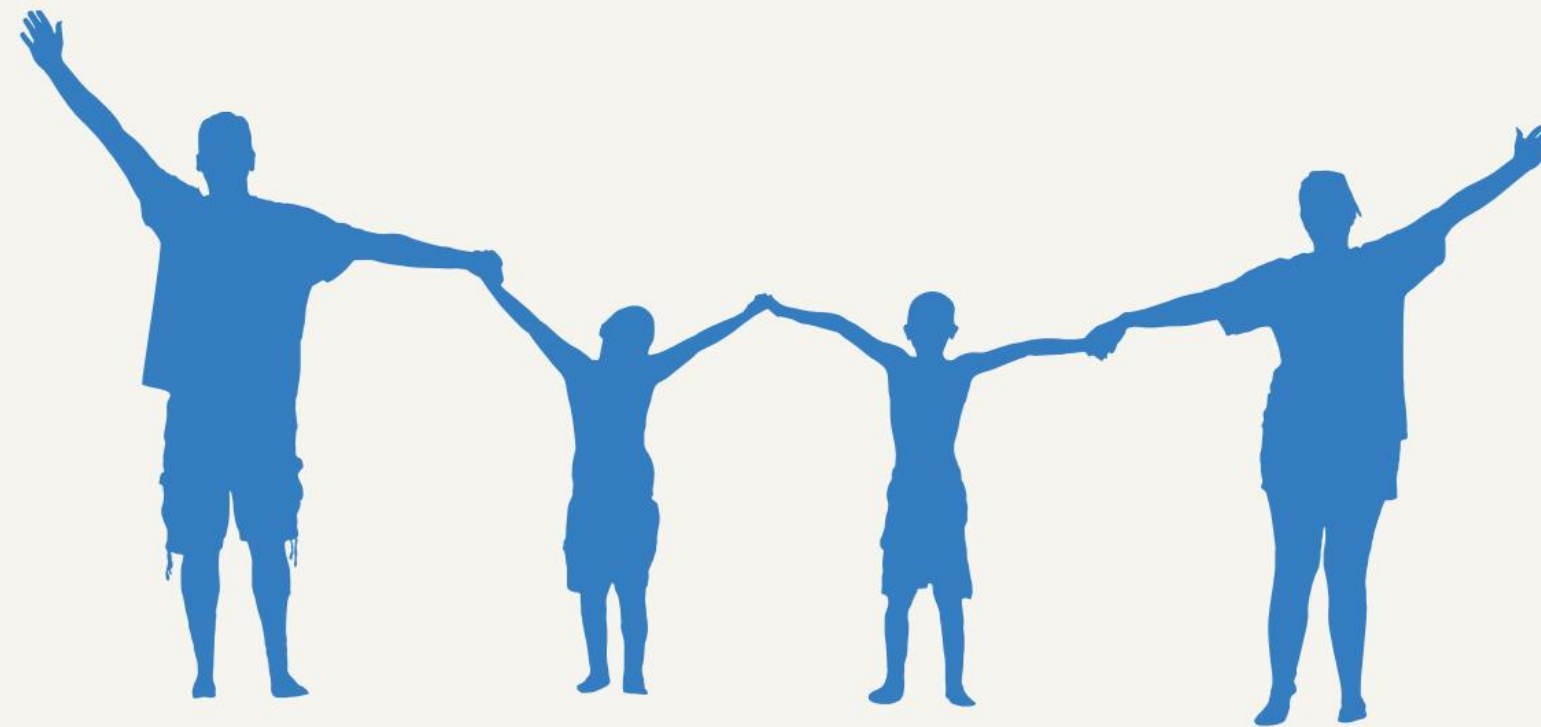
- Families and Carers Empowered -



Black Country
Integrated Care Board

Working together

The lived experience of children, young people and their families with SEND is central to our developments and co-production is fundamental within our continuing work. We value and will continue to listen to our SEND community. We will continue to learn from what they tell us and ensure their voices influence our work and developments. By working together in partnership, we will provide the right support at the right time, for all children and young people with SEND across our community and ensure we deliver the very best outcomes based on their needs. Our co-produced SEND Co-production and Engagement Agreement and In Our Hands Engagement and Participation Strategy will provide the basis of our work in this area.



Context

In Walsall, the overall population size has increased by 5.5%, from around 269,300 in 2011 to 284,100 in 2021. This is lower than the overall increase for England (6.6%), and for the West Midlands (6.2%).

