

Sheffield Inclusion Strategy – Consultation document – Commitments

This document should be read alongside the original consultation document for the Sheffield Inclusion Strategy.

Following initial feedback from the consultation that identified that some of the language used in the consultation document was not clear, we have re-written the five commitments in the consultation.

Whilst we have re-written to make the language clearer, the content has and intention has not been changed.

Consultation Document

Commitment 1: Effective identification of needs with appropriate assessments

Our challenge:

- We need to identify children and young people's needs earlier so that we can provide support as soon as possible.
- We need to assess children and young people based on their overall individual needs rather than their medical diagnosis.
- We need to improve our assessment processes so that we are clear about who should do what and when.

What it looks like now:

Families, Services and schools tell us:

- We focus more on a diagnosis than on an individual's specific needs.
- They do not always know how to access assessment and support.
- Processes can be hard to understand and are not clear and consistent.
- There is too much focus on a services standard offer rather than an offer that is tailored to a need.
- It takes too long to wait for any diagnosis and families have to wait too long to get support whether they have a diagnosis or not.
- They want services to work together and want to have better services in local areas.

What we have done so far:

- We have developed tools to support assessment processes. This includes tools for SEN Support linking the Family Common Assessment Framework (FCAF) and Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments.
- We have improved the number of Education Health and Care needs assessments completed in the statutory timescales.

Our priorities:

1. We will identify children and young people as early as possible so that they and their families get the right support at the right time.
2. We will assess children and young people based on their individual needs and we will work with families to understand what works and what needs to change.
3. We will have clear assessment and review processes that describe who does what and when.
4. We will work together with other services to identify and assess need.
5. All our plans will have a focus on long term aspirations and outcomes

What we will change:

Priority One - *We will identify children and young people as early as possible so that they get the right support at the right time.*

- We will create clear referral routes for assessment and support.
- We will use the resources we have available to have the right people, knowledge and funding in place to identify and assess needs in a timely way.
- We will work with schools and nurseries to make sure they have the knowledge and skills to identify needs early.
- Services across education, health and care will work together to support the early identification of needs.

Priority Two - *We will assess children and young people based on their individual needs and we will work with families to understand what works and what needs to change.*

- We will include the family and people who work with the family throughout the assessment process.
- We will ask and listen to the child and family's views, about what is working and what needs to change in order to build better relationships between service and families.
- We will create evidence-based tools and easy-to-read resources to support assessments so that all children and young people can take part including those that communicate non-verbally.

Priority Three - *We will have clear assessment and review processes that describe who does what and when.*

- We will create clear documents and visuals that show assessment and review processes.
- We will review our school locality processes and make sure we are supporting the 'graduated approach' cycle where children and young people's needs are regularly reviewed (the 'graduated approach' is a cycle of assess, plan, do, review).
- We will review decision making processes, including resource allocation panels, to make sure they are clear and accountable.
- We will create a quality framework to ensure all assessments, plans and reviews are of high quality including MyPlans and EHC Plans.

Priority Four - *We will work together with other services to identify and assess need.*

- We will set up joint teams/hubs of services around the city.
- We will work with schools to improve SEND knowledge and access to assessment and clinical support.
- We will make sure that schools are ACE (Adverse Childhood Experience) aware.

Priority Five – *All our plans will have a focus on long term aspirations and outcomes.*

- We will make sure that assessments are 'person-centred' (meaning they place the child at the centre of planning) and include the views and aspirations of the child/young person and their family
- We will make sure that all plan writers are trained in how to identify aspirations and outcomes and include them in plans

The impact this will have:

- Children and young people will have their needs assessed at the right time to get the support they need.
- Children and young people will be at the centre of all assessments so that they are meaningful to their lives.
- Families, schools and services will understand and implement assessment and review processes.
- Services will work well together to assess children and young people.

Commitment 2: A wide range of services that meet the needs of our young people (Provision)

Our challenge:

- We need to work together to commission services based on the needs of children and young people.
- We need to make sure our services are available to all children and young people who need them. This includes universal (services open to all), targeted (services for those with some additional needs) and specialist services (services for those with the most complex needs).
- We need to make sure our systems and processes are easy to understand and use.
- We need to make sure that mainstream settings are inclusive and are able to focus on early intervention, particularly before a child is school aged.

What it looks like now:

- Children, young people and families are not always involved in developing services.
- Our systems and processes are difficult to use and understand.
- We have growing numbers of children and young people that need services and not enough funding.
- We do not have enough specialist education places; all our special schools are full.
- Mainstream schools do not have the right expertise and enough resource to support all children and young people.
- Our services are very busy and are not able to support all the children and young people who need them.
- Our advisory services, such as health services and educational advice givers, are not joined up and are not able to support all those who need them.

