



## **SEND & Inclusion Strategy 2023-2027: Annex A: Sufficiency of specialist places to meet the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND)**

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**January 2023**

## 1. Introduction

Across the local area, there is a commitment to deliver high quality education for all children and young people, including those who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Our SEND & Inclusion Improvement Programme underpins the strategy and clearly set out the local area's commitment to delivering high quality support and provision across all our schools and educational settings, enabling the best outcomes for every child and young person over six key priorities and five key enablers.

All children and young people are entitled to a mainstream education, and this is the best opportunity for most, including for those at SEN support and EHCP level. Where this is not right for those with the most complex needs, we have high quality special school places, and we want to ensure that there are sufficient places to continue to meet the needs of the local area into the future across all our mainstream and specialist provision.

We recognise that there are children and young people, who may need support beyond what mainstream provision can currently offer and we want to increase the options for this group. This will be done through the development of a greater range of education options in mainstream primary and secondary schools. In addition, further consideration will be undertaken regarding the development of provision in early years and post sixteen education as part of the longer term strategy.

We also want to ensure the right level of provision from support services from education, health and social care is available for all children and young people, regardless of their education setting.

The sufficiency element of our strategy is monitored and developed through the Joint Commissioning Partnership, which focuses on joint commissioning for sufficiency of specialist support and provision.

To explain how we are going to achieve our ambitions for the children and young people of Oldham, this annex forms part of the overall SEND & Inclusion Strategy 2023–2027 and focuses specifically on the SEND specialist place sufficiency aspect of the strategy.

## 2. Aims and ambitions

The overall SEND & Inclusion Strategy details all that we are aiming to achieve across the local area to get the best outcomes for children and young people. The sufficiency annex sets out further detail about how the local authority and partners will address the fundamental challenges being faced in meeting increasing demand for the range of specialist places we need to sustain for children and young people with SEND within the resources available. This will be done in collaboration with partners and stakeholders.

The sufficiency annex to the main SEND & Inclusion Strategy will be based upon the following objectives:

- Ensuring children and young people with SEND have access to the right type of school placement and provision which best meets their needs, and which is within their community. This includes those who have been categorised as having needs relating to social, emotional and mental health; autism and/or speech, language and communication needs.
- Embedding a partnership-based approach, to ensure the appropriate range and capacity of provision is available in local mainstream schools, academies, trusts and specialist settings to enable the needs of a greater number of children and young people to be met, as part of an inclusive culture. This builds upon our commitment expressed in the Education Improvement Strategy.
- Building a sustainable system that provides value for money and the most effective use of available resources, which continues to underpin the strategy and results in improved settings, environments and skill sets that get the best outcomes for children and young people.
- Ensuring that children, young people and their families are at the heart of planning support and provision.

In line with previous years developments, statutory partners continue to work closely to ensure, where possible, that children and young people with SEND do not have to travel out of the borough to have their educational needs met through early identification and support. Work in this area has been undertaken in parallel with improvements to the quality and efficiency of education, health and care plan processes. This is to enable children and young people who require ongoing specialist support to be placed in the best possible provision and have their needs met through a stable and enriching school life.

The strategy further sets out its objectives to continue to address pressures within the SEND system, placing a renewed focus on developing capacity locally through re-setting the balance in favour of borough based resource and satellite provision which is closer to children and young people's home and community, and which prevents the need for significantly more costly, independent provision outside of the borough.

Improving personalisation, through things such as personal budgets, alternative provision and education other than at school is also a key priority to create a system which promotes independence, confidence and aspirations and enables children and young people to make a successful transition to adulthood. Annex B of the SEND & Inclusion Strategy 2023-2027 will focus on these aspects.

### 3. Rationale and evidence of demand

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of children and young people who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) resultant in the current figures shown in table 1.