73,344

Children
and young people



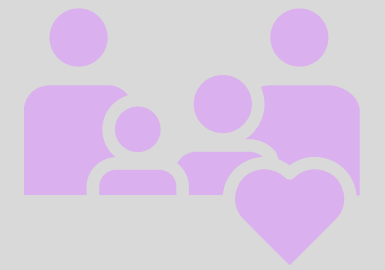
53,863

In schools



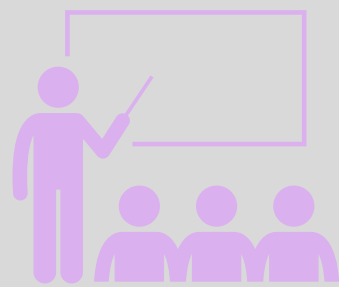
9,366

SEND children



6,703

SEN support
school age



3.7%

of children with SEN
support known to social care



6.9%

of children with an
EHCP known to social care



4,532

EHCP's aged 0-25



2.7%

of school aged children
have SEMH needs



Priority 1: Localised high-quality provision

Our aspiration...

Is to provide a continuum of high quality, local provision in Walsall across education, health and social care; to better meet the needs of young people with SEND and those requiring Alternative Provision.

We will...

- Develop a continuum of provision to support young people that will better meet their needs to be successful in their local mainstream school or setting.
- Ensure that every child and young person can access a positive learning environment where they have a sense of belonging to support their self-esteem leading to increased aspirations and a successful life.
- Continue to develop and implement training and awareness for SEND for all staff across the partnership.
- Have an integrated training and education offer for education settings to support reasonable adjustments and increase their understanding of needs.
- Support schools and settings to meet the medical needs of children young people with identified health conditions, with access to support and training from local health providers.
- Have appropriate local health care provision that is easy to access by children, young people and their families.
- Ensure good practice is shared and celebrated from high-quality schools, settings and services.
- Expand the range of alternative provision options available, including in-house provision, external providers and specialist interventions, to ensure that every child and young person has access to appropriate placement.

How we know we have made a difference...

The majority of children and young people with SEND will successfully attend their local mainstream school or setting.

Those in need of additional support from Alternative Provision will be supported to return to, and be successful in, their local mainstream provision.

All children and young people will have their education, health and care needs met locally, fewer children and young people will have to travel outside of Walsall for their needs to be met.

Quality first teaching and access to an inclusive curriculum will meet the needs of children and young people with SEND, whatever education or early years setting they attend.

There will be an increase in young people successfully transitioning across education, health and care to the next stage of their journey.

There will be an increase in young people accessing higher education, apprenticeships, traineeships and supported internships leading to successful employment.



Priority 2: Early identification and help

Our aspiration...

We will work in partnership across education, health and care to deliver the right support, in the right place and at the right time to meet the needs of children and young people earlier.

We will...

- Ensure that our Local Offer website continues to help children and young people and their families find the local information and support from across Walsall.
- Develop a skilled, confident and resilient workforce, able to meet the educational, social and emotional needs of all children and young people.
- Provide a high-quality professional development offer for our workforce across the SEND local area.
- Celebrate and share good practice from a range of high-quality schools, settings and services.
- Implement a consistent Graduated Approach that will 'assess, plan, do and review' the support that has been put in place to meet the needs of each child and young person with SEND.
- Continue to manage requests for Education Health and Care plans, keeping within the statutory timescales.
- Develop robust processes for identifying children and young people who may benefit from alternative provision and conducting comprehensive assessments of their needs.

