



**Walsall Council**

**PROUD OF OUR PAST OUR PRESENT AND FOR OUR FUTURE**

# **Walsall SEN Strategy 2020 - 2025**

**Walsall Council**

# **Contents**

## **Introduction**

- What are Special Educational Needs and Disabilities?
- SEND in the National Context

## **Special Educational Needs In Walsall**

### **The Walsall Vision for SEND**

- Aims
- Values

### **Our Priorities for 2020 – 2025**

### **The SEND Partnership**

### **Strategy Implementation**



## Introduction

All children deserve the best start in life, and for our children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), this requires us to identify learning needs early, to have the right level of collaboration with parents, carers and our providers, and to have the provision we require to meet the diverse range of needs for our children and young people.

The Children and Families Act 2014 brought in fundamental changes in relation to SEND. In particular, it aimed to:

- Get education, health and social care services working together
- Ensure accurate and useful information is available to children or young people with SEND and their families
- Give children and young people and their parents more of a say about the help they receive
- Give children or young people one plan for meeting their education, health and care needs that focuses on and gives time for getting ready for adulthood.

We are committed to enabling, challenging and supporting all schools to be inclusive so that the best outcomes are achieved for all pupils and we will be regularly sharing our progress through the Walsall Council Local Offer.

## What are Special Educational Needs and Disabilities?

Section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and Section 312 of the 1996 Education Act, states that a child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Children have a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age;
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions; or
- are under compulsory school age and fall within one of the definitions above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

Special educational provision means:

- for children of 2 years or over, educational provision additional to, or different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools

maintained by the local authority, other than special schools, in the area; or

- for children under age 2, educational provision of any kind

In addition, the SEND Code of Practice sets out four broad areas of need and support which may be helpful when reviewing and managing special educational provision. These are:

- communication and interaction;
- cognition and learning;
- social, emotional and mental health difficulties; and
- sensory and/or physical needs

Further information can be found within Section 6.28 - 6.35 of the 2015 SEND Code of Practice.



## **SEND in the National Context**

This strategy is implemented in line with the significant Government reforms to education, health and social care for children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers. The principles of these reforms were to facilitate better outcomes for children and young people by combining the support provided across health, education and social care from birth to 25, ensuring early intervention, and to make sure children, young people and parents are at the centre of the decision making.

### **The Children and Families Act 2014**

The Children and Families Act 2014 took forward the Government's commitment to improve services for vulnerable children and young people. The Act extends the SEND system from birth to age 25 and enables children, young people and their parents or carers to have greater control and choice with decision making.

Walsall Council have implemented these reforms to ensure that children and young people with SEND receive timely and coordinated support to meet their needs.

### **SEND Code of Practice 0- 25**

The Department for Education published the SEND Code of Practice in 2014, later updated in 2015. The code mirrors the changes introduced by the Children and Families Act 2014. The Code explains the duties of the local authorities, health bodies, schools and colleges to provide for those with SEN



# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Walsall

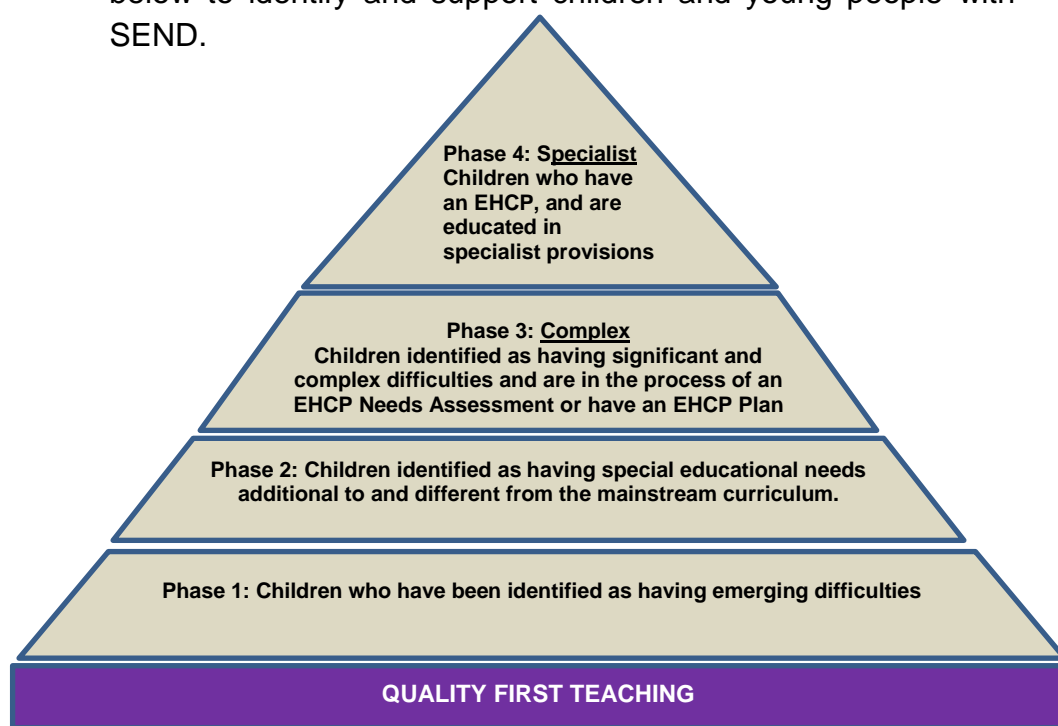
Walsall has an overall school population of <sup>(a)</sup> 45381 pupils. Of this <sup>(b)</sup> 2418 of children are recorded as having an EHCP. SEN support remains at 11.7%, slightly below national of 12.1 %.