SEND for school aged children and young people (excludes early years and post 16)					
Phase	Total	Special place	SEN Support	EHCP	Total SEN
Primary	26400	22365	3449	586	4035
Secondary	17985	15724	1889	372	2261
Special	1183	0	18	1165	1183
PRU	37	0	37	0	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>45605</b>	<b>38089</b>	<b>5393</b>	<b>2123</b>	<b>7516</b>

*Table 1: School census January 2022*

Numbers continue to show that Oldham has a higher number at the EHCP level and lower at the SEN support level than statistical neighbours and the national average.

	Oldham	Stat' neighbours	National
Nº of school age pupils	47169	530311	9000031
No of pupils with SEND	7662	89820	1485409
% Who have an EHCP	4.7%	3.9%	4.0%
% At SEN support level	11.5%	12.9%	12.6%
% Total who have SEND	16.2%	16.8%	16.6%

*Table 2: EHCPs and SEN support comparisons based*

Latest national data, published in June 2022 by the DfE, shows that the most common type of need for children and young people who have an EHCP is autism and for those who are identified as requiring SEN support is speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). This is also reflected in Oldham and there has been an increase in those being diagnosed and/or presenting with autism, both nationally and in Oldham.

In Oldham, for children and young people with an EHCP, data shows us that, autism is the most common primary type of need, with **42%** of children and young people in Oldham schools and settings having this primary type of need. SLCN and SEMH are also significant with **17%** of the Oldham schools EHCP cohort having a primary need of SLCN and **12%** SEMH (Jan Census 2022).

Despite the identified number of children and young people in Oldham schools who have an EHCP with a primary need of SLCN, this may not account for the true level of need in this area. This is because many children and young people will have been categorised as having social, emotional and mental health (SEMH), needs at secondary school whilst at primary they may have been more likely to be identified as having SLCN. This indicates that when they move to secondary school, their SLCN has been under identified or mis-categorised.

Table three shows the latest forecast for Oldham children and young people who have an EHCP, or may need one in future, if we do not change how we do things.

	ASC	HI	MLD	PD	PMLD	SLD	SEMH	SpLD	SLCN	VI	MSI	Other	Totals
2015	371	41	123	82	54	109	153	23	170	17	0	7	1150
2016	411	45	134	90	55	119	167	28	183	20	0	14	1266
2017	498	53	152	98	60	135	191	44	228	24	0	7	1490
2018	592	62	192	118	71	141	239	47	268	29	0	9	1768
2019	668	68	224	125	72	146	283	51	311	30	1	69	2048
2020	770	72	249	136	76	123	321	79	339	32	3	50	2250
2021	803	67	240	143	80	111	340	89	382	32	3	23	2306
2022	914	75	260	150	93	116	405	96	513	39	4	35	2700
2023	1027	76	272	157	97	105	458	99	615	47	6	35	2994
2024	1130	84	299	173	107	116	504	109	677	52	7	39	3293
2025	1243	92	329	190	117	127	554	120	744	57	7	42	3623
2026	1367	101	362	209	129	140	610	132	819	63	8	47	3985
2027	1504	111	398	230	142	154	671	145	900	69	9	51	4384
2028	1654	122	438	253	156	169	738	159	990	76	10	56	4822
2029	1819	135	482	278	172	186	811	175	1090	83	11	62	5304
2030	2001	148	530	306	189	205	893	193	1198	92	12	68	5834

**Table 3:** projected numbers of EHCPs up to 2030, following the current trajectory (actuals at Jan census to 2022 (2023 TBC in spring 2023), forecasted from 2024 based on average 10% national increase).

For all statutory school aged children and young people with an EHCP reviewed and maintained by Oldham LA, **55%** are educated in special schools (inc. INMSS and maintained special schools) The national average is **34%** and for metropolitan boroughs is **9.9%**. Table 4 shows what this means in numbers of children and young people.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Mainstream</b>	589	648	782	868	932	982
<b>Special</b>	701	794	887	962	1003	1093

**Table 4:** special school places 2017 – 2022

## 5. Pressure on high needs funding

INMSS monitoring provides up to child level data to understand the SEND needs required to both develop provision that children in INMSS settings could transition back and therefore provide appropriate local provision. This also enables us to forecast and understand the needs of the population to allow a focused approach to capacity development for specific identified needs, namely autism, SLCN and SEMH.

