

Blackpool SEND Strategy

2022–2025



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Foreword

Welcome to the Blackpool Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy which sets out our key priorities and actions to help children and young people with SEND between the ages of 0-25 years and their families, live happy, healthy lives in Blackpool.

This strategy is the result of our SEND Partnership Board working together and listening to the views and experiences of parents/carers, children and young people, and professionals across education, health and social care.

We consulted on the strategy from 4 April 2022 until 22 May 2022 and undertook a number of focus groups with parents/carers and children/young people. As a result of this activity the strategy has been updated to include:

- Support in early years
- Transitions between services
- Greater clarity on what we will do
- Our commitment to ensuring that co-production, communication and engagement with parents/carers, children and young people is central to all changes/improvements in SEND services.

The consultation provided recommendations from parents/carers, children and young people on changes/improvements to services and support currently available in Blackpool. Professionals working directly to deliver SEND services also suggested actions that need to be taken to enable the delivery of this strategy. We would like to express our thanks for this feedback and will ensure that it is considered in the development of the SEND partnership's improvement plan that will drive the achievement of this strategy.



Blackpool in Context

Demographics

Blackpool is a small, densely populated seaside town located in the north west of England. It has a total population of approximately 141,100 people with 30,600 children and young people aged 0-19 years. 21.7% of the population are under 20 years compared to 23.1% nationally.

Blackpool has an extraordinary concentration of social and economic issues in the central third of the town. According to the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) the centre of Blackpool has 10 of the most deprived small areas in England – no other town has anything like this level of social challenge within such a small geographical area.

Local Area Inspection

Between 28 February and 4 March 2022, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspected services provided by practitioners and professionals who support children and young people aged 0-25 years with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). During the inspection they assessed how well the local area has worked together to implement the SEND reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.

The local area includes Blackpool Council (education, children's and adult's social care and public health), NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board, Blackpool Teaching Hospital and other associated partners, parents and carers; and children and young people with SEND.

Some of the strengths identified during the inspection include:

- The most vulnerable children and young people with SEND benefit from the wealth of specialist services available.
- Across the area children in primary schools who require support for SEND attend and achieve well.
- There is a wide range of provision across the area to improve children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.
- The intended outcomes in recent EHC plans better reflect the aspirations of children, young people and their families.

The inspectors also identified four areas for improvement and His Majesty's Chief Inspector has determined that a Written Statement of Action is required to address these. The four areas are:

1. The lack of specificity, ownership and accountability in the area's improvement strategy for SEND.
2. The duties around preparing children and young people for adulthood not being fulfilled.
3. The poor communication with parents and carers across the areas.
4. The long waiting times for some therapies.

The SEND Partnership, as leaders of the local area, agree with the findings of the inspection and is committed to ensuring that swift action is taken to deliver these improvements. The inspection outcome has provided confirmation of the areas for improvement that we had recognized, as well as providing a renewed mandate to drive forward our plans and deliver progress as a partnership.



Strategic Leadership for SEND

The SEND Partnership Board has overall responsibility for ensuring this strategy is achieved. Members are experienced leaders of special educational needs and disabilities services and hold partners, across education, health and social care, to account for the co-ordination, commissioning and delivery of services and support for children and young people with SEND and their families.

Membership of the SEND Partnership Board is detailed in the following table.

Role	Organisation
Chair	Independent
Cabinet Member for Inclusion, Youth Schools and Transience	Blackpool Council
Director of Children's Services	Blackpool Council
Assistant Director for Education, SEND and Early Years	Blackpool Council
Assistant Director Children's Social Care	Blackpool Council
Head of SEND	Blackpool Council
Adult Services representative	Blackpool Council
Associate Director SEND	NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board
Head of Commissioning	NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board
Executive Director of Integrated Care	Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Divisional Director of Operations	Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Chair, Blackpool Parent Carer Forum	Parent representatives
SEND Parent's Advisory Group	Parent representatives
Service Manager	SEND Information, Advice and Support Service
Head Teacher, Highfurlong Special School	School representative
Executive Principal South Shore and Marton Academies, Bright Futures Education Trust	School representative
Public Health Specialist	Blackpool Council
Head of Commissioning and Corporate Delivery	Blackpool Council

Monitoring progress

To enable the SEND Partnership Board to measure progress on the priorities and actions set out in this strategy, a SEND Improvement Plan has been developed by stakeholders that sets out what needs to be done and when it will be achieved. The improvement plan is also aligned to the Written Statement of Action that will address the four key areas for improvement identified from the SEND inspection.