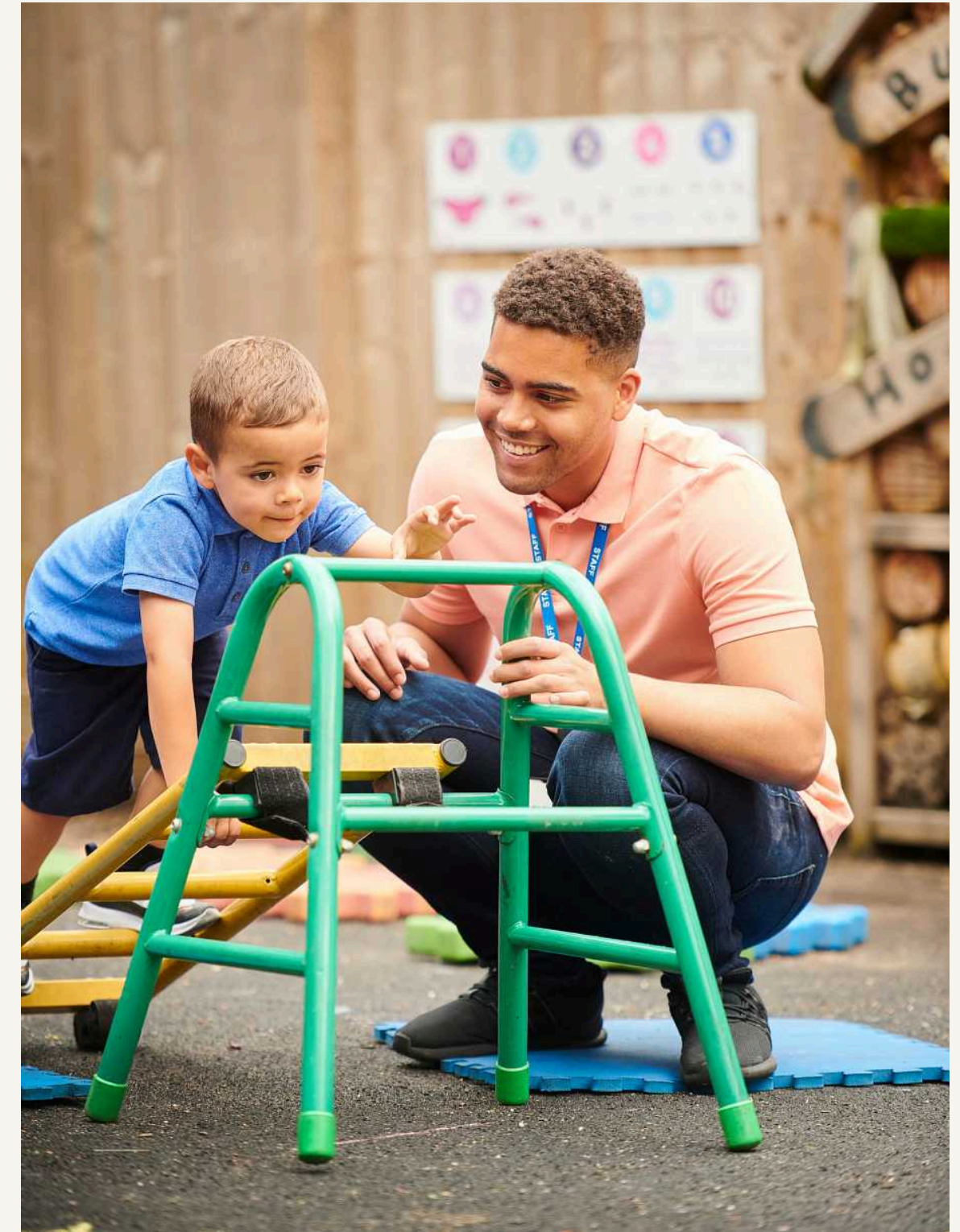
How we know we have made a difference...

There will be an increase in the numbers of staff who are confident they can meet the presenting needs of children with SEND.

There will be an increase in parental and professional confidence that early intervention is providing relevant and appropriate support for children and young people.

More families and children with SEND will be able to find and engage with local offer services through better online advice and guidance.

There will be increased confidence from young people that they are prepared to transition to adulthood.



Priority 3: Participate in decisions

Our aspiration...

We will build trust, listen to lived experience, welcome innovative ideas from children, families and partners to shape and improve long term outcomes for children and young people with SEND across Walsall.

We will...

- Consider the best options for children, young people and their families and place them at the centre of any decision making process.
- Embed the SEND Working Together Charter to ensure children, young people and their families are empowered to actively participate in decisions.
- Use innovative approaches to capture and listen to the voice of children and young people, to know if we are making a difference.
- Emphasise and amplify the importance of the voice of the child or young person as well as their parents and carers in our work.
- Facilitate regular workshops with parents and carers and our children and young people, seeking their views to help us shape services.
- Continue to develop and improve the Local Offer website, to make it more accessible for children, young people and their families.
- Ensure open communication by publishing regular newsletters for professionals, parents, carers and families.
- Seek to use evidence of lessons learned from compliments and complaints to make continuous improvements to our services.