Tables five and six show an overview of the use of INMSS placements highlighting a reduction on the dependence on the use of these schools due to developments to date.

Financial year	INMSS placements: out of borough	Total costs
2019/2020	94	£3,952,846.00
2020/2021	77	£4,282,601.00
2021/2022	67	£3,973,022.00
2022/2023	62	£3,609,940.00

Costs are based on full academic year costs. Latest information as of 21 October 2022.

**Table 5:** INMSS placements outside of Oldham.

Financial year	INMSS placements: in borough	Total costs
2019/2020	50	£802,440.00
2020/2021	46	£1,189,946.00
2021/2022	30	£935,443.00
2022/2023	24	£890,382.00

Costs are based on full academic year costs. Latest information as of 21 October 2022.

**Table 6:** INMSS placements in the private sector located in Oldham.

Previous reports have demonstrated that the continual long-term dependence on out of borough and independent non-maintained special schools (INMSS) is not favourable as a long-term sustainable option when viewed against steadily rising increase in needs for these cohorts of children and young people.

The INMSS data full year forecast figures for 2022/23 indicate that 30 children and young people were/are placed in INMSS settings with a primary need of autism at a cost of £1,478,153.40. This is on average £49,000 per place.

The INMSS data full year forecast figures for 2022/23 indicate that 32 children and young people were/are placed in INMSS settings with a primary need of SEMH at a cost of £1,394,534.50. This is on average £44,000 per place.

Primary need	INMSS number	Cost
Autism/SLCN	30	1, 478,153.40
SEMH	32	1, 394,534.50
Other	24	1, 627,634.10

**Table 7:** Costs of INMSS related to specific areas of need.

Whilst numbers in INMSS continue to reduce, through our concerted efforts, the cost of INMSS rises due to increases in prices in the independent sector, which the LA has no control over. We would like to see more of this funding remaining in Oldham schools and education settings. Our strategy, therefore, is to work towards ensuring more of our resources stay within Oldham education settings.

## 6. Considerations

The continuing work on SEND sufficiency has clearly identified a gap in educational provision for children and young people with autism/SLCN and/or SLD/SEMH, whose needs are not currently being met in mainstream schools, resourced provision or local special schools. This often results in children and young people being placed in independent non-maintained special school (INMSS) provision out of borough, or in-borough independent settings.

Oldham does have an autism specific special school; however this is targeted at children and young people who are able to follow a GCSE pathway and curriculum. There is currently a gap in specialist provision for children and young people who have the following needs:

- Communication and interaction (autism/SLCN) combined with moderate to severe learning difficulties.
- SEMH and combined severe learning difficulties.

There are currently only three established resource provisions in Oldham, providing **36** places in total. This 'mainstream plus' provision needs to grow to enable children and young people to be educated in the borough that they reside and ensure access to the right provision.

Whilst much of the capacity development is providing short and medium term cost avoidance, to ensure resources stay within the borough, the growing need for capacity of in-borough provision set against the rise in EHCP's requires a multi-faceted approach. Utilising early identification and support, graduated response as well as the development of in-borough provision with our maintained and academy partners must be a key part of this.

Demand for EHCPs and specialist places continues to rise and the council's ability to create more places locally within acceptable timescales is compromised. In addition, the complexity of some children and young people's needs, combined with the lack of mainstream specialist places, has meant that the council has been required to make greater use of INMSS to deliver provision.

There is potential to impact on the use of INMSS places currently however this would require several dependencies not least parental consent, appropriate key phase transitions of children in a particular year group.

There is a real concern on the long-term ability to impact on the use of INMSS places without having the ability to develop provision within the local area at the pace and scale needed to affect this. However, Oldham remains a partner within the Northwest Framework to secure specialist placements if required.