Regular reports will be presented to the SEND Partnership Board who will provide assurance to a range of key strategic partnerships across Blackpool that the SEND partnership is delivering on its priorities.

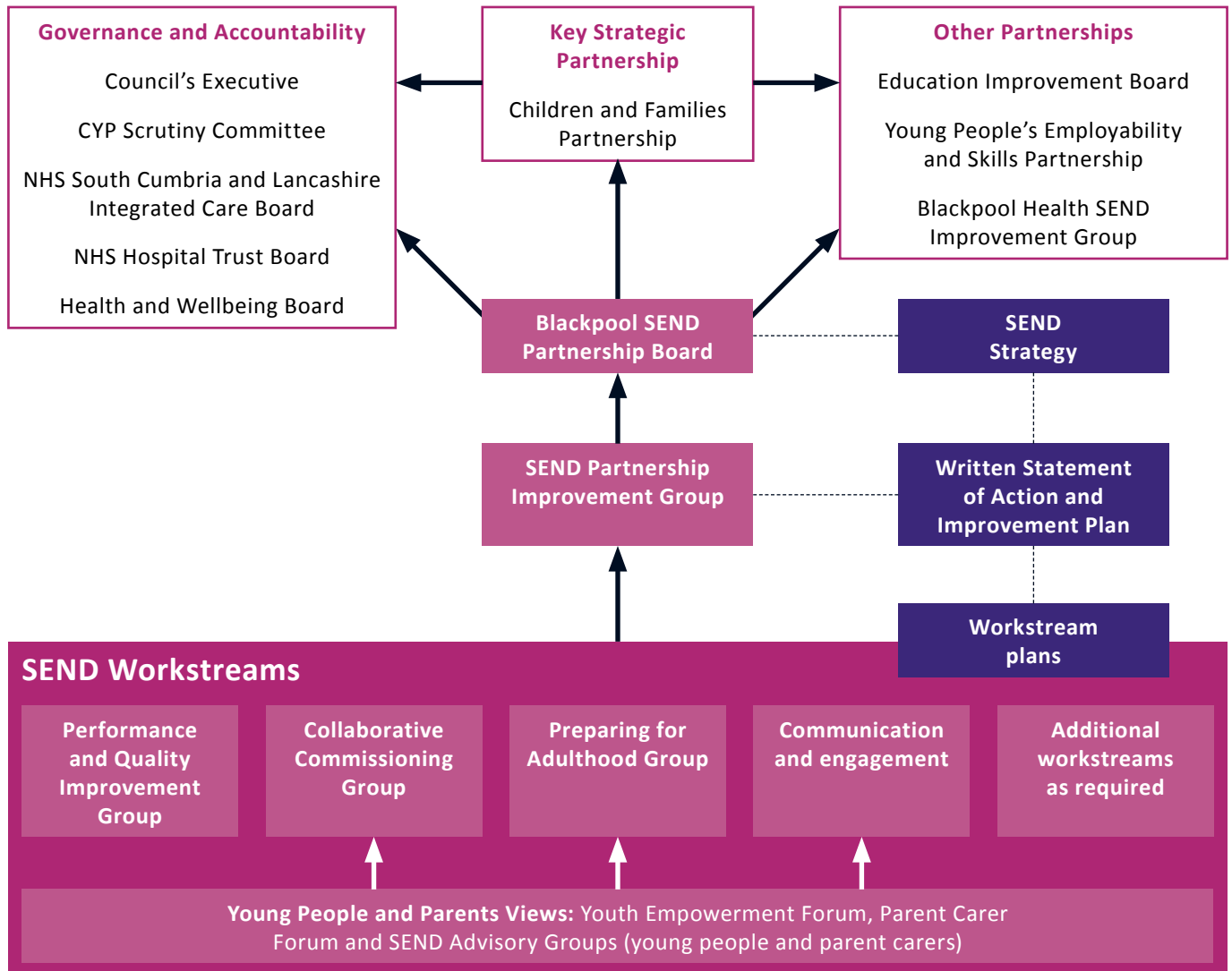
To support the SEND Partnership Board's progress monitoring, a set of key performance measures have been agreed and these are included in a SEND performance data dashboard that is also reported to the SEND Partnership Board.

The strategy will be reviewed and impact evaluated on an annual basis to demonstrate improvement, identify further areas for development and to take account of any local or national policy changes.

The governance structure diagram detailed on the following page sets out the range of partnerships that contribute to delivery of the strategy and the boards that hold the SEND Partnership to account for ensuring that the strategy is achieved. The SEND workstreams are task and finish groups made up of a range of professionals, parents and young people from across the area.