What we have done so far:

- Two new special schools have been commissioned and are due to open in 2021 and 2022.
- We have increased funding to mainstream schools from April 2020 but there is still not enough.
- We are increasing the number of integrated resource places throughout the city.
- We are working with schools to help them have more inclusive practice.
- We are promoting better use of the Sheffield Support Grid, locally developed guidance for schools and services, to provide consistent guidance on how needs should be met. This includes a parent guide.
- We are improving health services by prioritising SEND when we commission and review services
- We are increasing local social care support by reviewing our offer of short breaks provision and provision for young adults in adult life.

Our priorities:

1. We will make provision and support easy to find and access.
2. We will give the right support for children and young people at all levels of need.
3. We will provide support as early as possible.
4. We will create sufficient high quality local provision that meets local need.
5. We will work together with services and schools to improve inclusion.

What we will change:

Priority One - *We will make provision and support easy to find and access*

- We will create funding models for provision that are clear and easy to understand.
- We will commission advice, guidance and advocacy services for children, young people and families.
- We will have a 'key worker' approach to supporting families who need it.
- We will reduce waiting times so that they are in line with national and local targets.
- We will have a clear referral process and sufficient provision for short breaks and respite care.

Priority Two - *We will give the right support for children and young people at all levels of need.*

- We will make sure there are enough specialist school, integrated resource and alternative provision places.
- We will commission sufficient advice services to support the needs of children and young people in the city
- We will review existing provision and increase provision that works well.
- We will improve support to access education so that all children and young people can have a full time and appropriate education placement.
- We will develop a flexible model of support in our localities so that needs can be met quickly when they arise.

Priority Three - *We will provide support as early as possible.*

- We will focus on early intervention starting with Early Year's teams and early intervention services.
- We will move budgets towards providing support as early as possible and towards mainstream settings.

Priority Four - *We will create sufficient high quality local provision that meets local need.*

- We will work together with children, young people and families to plan our local offer of provision.
- We will revise our post-16 offer with a focus on access to employment, life skills and community participation.
- We will review and further commission our short break and respite provision.

Priority Five - *We will work together with services and schools to improve inclusion.*

- We will develop a city wide approach to inclusion in schools that is led by the schools sector and supports whole school practice.
- We will develop a quality framework to ensure that services are of high quality and meet young people's needs.
- We will monitor and quality assure the impact of services to make sure that children and young people's needs are being met.

The impact this will have:

- Families will be able to access the advice, provision and support that they need.

- Children and young people will have the right support at the right time.
- Children and young people will be supported earlier and services will be better joined up.
- Children and young people will have access to local provision that meets their needs.
- Children and young people will be in more inclusive schools, making them happier and more able to learn.

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Commitment 3: Smooth transition at every stage of a young person's life, and particularly to adult life (Transition)

Our challenge:

- We need to make sure that it is easy for children and young people to move between different educational stages and into adult life.
- We need to make sure that services across education, care, health and employment work well together.
- We need to have more opportunities for young people moving into adult life. These include education, employment, being a part of their community, independent living and the ability to manage health needs.

What it looks like now

- The move through education stages and into adult life is one of the greatest areas of concern for families, schools and services.
- Our services do not work well together and there is no city wide transition policy with joined up system and processes.
- We have not always communicated well with families about what is happening.
- Transition reviews are not joined up and do not focus enough on what the next stage of adult life will be like.

What we have done so far:

- We have begun to develop transition pathways for age 2 (pre-school), age 9 (Year 4) and age 14 (Year 9).
- We are working with young people to improve EHCP (Education and Health Care Plan) annual reviews and the pathways for moving to adult life.
- We are working with young people to look at post-16 provision with a focus on their outcomes.
- We have improved transition routes between health providers and are working on producing clearer pathways for care services.

Our priorities:

1. We will have clear pathways for children and young people as they move through education stages and into adult life.
2. We will have a clear plan to support young people to move into adult life that covers all parts of their life. This includes employment and meaningful activity, independence, being a part of their community and managing their health.
3. We will address the current gaps in provision for young people aged 16-25 across education, health and care.
4. We will ensure we have enough opportunities for young people across their whole life. This includes opportunities in employment, day activities, housing, health support, and life skills.
5. We will ensure that young people and families are able to access the right support, to enable them to succeed in adult life.