Further issues include:

- The unknown cohort of 'in-year' identification of children and young people who have SEND add to additional EHCP number, and these prove difficult to forecast, e.g. families moving into the area, other local authorities placing in Oldham schools, etc.
- Developing the market to encourage more school settings and trusts to develop and/or expand provision in the borough in the short and medium term.
- Development of forecast data for post 16 and review of statutory post 16 ESFA requirements that impact on the rising demand for placements up to the age of 25.
- The success of all identified projects with various approvals required from, capital, planning, providers and the possible impact of BSF/PFI initiatives.

## 7. SEND sufficiency projects 2023-2027

Progress has already been made on sufficiency projects including Medlock Valley (6 places) and Newman R C (6 places, PILOT only) plus Kingsland School scheduled for January 2023 (12 places). This will provide a further 24 places for the 22/23 academic year and a further 12 the following year.

In addition, an expression of interest went out in the Spring Term 2022 to all schools and settings, requesting they express an interest should they wish to provide resource or satellite provision.

From this initial expression of interest, **17** primary schools, **2** secondary schools and **1** FE provider have requested to be considered for mainstream plus provision. Due to the demand for mainstream plus places in secondary a further secondary mainstream plus provision will be needed in phase 1.

A further 6 mainstream plus provisions will open prior to 2025, giving an additional 108 places in total (36 in 2023, 2024 and 2025).

Development discussions have continued as part of the SEND sufficiency strategy work, assessing the available data to target provision against the needs of children and young people.

This highlights further the need for increased provision related to communication and interaction needs (autism and speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)) as well as SEMH needs.

Discussions continue with education providers to support the LA in its aims of the send sufficiency plan and its drive to significantly reduce the impact on the high needs budget by ensuring children and young people remain in local provision with a reduction in the use of INMSS.

Resource provision	Primary need	Total cost per place*	Year				Total
			22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	
Kingsland School	Autism/SEMH	£19,869	12	0	0	0	12
Medlock Valley	Autism/SEMH	£15,127	6	6	6	0	18
Secondary 1	Autism/SEMH	£19,869	6	6	6	0	18
Secondary 2	Autism/SEMH	£19,869	0	6	6	6	18
Secondary 3	Autism/SEMH	£19,869	0	6	6	6	18
Secondary 4	Autism/SEMH	£19,869	0	6	6	6	18
Primary 1	Autism/SLD	£15,127	0	6	6	6	18
Primary 2	Autism, SLD	£15,127	0	6	6	6	18
FE 1	Autism, SEMH	£19,869	0	6	6	6	18
<i>*Subject to review of resource allocation system.</i>			<b>24</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>156</b>

**Table 8:** Planned creation of resource provision/mainstream plus provision.



## 8. High needs provision capital allocations 2021 – 2024

Those SEND projects requiring capital investment have and are being supported through the Special Provision Capital and the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation Grants.

The current sufficiency plan and model is based on developments in the short and medium term with mainstream plus provision developments, but with the recent allocation of additional funding through the High Needs Capital Allocation Grant this could allow for additional capacity to meet the needs sooner.

Oldham have been awarded further funding for 2022-23 and 2023-24, from the DfE's high needs provision capital allocation grant. This creates a cumulative total of 6.0m (from the original 0.8m allocated in 2021-22).

<b>High Needs Provision Capital Allocations 2021-24</b> <i>(published March 2022)</i>			
<b>Updated HNPCA 2021-22</b>	<b>Updated HNPCA 2022-23</b>	<b>Additional HNPCA 2023-24</b>	<b>Total HNPCA 2021-24</b>
£830,009	£2,189,364	£3,012,464	<b>£6,031,837</b>

**Table 9:** HNPCA 2021 - 2024

This funding is to support the development of additional capacity and enhancing school/setting environments to support children/young people with SEND. This is great news for Oldham as it will enable more sufficiency projects to proceed, thereby enhancing the specialist places available within the borough. This will be managed through the Education Provision Team, which reports into the Education Provision Group (EPG).