How we know we have made a difference...

There will be an increase in families who tell us they are feeling respected and valued.

There will be evidence of children and young people involvement in strategic developments.

Children, young people and their families will be involved in strategic meetings to help shape service improvements and developments.

We will see a reduction in conflict and tribunal action with families via dispute resolution, mediation and tribunals.

Improved feedback mechanisms will demonstrate an increase in satisfaction rates for how we communicate with families.

We will be able to demonstrate increased engagement with families through a range of forums across the system.

All practitioners will know for each child and young person their preference on how they communicate.



Priority 4: Supportive alternative provision offer

Our aspiration...

We will develop a continuum of support, including outreach and local Alternative Provision, as well as intervention placements, to enable those young people to be successful in mainstream schools.

We will...

- Expand the range of alternative provision options available, including in-house provision, external providers, and specialist interventions, to ensure that every child and young person has access to appropriate placement.
- Implement rigorous quality assurance mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of alternative provision and drive continuous improvement.
- Support smooth transitions into and out of alternative provision, providing comprehensive support to facilitate successful reintegration into mainstream education or other pathways.
- Prioritise the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and young people in alternative provision settings, providing access to appropriate support services and interventions as needed.
- Foster strong partnerships with schools, colleges, providers, local authorities, and other agencies to coordinate support and resources for children and young people in alternative provision.
- Promote active engagement and participation of children and young people, families, and communities in the design, delivery, and evaluation of alternative provision services. This will enable children and young people to be valued within their local communities and develop positive relationships.

How we know we have made a difference...

We will have a clear system of consistent and easy to access support services across education, health and care for AP and SEND.

Schools, children, young people and their families will tell us that they have been able to access AP at the right time.

Schools will tell us they feel supported and confident in their commissioning processes for AP.

We will identify good practice and areas for improvement to ensure quality throughout our AP providers.

Children and families will tell us that their experiences in our alternative provision are positive that they feel they are included, belong, and listened to.

We will see a rise in attainment levels for children and young people attending AP and a reduction in permanent exclusions, suspensions, and placement breakdowns.

Achievements in AP will be celebrated by children and young people, parents, schools, and providers.

We will see an increase in children and young people re-engaging with mainstream schools and a reduction in reduced timetables.

There will be an increase in young people successfully transitioning to the next stage of their journey or into post-16.



Priority 5: Children and young people feel valued and visible in their community

Our aspiration...

We want all children and young people with SEND and those in Alternative Provision settings to feel welcomed and to live well in their communities.

We will...

- Work with all our schools, early years settings, post 16 providers, social care providers, health providers and partners to be welcoming and ensure that children and young people have a sense of belonging regardless of their gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background or educational need.
- Ensure children and young people are supported to communicate in the way or method they choose and feel most comfortable with.
- Always consider the needs of children with SEND in local initiatives.
- Continue to work with community teams to raise awareness of SEND to promote inclusivity for all.
- Develop our work with charities and organisations, to ensure there is a vibrant range of high-quality specialist activities and facilities in the community.
- Further enhance our offer and support for children and young people to prepare for adulthood.
- Use images and articles in our mainstream corporate communications celebrating inclusivity, equality and diversity.

How we know we have made a difference...

Children, young people and families will tell us that their experiences in our local mainstream schools with SEND are positive that they feel they are included, belong and are listened to.

There will be an increase in SEND young people who progress to higher education, apprenticeships, traineeships, supported internships and employment.

There will be a reduction in the number of children and young people who have to travel out of their local community for their education, health and care needs.

There will be increase in positive feedback from children, young people and their families telling us that they learn, contribute to, and take part in all aspects of setting/school/college life.

There will be an increase in children and young people with SEND accessing community based activities and initiatives.



