

Title of Report	Hackney SEND Strategy 2022-2025
Key Decision No	CE S139
For Consideration By	Cabinet
Meeting Date	21 November 2022
Cabinet Member	Cllr Woodley, Cabinet Member for Families, Parks and Leisure
Classification	Open
Ward(s) Affected	All
Key Decision & Reason	Yes Significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Implementation Date if Not Called In	1 December 2022
Group Director	Jacquie Burke, Group Director of Children and Education

1. Cabinet Member's introduction

- 1.1. This report updates members on the Draft Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy for Hackney 2022–25.
- 1.2. The Strategy has been co-produced with a wide range of key stakeholders across Hackney including: Families, young people, schools and settings. The overall aim of the Strategy is to provide detail on Hackney's current approach to SEND, and to set key priority areas for the coming years.
- 1.3. Hackney has a vision to provide an excellent, inclusive and equitable local experience for all Hackney children and young people with SEND.
- 1.4. We want all our children and young people to have access to the right support at the right time from local services and to be able to travel easily to a great inclusive local school which engages with their neighbourhood parent/carer community. We want all our children and young people to be in schools and to access services which fairly reflect the diversity of the Hackney community.

1.5. The four main priorities in the Strategy will ensure that the above vision is progressed for our children and young people and are as follows:

Priority One - Outstanding Provision and Services

Priority Two - An Earlier Response

Priority Three - Preparing for Adulthood

Priority Four - Joining up our Services

2. **Group Director's introduction**

2.1. The SEND Strategy sets out Hackney's vision for children and young people with SEND. This is an extremely important and central strategy that details the local area's ambition and inclusive approach for SEND.

3. **Recommendations**

3.1. **It is recommended that the Mayor and Cabinet approve the SEND Strategy 2022–25.**

4. **Reason(s) for decision**

4.1. Hackney is committed to ensuring that children and young people make positive outcomes both educationally and within the community. The SEND Partnership Board has set an ambitious programme to transform the experience of families and the delivery of high-quality services to achieve the best for our children and young people.

4.2. This decision is required to ensure that there is a transparent, co-produced strategy to continue to develop our local offer of services and support to meet the needs and deliver high quality outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

5. **Details of alternative options considered and rejected**

5.1. No other options were considered as it is essential practice for the local area to have a SEND Strategy that is co-produced with key stakeholders.

5.2. It is important that the Council has a strategy in order to set out the vision for provision for SEND locally, across education, health and social care. A primary driver for this strategy is to enhance the combined alignment, direction and delivery of services across education, social care and health to enable families with children and young people with SEND to live well and thrive to the best of their abilities. It is part of a range of ways in which the

Council delivers the statutory duties set out under the Children and Families Act 2014 and SEND Code of Practice 2015.

6. **Background**

Policy Context

- 6.1. There has been a significant increase in the number of children and young people (CYP) with Education Health Care Plans (EHCP).
- 6.2. Hackney currently has the 12th largest number of children and young people with SEND nationally, with 1 in 20 children and young people having an EHC Plan. This context has meant that leaders have had to adapt to ensure that our vision for SEND is able to meet growing numbers and levels of need but also ensure that our children and young people have the opportunity to make excellent progress.
- 6.3. The underpinning principles of the Strategy are as follows:

Listening to our children and young people

- We will actively listen to our children and young people with SEND through a number of mechanisms that support and promote our children to have a voice
- We will incorporate the feedback we receive from our children and young people into our planning both on an individual level and when strategically planning

Co-production

- We will work with our parents, carers and those who represent them to co-produce on an individual basis but also to develop and deliver strategy

Outstanding communication

- We will communicate with our families and young people in meaningful ways
- We will form excellent relationships with our partners to ensure communication is easy and effective
- We will make sure we share information between agencies effectively and in a timely way

Transparency

- We will operate honestly and within a framework of reflective practice

- We will be transparent with families, children and young people about what can and cannot be achieved
- We will be clear about timescales with families, schools and setting

Multi-agency working

- We will think multi-agency in every aspect of our work to make sure silo working is removed
- We will actively work to break down barriers between agencies to improve the experience of our families accessing multiple services

Data quality

- We will actively work to improve our data quality across the partnership
- We will use our data to inform decision making and evaluate progress
- We will be transparent with our data when co-producing with parents and carers

Excellence and ambition

- We want the best for our children and young people in Hackney
- We will aim high and always strive to improve and evolve to meet the changing needs of our community

Equality impact assessment

- 6.4. Hackney Council and its decision-makers must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act (2010), which requires us to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations by reference to people with protected characteristics. For further information please check the Equality pages on the intranet.
- 6.5. The purpose of the strategy is to champion equality and to ensure that families, children and young people are included and thrive within their local community.

Sustainability and climate change

- 6.6. The Council, with its partners, are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of children and young people with SEND to achieve excellent outcomes for the people of Hackney.

Consultations

- 6.7. The Council has consulted with a wide range of partners in order to draft the SEND Strategy. We have consulted with the SEND Partnership Board, parent groups, young people, schools and settings.
- 6.8. Consultation on the Strategy is not a statutory requirement in this instance. However, we have a duty to co-produce with families, children and young people.

Risk assessment

- 6.9. The risks associated with the Strategy are low in that this provides the framework to improve SEND practice and provision across the local area.

7. Comments of the Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources.

- 7.1. This report seeks approval of the draft SEND Strategy for 2022-2025. SEND financial pressures are not unique to Hackney. Many local authorities are currently grappling with huge deficits in the Dedicated School Grant (DSG) largely due to significant deficits in the high needs funding allocations from government. Demand for services for children with SEND has grown substantially since the introduction of the Children and Families Act 2014. The Government's high needs funding allocations have not kept up with this increase in demand, leaving many local authorities with significant deficits.
- 7.2. The brought forward SEND deficit for Hackney in 2022/23 is circa £13.9m, based on current forecasts this will increase to circa £18.5m by the end of this financial year. At this stage it is not possible to identify all the direct financial implications that will arise from the SEND Strategy, other than stating along with implementing the strategy and addressing the SEND deficit, that this will require significant management actions and investment to address the current position.
- 7.3. Hackney is included in Tranche 2 of the Delivering Better Value (in SEND) programme which aims to help local authorities maintain effective SEND services, however the programme aims to provide assistance on deficit recovery actions through a grant of up to £1m to fund invest-to-save initiatives, rather than provide direct funding to address the deficit. Senior officers have held an introductory meeting with representatives of the DfE in respect to the format and workstreams of the programme, with the detailed work due to commence from January 2023. Any plans agreed with the DfE to address the SEND deficit will need to be factored into future SEND strategies.

8. **Comments of the Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services**

- 8.1. This report recommends that Cabinet approves this three year SEND strategy. A legal framework underpins Hackney’s responsibilities towards its children and young people who have or may have SEND. These include: identifying them; making joint commissioning arrangements for education, health and care provision for them with partner commissioning bodies, and keeping educational, training and social provision for them under review. These duties are set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. Section 19 of the Act requires that in carrying out core SEN functions we have regard, “in particular”, to four matters: the views, wishes and feelings of the child and their parent, or the young person; the importance of each of these participating as fully as possible in decisions relating to the exercise of the function concerned; the importance of them being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions, and the need to support them to facilitate the development of the child or young person to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes.
- 8.2. Regulations made under the same Act set out processes and timescales required for EHC plans.
- 8.3. The report refers to further information concerning our Public Sector Equality Duty.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Hackney Draft SEND Strategy

Background documents

None

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