(a) Data sourced from January 2020 Census (b) Walsall SEN Key Data August 2020

Walsall local authority has 123 provisions in total. There are 8 Nursery's, 86 Primary Schools, 18 Secondary Schools, 7 Special Schools and 3 Pupil referral Units.

## Our approach to supporting SEND

Walsall adopts a graduated approach, illustrated in the diagram below to identify and support children and young people with SEND.



A graduated approach means that we expect reasonable adjustments to be made, ensuring that the majority of children and young people with SEN are able to have their needs met within a mainstream provision, thus allowing them to enjoy the same opportunities as their peers whilst being fully included within their communities.

Within the graduated approach, at the Universal level, needs are met through Quality First Teaching and Learning (QFT). Additionally, health and social care services can be provided at this level. QFT is provided to all children and young people, including those with SEND; all teachers are teachers of children and young people with special educational needs.

Support at the upper levels is tailored to meet the needs of the individual child or young person. For example, implementing the use of assistive technology, or using small group or individual interventions.

However it is recognised that some children and young people may require more complex specialist intervention to support their needs. Where children and young people require specialist support, we conduct a multi-agency assessment (Education, Health and Care needs assessment) to determine what additional support they may require. If these assessments reveal that the child or young person requires a provision that is significantly different from that provided for other children or young people of their age, and Education, Health and Care Plan

(EHCP) will be written. The EHCP outlines what support they need within the areas of education, health and care

## **The Walsall Vision for SEND**

It is our vision that Walsall will be an inclusive borough where all partners work together to ensure that children and young people get the right support at the right time. Regardless of their learning needs or abilities, all children and young people in Walsall will be able to gain the skills and confidence to succeed.

We envisage a well-planned continuum of provision from birth to age 25, which meets the needs of children and young people with SEND and their families. Integrated services across education, health and social care work collaboratively with children, young people, parents and carers, to ensure that individual needs are met without unnecessary bureaucracy or delay. This means that we are dedicated to supporting early intervention and prevention which allows support to be implemented in a timely manner to ensure children's and young people's needs do not increase.

Walsall believe that every child and young person should have their needs met in their local community wherever possible. This includes local early year's settings and schools, further education colleges and work places. We believe that SEND Provision is NOT about a building; rather, identifying and implementing the most effective **inclusive** approaches to promoting the best outcomes for our children and young people. We expect all early years, post 16 providers, mainstream schools and academy's to make effective provision for children with SEND, in order for them to make good educational progress, which allows them to easily

transition to the next stage of their education, employment and independent adult life.

It is our vision that all educational, health and care provisions have the capacity, skills and confidence to deliver high quality provision for children and young people with SEND, to improve their educational and health outcomes and access to wider opportunities within their local community.

We expect education, care and health services to be delivered in an integrated way so that the experience of families accessing services is positive and children's and young people's learning and development, safety, well-being and health outcomes are well promoted alongside their educational progress and achievement.

### **Aims**

The Aim of this SEND strategy is to turn high aspirations for all of our learners with SEND into a reality. The strategy outlines our vision, principles and priorities to ensure that we are working collaboratively to identify and meet the needs of Walsall's children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) from birth to the age of 25. This strategy does not exist in isolation and builds on the 'Getting it Right for Walsall' Strategy and the outcomes of our Ofsted local area inspection in February 2019. We acknowledge that our vision cannot be implemented and our priorities cannot be delivered by professionals alone. We are committed to working together with children and young people, as well as parents and

carers to provide support to them and create an environment and conditions which will enable them to thrive and achieve their personal goals and aspirations.

The Walsall borough will:

- promote a spirit of co-production and partnership with parents, their children and young people with SEND, involving them in all key decisions
- work collaboratively with schools and partner agencies to deliver an effective SEND system which ensures effective early identification of need
- have high expectations for all children and young people with SEND, ensuring that their local educational settings are inclusive and meet their needs
- commit to promoting and celebrating strong leadership and inclusive practice for children and young people with SEND across all phases of Walsall's schools and settings
- ensure a rigorous focus on the preparation for adulthood outcomes



## Values

Our values will help us to achieve the Council's SEND vision and priorities. Our values underpin the way we operate as an organisation. They influence our choices and our behaviours - they are the thread running through everything we do. The values we will work on throughout this strategy are:

- **Person centred** – ensuring the child and their family are at the centre of what we do, all decisions are 'Done with' and not 'Done to'
- **High expectations and aspirations** – creating and nurturing a culture which raises everyone's expectations for children and young people with SEND
- **Trust** – between families and services
- **Collaboration** – children, young people, families and services working together

This strategy supports the values behind Part 3 of the Children and Families Act, the SEND Code of Practice and the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which state a commitment to inclusive education of disabled children and young people, and the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation in mainstream education.