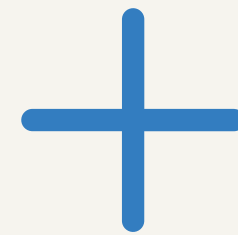
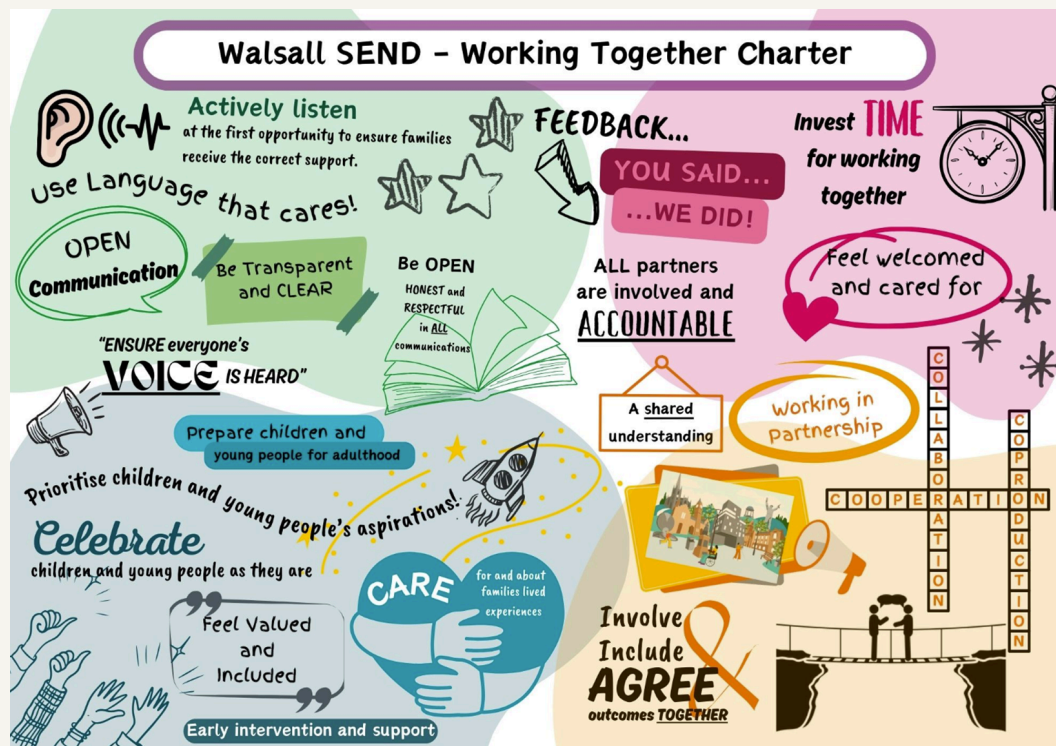
Working together for better outcomes

Priorities

- Localised high-quality provision.
- Early Identification & help.
- Participate in decisions.
- Supportive AP offer.
- Children & young people feel valued & visible in their community.

Outcomes

- Needs are identified accurately and assessed in a timely and effective way.
- Children, young people and their families participate in decision-making about their plans and support.
- Children and young people receive the right help at the right time. Children and young people are well prepared for their next steps, and achieve strong outcomes.
- Children and young people are valued, visible and included in their communities.



Using the voice of the child and young person to continually improve...

How we will deliver our priorities

Strategic Delivery

Professionals across Walsall understand that for us to deliver cohesive, holistic support to our children and families we must work together with the child's or young person's aspirations and needs at the centre of our efforts. To enable this we are dedicated to working together for better outcomes, through embedding the priorities in this strategy into service and delivery plans.

Local Area Partnership Governance

The SEND Partnership Operational Group, with parent/carer, local authority, school and other education setting representation, will formally oversee the effective delivery of this strategy.