What we will change:

Priority One - *We will have clear pathways for children and young people as they move through education stages and into adult life.*

- We will develop our pathways of support and intervention for young people at age 2, age 9 and age 14.
- We will create clear documents on these transition pathways which will show what support is available at each stage.
- We will develop a clear governance structure around transition including a strategic multi-agency transition group.
- We will have clear roles and responsibilities around transitions.
- We will combine health transition actions plans to improve the journey between children's and adult health services.

Priority Two - *We will have a clear plan to support young people to move into adult life that covers all parts of their life. This includes employment and meaningful activity, independence, being a part of their community and managing their health.*

- We will have a joint review process for all young people with additional needs from age 14 onwards with a focus on what adult life will look like and what support they will need.
- We will work with schools and colleges to review the curriculum for those with complex needs, to ensure that it is fit for purpose in preparing young people for adult life.
- We will make sure social care teams begin transition planning early and have a pathway plan which includes employment, housing, training, health and financial support.

Priority Three - *We will address the current gaps in provision for young people aged 16-25 across education, health and care.*

- We will create a 5 year plan to ensure we have enough provision for young people including health, care, community provision, and housing.
- We will use available data to inform commissioning so that we have the right provision in place that meets the needs of young people.

Priority Four - *We will ensure we have enough opportunities for young people across their whole life. This includes opportunities in employment, day activities, housing, health support, and life skills.*

- We will work with employers to develop employment opportunities for young people with SEND including supported internships and job coaching.
- We will ensure that there is a 5 day offer of opportunities including commissioned and community activities so that young people can have a varied and meaningful life.

Priority Five - *We will ensure that young people and families are able to access the right support to enable them to succeed in adult life.*

- We will make sure there that we target our available resources in services so that young people get the right support to plan and move into adult life.

The impact this will have:

- Young people will have a smooth transition between different educational stages and services.
- Young people and families' experience of transition will be good.

- All young people with SEND will have a clear plan to move into adult life that covers all parts of their life.
- We will have sufficient provision for young people to move successfully into adult life
- Services will have the skills and tools to support young people through identifying their needs and plan for adult life

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Commitment 4: Excellent communication and engagement between young people, families, services and schools (Communication)

Our challenge:

- We need to build mutual trust and relationships between children, young people, families, schools and services across the city.
- We need to make sure our services are based on the needs of the children, young people and families we support.
- We need to clearly communicate, with families and services about who should do what, when and how.
- We need to make it easy for children, young people and families to find information.

What it looks like now:

- Families tell us that our communication systems do not work. They find it difficult to understand what should happen and hard to get answers.
- They have told us that they do not know where to go to for help when there are gaps in support.
- Our systems are not easy to use and there is not enough transparency.
- Our communication is not consistent and there is poor 'customer care' when families are going through difficult processes.
- We have some good practice of communication but it is in pockets across the city, is dependent on individual SENCO's or officers, and is not consistent.

What we have done so far:

- We have produced new guidance and videos to explain how things work.
- We are consulting with children, young people and families on what we should improve.

Our priorities:

1. We will make sure that the voice of the young person and their family will be at the centre of all our services.
2. Services and schools will work together to ensure good communication with children, young people and families that is focused on the individual child.
3. We will make sure that assessment and support processes are clear and easily available to all.
4. We will have a clear and consistent way of working with families from day one. Families will know what is happening and what will happen next.
5. Our services and schools will be open and honest with families about what support is available.

What we will change:

Priority One - *We will make sure that the voice of the young person and their family will be at the centre of all our services.*

- We will recognise, listen and respond to the family as an equal partner who are the experts of what daily life is like for their child.
- We will develop a citywide 'tell us once' approach so that young people do not have to repeat their story. Appropriate information will be shared. This will link to a 'family journey' through SEND and Inclusion.

- We will develop an engagement approach with under-represented communities to ensure that their voice is heard. This will include Roma, BAME, and those families with their own learning needs.
- We will create communication tools that we can use with all children and young people including those that are non verbal. This will mean that we can get their views and find out what is important to them.

Priority Two - *Services and schools will work together to ensure good communication with children, young people and families that is focused on the individual child.*

- We will develop a 'customer approach' in services that prioritises good communication and ensures that agreed actions are completed.
- We will ensure that our IT systems talk to one another to share appropriate information. This will include looking into the development of a central data system across services.

Priority Three - *We will make sure that assessment and support processes are clear and easily available to all.*

- We will re-design our local offer website to make it easy to use so that everyone can find the information they need easily.
- We will outline clear detailed assessment and support processes in different formats for all to use. This will include posters, animations and diagrams.
- We will put in place a marketing strategy to ensure that information about SEND and inclusion is widely available. We will look at putting information in public places and doctor's surgeries. We will look at how we use social media to get information out to families.