SEND Partnership Governance Structure



Our Partnership Vision

All children and young people with SEND live happy, healthy lives, in a community that is inclusive and supports them to achieve their ambitions.

This vision will determine how, as a partnership, we will most effectively use our resources and expertise to plan and delivery local services and support in the best interests of children and young people with SEND, and their families within Blackpool.

The achievement of this vision will require a commitment from all our partners to make SEND everybody's business. This means all individuals working in education, health and social care services with children and young people in Blackpool Council will consider the needs of the individual and their families in everything that they do. This will enable positive interactions and experiences of all that Blackpool has to offer to our residents.



Working Together

The SEND partnership is committed to working together through a model of co-production. This means parents and carers, children and young people will be involved as equal partners in the design and shaping of services/support alongside those responsible for funding and delivery.

We will all work together and share our experiences to co-design both new resources, services and systems and to improve existing ones that parents and carers, children and young people; and professionals tell us need to be improved.

We know that we have work to do to improve communication with parents and carers across Blackpool so that they can have trust and confidence in what they are told about SEND and SEND services.

We are establishing a Parents' SEND Advisory Group and a Young People's SEND Advisory Group to facilitate co-production with families across Blackpool. These groups will enable parents and carers, children and young people to confidently express their views, wishes and feelings to help them live happy and healthy lives.

Together we will produce a SEND communications charter that describes how our families want us to work together based on our collective core beliefs, values and our practice.

Our goal is to build a SEND community that is based on mutual trust and respect and places parents/carers, children and young people's experiences and expertise at the heart of our decision making.



What children and young people told us is important to them



What parents and carers told us is important to them



The landscape for SEND in Blackpool



Early Years

- 34 group childcare providers (day nurseries and preschools)
- 20 schools with nursery classes
- 44 childminders.



Infrastructure for health

- 1 NHS hospital providing both acute and community services including public health 0 – 19 services
- 1 child development centre
- 1 CAMHS provider



Schools

- 33 primary schools
- 6 secondary schools
- 2 all through schools
- 4 special schools
- 1 pupil referral unit.



Profile of children with SEND

- 1,311 children and young people with an EHC plan (October 2022)
- 3,297 children receiving SEN support (October 2022)
- 160 children with EHCPs aged 16 and 17 years old



Post 16 provision

- 1 FE College
- 1 Sixth Form College
- 1 Specialist College 19-25,
- 3 16-19 special schools
- 1 supported internship provider
- 3 private training providers



Our Partnership Priorities

Working in partnership we have identified four key priorities that help us to achieve our vision.

These priorities have been informed and guided by:-

- Our SEND self-evaluation
 - The outcome of our SEND inspection
 - Listening to the views of parents, carers, children and young people; and professionals through consultation and focus groups.
- 1. Timely identification and access to education, health and care services, well planned transitions and the best opportunities that help children and young people live healthy lives.**
 - 2. Expand our range of education provision to enable children and young people's needs to be met in local settings that provide an inclusive education and support them to achieve their very best.**
 - 3. A range of leisure and social activities that develop children and young people's interests and broaden opportunities to socialise and develop friendships, incorporating respite placements.**
 - 4. Clear routes into further/higher education and training that will provide young people with the skills to secure employment, live independent, healthy lives and reach their potential.**



Priority 1

Timely identification and access to education, health and care services, well planned transitions and the best opportunities that help children and young people live healthy lives.

The importance to our partnership

Timely identification and support enables children to make the best possible progress in their education and in everyday life. Listening to the experiences and concerns of children, young people and their families enables support to be tailored to individual need, and builds a climate of confidence and trust between families and professionals.

Well planned transitions ensures that this support continues whenever there is a change to the child or young person's circumstances or the services/support being provided.

We expect all professionals and services working with children, young people and their families to plan, discuss and agree any changes that may take place to ensure continuity of support and that children, young people and their families have confidence in what is being provided and where they can go for help.



What we need to do

- Adopt a 'right door and tell us once' approach with families so that professionals can support them to access the right services and support at the right time.
- Further develop processes for sharing information between professionals supporting children in their pre-school years so that support is planned for and provided when it is needed.
- Use the model of family hubs to establish co-located, wrap-around services in places close to where people live.
- Improve the local offer website so that families know where they can obtain help and advice when they have concerns about their children's development.
- Review the use of funding to enable more flexibility when meeting needs.
- Co-design and deliver training and support for the whole workforce and families to utilise a graduated approach for SEND.
- Co-produce strengthened graduated approach pathways into health services that provide support at the time when a need is identified.
- Provide timely access to all health services for children and young people with SEND, and resolve the access challenges in Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy.
- Work with families to ensure that EHC plans accurately reflect their child or young person's needs, expected outcomes and are updated in a timely manner.
- Jointly commission/improve services and support across education, social care and health that are based on robust data analysis and what families tell us is needed.
- Co-review the current arrangements for transitions between children's and adults' education, health and social care services based on the experiences of children, young people and their families, and the workforce.
- Ensure that information, advice and guidance is available to professionals, children, young people and their families to enable timely planning and clarity for continuity of support.