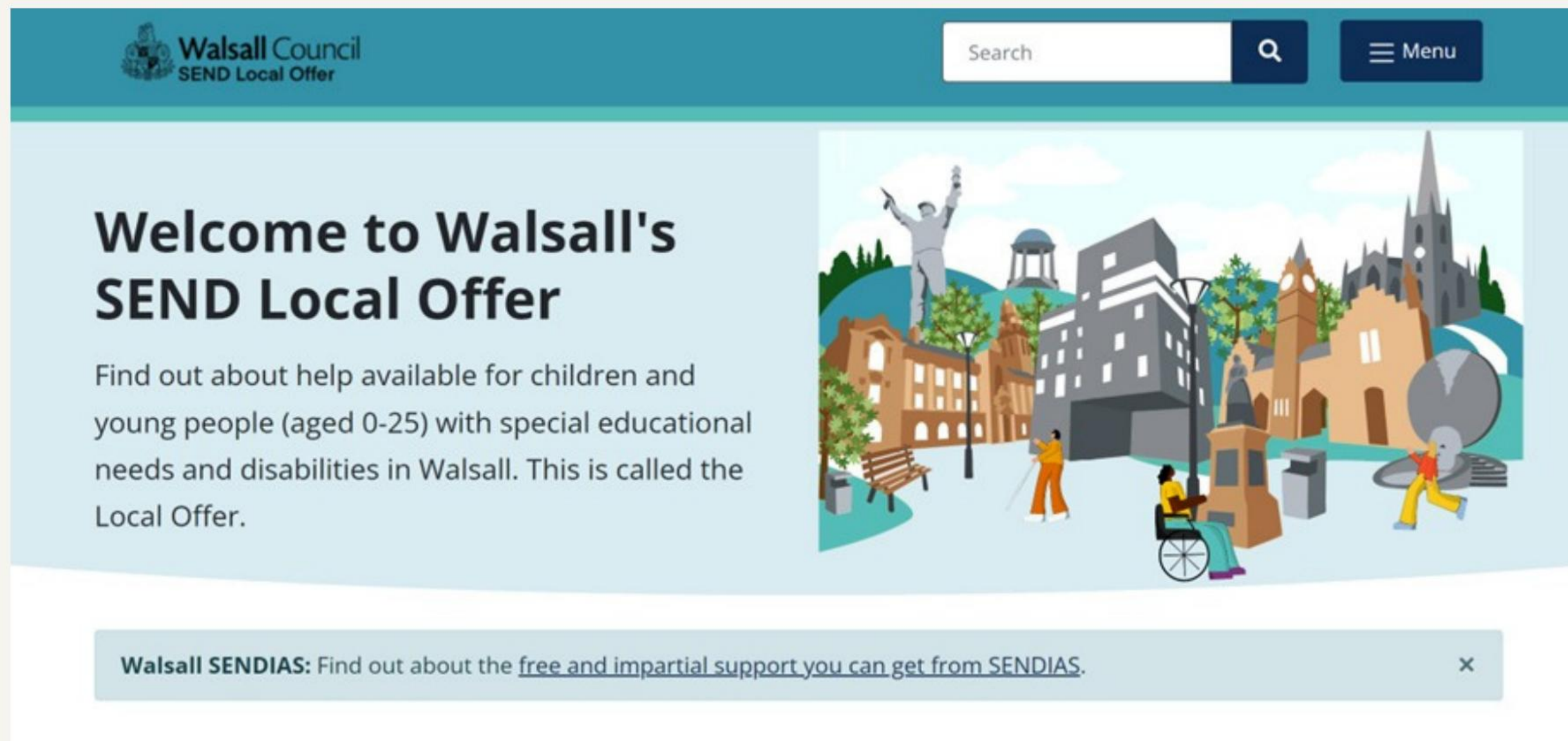
Reviewing and monitoring our strategy

The SEND Partnership Operational Group will track and monitor projects that support the implementation and development of this strategy. The action plan is regularly updated, presented to the Local Authority Inclusion Board and published on the SEND Local Offer. The Strategy and Action Plan will sit alongside our local area SEND and Alternative Provision self-evaluation framework which supports our continuous journey of self-improvement. We have the ambition to continually ensure that the area partnership has arrangements that lead to positive experiences and outcomes for children and young people and that we are taking action where improvements are needed. We will ensure to maintain open communication across the partnership, to continually feedback through the 'you said, we did' approach, being honest and transparent about the improvements we are able to implement and the challenges we may face.

Local Offer for Special Educational Needs and Disability

Discover all you need to know about education, health and care services in Walsall.

On the Local Offer website you can find information and advice about services, support and activities for children and young people aged 0-25 with special educational needs and disabilities all in one place.



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Walsall Council SEND Local Offer website. At the top left is the Walsall Council logo and the text 'Walsall Council SEND Local Offer'. To the right is a search bar with the word 'Search' and a magnifying glass icon, and a 'Menu' button with a hamburger icon. The main content area features a large illustration of a town square with various buildings, a statue, and people, including one in a wheelchair. To the left of the illustration, the text reads: 'Welcome to Walsall's SEND Local Offer' followed by 'Find out about help available for children and young people (aged 0-25) with special educational needs and disabilities in Walsall. This is called the Local Offer.' At the bottom, there is a light blue banner with the text: 'Walsall SENDIAS: Find out about the [free and impartial support you can get from SENDIAS.](#)' and a close button 'x'.

www.send.walsall.gov.uk