Priority Four – *We will have a clear and consistent way of working with families from day one. Families will know what is happening and what will happen next.*

- We will use individual agreed methods of communication with children, young people and their families. Services and schools will agree this with them when they are first involved.

Priority Five – *Our services and schools will be open and honest about what support is available.*

- We will develop standards and best practice guidance on how and when to communicate with families. This will include written and verbal communication from teachers, SENCO's and services.

The impact this will have:

- The child and young person's voice will be central to the way all our services work.
- Services and schools will work well together and families will know what is happening and when.
- Children, young people and families will understand the support available to them.
- Families, schools and services will have better relationships.
- Professionals will have the tools available to them to communicate well with families.
- It will be easier for families to get the information and help they need.

Commitment 5: Skilled leader and staff capabilities to deliver the services (Workforce)

Our challenge:

- We need to have a workforce that works well together with shared values and trust.
- We need to ensure that leaders have the skills to make the right decisions to support children, young people and families. They need to have clear roles and responsibilities. We need to have decision making processes that are clear and accountable.
- Our workforce needs to be supported with training so that they have the right skills and knowledge.
- We need to have systems that are easy to use for our staff.

What it looks like now:

- We have a committed and hardworking workforce who we want to support to do their job as well as possible.
- Our families tell us that some staff go the extra mile to help but that not all staff have the skills they need.
- We have a range of expertise across the city but it is not consistently available to all.
- We have had issues recruiting and retaining staff which has changed how well services run.
- Our leaders tell us that systems and processes do not join up and the pressures on individual services are preventing change.
- We have some good joint working but it is not consistent across Sheffield. We know that cases involving many teams can be a difficult experience for families.

What we have done so far:

- We have developed training on processes that are being rolled out to schools and services across the city.
- The Accountable Care Partnership (a group of health and social care organisations that work together to deliver care for people living in Sheffield) has developed a workforce strategy.
- We have created school-sector leadership across SEND. This has helped education providers' work together more but we need to join with health and care services.
- We have held events including the 2018 SEND Leaders conference to promote inclusion.

Our priorities:

1. We need to know how many people need our services and understand where we have gaps in staffing and skills.
2. We need to make sure our workforce has the skills they need to understand and support inclusion.
3. We need to develop shared values, language and knowledge so that we can work together well.
4. We need to make sure that support is joined up. We will use a keyworker approach to do this where possible.
5. We need to ensure we value and support our staff so that we can recruit and retain the right people.

What we will change:

Priority One - *We need to know how many people need our services and understand where we have gaps in staffing and skills.*

- We will make sure we use data to tell us how many people need our services and what our services need to provide.
- We will develop and train staff to make sure that our services are able to support the people who need them.

Priority Two - *We need to make sure our workforce has the skills they need to understand and support inclusion.*

- We will develop clear roles and responsibilities for leaders and will make decision making processes clear and accountable.
- We will develop standards for staff across services and we will use these to check how well our staff is performing.
- We will create a programme of training for all schools, services, young people and families in the city that covers inclusion and SEND.
- We will train our assessors and plan writers so that they have the skills to create high quality, accurate and specific plans.
- We will explore how to develop a 'charter mark' for inclusion so that we can evidence that leaders are developing good inclusive practice.

Priority Three - *We need to develop shared values, language and knowledge so that we can work together well.*

- We will develop a knowledge hub so understanding and experience can be shared across the city.
- We will develop a skill sharing approach so different staff can come together to share skills and knowledge.
- We will undertake peer reviews and service evaluations so that we can keep improving our services.
- We will develop a set of shared values and common language so that everyone can work together well.
- We will use the city's Inclusion Improvement Board to lead the whole programme in making changes across services and schools.

Priority Four - *We need to make sure that support is joined up. We will use a keyworker approach to do this where possible.*

- We will develop a keyworker approach so that our most vulnerable and complex children, young people and families are well supported.

Priority Five - *We need to ensure we value and support our staff so that we can recruit and retain the right people.*

- We will develop a citywide understanding of recruitment and retention issues.
- We will make jobs in inclusion attractive to people so that we can recruit and retain high quality staff.

The impact this will have:

- Services will have the right skilled staff to support the people that need them.
- Staff will be skilled and well trained, make better decisions and give better support.
- Leaders will have clear roles and responsibilities and will be accountable.

- Services will work well together and will share values, language and knowledge.
- Services will be able to recruit and retain high quality staff and morale will be high.

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