Priority 2

Expand our range of education provision to enable children and young people's needs to be met in local settings that provide an inclusive education and support them to achieve their very best.

The importance to our partnership

We are committed to ensuring the inclusive education of children and young people and the removal of barriers to learning.

There is an expectation that all educational settings will work to enable all children and young people to develop, learn, participate and achieve their best possible educational potential and achieve their aspirations.

We want every child's needs to be met, as far as possible, in their local community, by local early years' providers and mainstream schools.



What we need to do

- Widen and strengthen SEND provision by increasing the numbers of places in Blackpool for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Create an intensive support centre to meet the needs of our most complex children and young people.
- Provide specialist, evidence based training and support to our early years and mainstream educational settings in relation to SEND to underpin our principles of local schools for local children and 'no Blackpool child left behind'.
- Promote quality first teaching in all our educational settings that focuses on high expectations for all our children through the effective deployment of the education service.
- Support the development of SEND provision in all educational settings through a whole school approach to SEND based on NASEN standards.
- Undertake a needs based assessment to identify and strengthen the range of educational provision commissioned to ensure the needs of our most complex children and young people in Blackpool are met.
- Ensure that children, young people and their parents are involved in the planning and delivery of the support their children require.
- Increase the numbers of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan who are educated in a mainstream school to ensure that they have access to a full curriculum that enables them to progress to further education/employment.

Priority 3

A range of leisure and social activities that develop children and young people's interests and broaden opportunities to socialise and develop friendships, incorporating respite placements.

The importance to our partnership

We believe that all children and young people that live in Blackpool should have access to the same range of opportunities and experiences as any other child or young person living in Blackpool.

Evidence tells us that children and young people that are connected to their communities have a sense of belonging, experience better mental health and wellbeing, grow in confidence, build resilience and independence; and develop positive relationships and friendships with others.

What we need to do

- Explore opportunities to expand the range of school holiday care across Blackpool for working parents.
- Co-design and realign existing funding to provide a range of opportunities that enable children and young people to develop life skills, friendships and build confidence.
- Encourage partners to create activities in accessible locations to avoid unnecessary travel.
- Expand provision in before and after school clubs to enable access for children from special schools.
- Support existing leisure and social activities to better meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.
- Consult and co-produce with families commissioning priorities to ensure a wide variety of options for respite, short breaks and leisure opportunities to meet a wide range of needs.
- Provide training and support to voluntary organisations to enable children and young people with SEND to access their activities.
- Explore the use of community assets to provide safe, accessible venues and facilities for children and young people with SEND.



Priority 4

Clear routes into further/higher education and training that will provide young people with the skills to secure employment, live independent lives and reach their potential.

The importance to our partnership

We are ambitious on behalf of our young adults with SEND. We want them to have access to opportunities that enable them to achieve their career and life goals.

We recognise that young people and their families need support for this to happen and we are committed to working with young people and their families to understand what their goals are and the support they need to achieve them.

Our intention is to develop a Preparation for Adulthood strategy with young people, their families and a range of stakeholders across Blackpool that provides clarity on the routes, opportunities and support available so that young people and their families can plan and be confident in the decisions they make about their futures.

What we need to do

- Gather the views and aspirations of young people, and their parents to shape the provision provided within Blackpool.
- Work with our further education partners to provide courses for young people that include a quality work experience placement and enable them to gain the skills and qualifications to progress to higher education, access apprenticeships/employment within the Blackpool area.
- Engage with local employers to increase the numbers of opportunities for supported internships and apprenticeships.
- Provide high quality information, advice and guidance to young people and their parents in a timely manner that enables them to make early informed choices about their future career/life pathway.
- Co-develop with young people and our partners a range of provision that will prepare young people for everyday life that develops their independence skills (e.g. managing on a budget, cooking, booking health appointments).
- Create opportunities with local providers for young people to participate in activities such as Duke of Edinburgh awards and volunteering.