## Our Priorities for 2020 – 2025

In line with our vision, we have identified 4 key priorities which we will focus on to shape the future direction of SEND services in Walsall. We recognise that these priorities cannot be delivered by individual organisations alone and we have a commitment to working together in partnership to achieve collective goals and outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

1. **Effective early identifications of needs with appropriate assessment across education, health and care**

2. **Provide a wide range of Education, health and Care Services which meet the needs of our children and young people**

3. **Ensure schools and other educational settings embed inclusive practice for children and young people with SEND in mainstream settings**

4. **Ensure a clear transition across education, health and care at development stages, including effective transition into adulthood**

### 1. **Effective early identifications of needs with appropriate assessment across education, health and care**

Objectives:

- Identify children and young people as early as possible so they get the right support at the right time
- Ensure health services and early years education providers work collaboratively to make sure needs are identified and the appropriate support is put in place as soon as possible
- Use data to prioritise how we allocate and use the resources we have available to get the right skills, knowledge and funding in place to identify and assess needs in a timely manner
- Assess children and young people based on their individual needs and work collaboratively with families to understand what works and what needs to change
- Have clear assessment and review processes which describe who does what and when on an ongoing basis
- Have EHC Plans which are high quality and have a focus on long term aspirations and outcomes



## **2. Provide a wide range of Education, health and Care Services which meet the needs of our children and young people**

### Objectives

- Review existing provision and analyse data to predict future demand, adapting provisions as required
- Ensure there are sufficient high quality specialist schools, integrated resource and alternative provisions
- Provide and commission sufficient and effective advice services to identify and support the needs of children and young people in Walsall
- Work with schools to develop models of funding which allows them to implement identified support at the SEN Support and EHCP level
- Work to reduce the number of fixed term and permanent exclusions of learners with SEND
- Provide additional support to schools to access mental and emotional wellbeing support for children and young people
- Identify gaps in areas of need to upskill our workforce so that they have the expertise to identify and meet the needs of children in the borough

## **3. Ensure schools and other educational settings embed inclusive practice for children and young people with SEND in mainstream settings**

### Objectives:

- Provide a borough wide approach to inclusion in schools so that all children are made to feel welcome.
- Ensure that services are of high quality and meet young people's needs.
- Monitor and quality assure the impact of services. If issues with the quality of adequacy of services, we will take the appropriate action to ensure children and young people's needs are being met.
- Ensure schools are supported to make the physical learning environment as inclusive as possible.



#### **4. Ensure clear transition across education, health and care at development stages, including effective transition into adulthood**

##### Objectives:

- Develop pathways of support and intervention for young people from age 2, age 9 and age 14.
- Provide clear support to parents and carers to support their child at key transition stages, ensuring they are at the centre of the process
- Ensure that early intervention and social care teams work with education and health services to begin transition planning early
- Ensure clear pathways for children and young people as they move through education stages into adult life, ensuring services and processes across education, health and care are joined up
- Use available data and information from listening to children and young people, and their families to inform commissioning, in order for the right provision is implemented in line with the needs of the child/young person
- Work with employers to develop employment opportunities for young people with SEND, including supported internships, work experience and volunteering

## **The SEND Partnership**

The SEND Inclusion Board brings together key stakeholders including: FACE (Parent and Carer forum), head teachers, leaders and service managers in education, health, social care and commissioning. The Board is responsible for providing strategic direction and joint commissioning to improve the lives of children and young people with SEND. Collaboration between Walsall council, Walsall CCG and wider partners provide strategic oversight to:

- Identify all children and young people with SEND
- Assess and meet their needs
- Improve their outcomes

We believe that children, young people and their families are in the best position to shape the services and support they receive. The Board is committed to working with all stakeholders to ensure co-design and production, creating a future which is inclusive and positively impacts lives.

## **FACE**

FACE Walsall, is the Parent Carer forum for the borough of Walsall is led by parents for parents and carers of children and young people aged 0-25 with additional support needs and disabilities in Walsall. They work in partnership with commissioners and service providers across health, social services and education.

The aim of the Parent Carer Forum is to enable parents and carers to share their knowledge of what works and what does not work so well; and to help service providers and commissioners focus their efforts on effective, high quality support.

More details can be found here:  
<https://facewalsall.wordpress.com>



## **Strategy Implementation**

In order to deliver the aims and priorities within this strategy, we will put in place a robust action plan which details how we will ensure delivery and implementation of the SEND strategy.

The action plan will cover all areas of the SEND strategy and will include:

- SMART (Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) outcomes
- Resource implications, including funding
- Timescales for delivery

This action plan will be reviewed, updated and be published accordingly via the local offer.