Glossary of Terms

Term	Description
Apprenticeships	An apprenticeship is a paid job for anyone over the age of 16. Alongside on-the-job training, apprentices spend at least 20% of their working hours completing classroom-based learning with a college, university or training provider which leads to a nationally recognised qualification
Children and Families Act 2014	The Children and Families Act 2014 brought together a number of changes to legislation around services for vulnerable children and young people and families. The changes cover the family justice system, virtual schools for looked after children, adoption, childcare, shared parental leave and flexible working, and services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). The provisions in the Act which relate to SEND came into force in September 2014.
CAMHS - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	Blackpool CAMHS service is made up of professionals from a range of disciplines including consultant child and adolescent psychiatrists, nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, psychologists, counsellors, support staff and an admin team. The service offers a range of assessments and therapeutic interventions including 1:1 work, family therapy and group work.
Communications charter	An agreement that sets out how professionals will communicate with parents, carers, children and young people based on a co-produced set of principles.
Co-production	An approach that places parents, carers, children and young people at the heart of decision making by involving them in the design, development and delivery of services that impact on their lives.
CQC – Care Quality Commission	The independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. They make sure health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high quality care and encourage care services to improve. They undertook the SEND inspection in Blackpool jointly with Ofsted.
Data dashboard	An information management tool that helps to track our progress against our key performance indicators.
Early Years	From pre-birth to starting school.
EHCP – Education, Health and Care Plan	A legal document that details the education, health and social care support that is provided to a child or young person who has a special educational need and/or a disability. It is drawn up by the local authority after an education, health and care (EHC) needs assessment of the child or young person has determined that an EHC plan is necessary, and after consultation with relevant partner agencies.
Family hubs	Family Hubs are centres which, as part of integrated family services ensure families with children and young people aged 0-19 receive early help to overcome a range of difficulties and build stronger relationships.
Focus Group	A group of people brought together to have a discussion/provide feedback on a specific service or topic.

Glossary of Terms

Term	Description
Graduated approach	An outline of the provision and support that Blackpool Council expects to be in place in all educational settings which support Blackpool children and young people with SEND and, therefore, forms an important part of the Blackpool local offer for SEND.
IMD – Index of Multiple Deprivation	The Index of Multiple Deprivation is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas ¹ (or neighbourhoods) in England. The Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks every small area in England from 1 (most deprived area) to 32,844 (least deprived area).
Improvement Plan	A plan that sets out measurable actions that will be taken with clear accountabilities, measures and deadlines to make improvements identified from the SEND strategy and the SEND inspection.
IAG – Information, advice and guidance support	Services that provide advice and information to children with SEND, their parents and young people with SEND. These services provide advice and support to help families make informed decisions about education, further learning and employment, health and care transitions and support.
Local Offer	The Local Offer is the support and services available in Blackpool for children and young people with SEND aged 0–25 and those who support them.
Mainstream	Any school or setting that is not a special school or non-specialist pre-school provision.
NASEN	The National Association for Special Educational Needs – a charitable membership organisation that exists to support and champion those working with, and for, children and young people with SEND and learning differences.
ND pathway	
(Neurodevelopmental) pathway	The Fylde Coast School Age Neurodevelopmental Pathway is an integrated multi-agency pathway for children and young people aged 5-16 years who are causing parental and professional concern and who require multi-agency specialist consideration of their needs.
NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB)	A statutory NHS organisation which is responsible for developing a plan for meeting the health needs of the population, managing the NHS budget and arranging for the provision of health services in a geographical area. ICBs have their own leadership teams, which include a Chair and Chief Executive, and also include members from NHS trusts/foundation trusts, local authorities, general practice, and an individual with expertise and knowledge of mental illness.
Ofsted – Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills	Ofsted is a non-ministerial department that inspects services providing education and skills for learners of all ages. They also inspect and regulate services that care for children and young people and undertook the SEND inspection in Blackpool jointly with the Care Quality Commission.
Short breaks/respite provision	Short breaks provide opportunities for children and young people with disabilities to spend time away from their primary carers, and provide opportunities for their parents and carers to have a break from caring responsibilities

Glossary of Terms

Term	Description
Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities	A child or young person between the ages of 0-25 years has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child or young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of education facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or colleges.
Quality First Teaching	A style of teaching that emphasises high quality, inclusive teaching for all pupils in a class.
Supported Internships	Supported internships are a structured, work-based study programme for 16 to 24-year-olds with SEND who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The core aim of a supported internship study programme is a substantial work placement, facilitated by the support of an expert job coach for those young people wanting to secure employment.
Transitions	The moves children and young people make from home to early years education through to further and higher education/employment and the transfers from children's services to adult services for health and social care provision.
WS0A – Written Statement of Action	A document which sets out the actions that are needed to address the significant areas of weakness in a local area identified by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission following a SEND inspection.