The potential capacity expansion programme based on the forecast data for children and young people with EHCP's, as well as recognition of those currently in INMSS and their respective year groups would look to provide the additional capacity we need.

## 9. Collaborative approach

The continuing development discussions with schools regarding additional capacity at mainstream school sites has the potential to align itself to a positive inclusive model. This supports the aims of providing local education places for children and young people with SEND in Oldham and may be more practical in effectively supporting the educational needs and demands of all children in Oldham long term, and successfully impacting, to the extent needed, to reduce the high needs block in the long term that will be sustainable.

Most children and young people should be able to access the support they need to thrive in their local mainstream setting, without the need for an EHCP. To ensure we can achieve this, we need to create a financially sustainable system that provides value and ensures the best outcomes for children and young people.

Previously, we have considered the increase of special school places, however national developments and drivers have caused pause for thought. The Education Act 2011 changed the arrangements for establishing new schools and introduced section 6A, which is known as the academy or free school presumption which, without central government funding, would require the LA to provide the capital to fund any development. In addition, government plans can lead to significant aspects of changes of the education landscape potentially having a significant impact on local authorities, that is not yet known.

Monitoring of the use of INMSS placements and the tracking of year groups as part of the ongoing dedicated schools grant sustainability improvement programme, provides information that supports the development of in borough provision. This will allow us to review the use of INMSS whilst also monitoring the local increases identified in the data around needs and EHCP's. Also of note is that Oldham are part of the SEND North West Framework, used to identify possible placements within an agreed funding range. This is something we need to drive forward.

An additional benefit to our improvements will be enabling children and young people to participate in activities that build self-esteem and independence skills such as those delivered through the Short Breaks Play and Leisure offer.

### In summary

The priorities we have identified as part of the overall SEND & Inclusion Strategy are intended to further reduce the need for INMSS because of strengthening the range of provision with the borough. This will enable more of the high needs block to remain within the borough, and it will reduce the social costs for children, young people and families.

To address sufficiency in the best way to meet the needs of children and young people in Oldham, we are proposing to establish sufficiency of specialist places by working in partnership with schools/settings and trusts to develop specialist provision within mainstream schools.

Our commitment is that children and young people have their needs identified promptly, with appropriate support and provision put in place within Oldham at the earliest opportunity and at the level they need it.

## 10. SEND & Inclusion Strategy 2023 – 2027

### What we will do

- Develop a range of ‘mainstream plus’ options to support children and young people who require provision than is expected to remain in mainstream schools.
- Develop an evidence-informed and collaborative approach to planning places in all types of specialist SEND provision so that there is a transparent plan for how local provision can meet local needs.
- Work with partners to develop more structure and consistency for considering bespoke placements for children and young people with the most complex needs.
- Develop a joined-up network of SEND and inclusion practice across the borough, which is supported by Oldham's early years specialist support services, special schools, mainstream plus practitioners and centrally based specialist services.
- Work with education settings to ensure the best use of the high needs capital funding to improve and enhance the environment to support children and young people with SEND.
- Ensure that there are enough specialist placements to meet the needs of the local population within Oldham and map this out for the period of this strategy and into the future, in consideration of forecast needs.
- Explore what can be done to offer parent/carer support in education settings in partnership with SENCos and services.
- Ensure that there are sufficient options available for young people when they leave school, including apprenticeships, sixth form, work-based opportunities and further education.
- Promote and expand the inclusive offer in Oldham, so that more young people have access to employment pathways that meet their needs including, through; work placements, work experience, traineeships, supported Internships and apprenticeships.
- Review health provision to ensure the right level of health provision is commissioned to meet the needs of the local area.
- Review and develop our commissioning agreements between the local authority and the integrated care system so that key health services have good transition plans between children's and adults' services.

### Because of what we do

- More children and young people will have their needs met in mainstream provision and will access the opportunities this provides so that they are able to make a positive contribution and play an active role in their community.
- Children and young people will benefit from the right support, when they need it, so they can continue to learn new skills and knowledge along with their peers.
- Capacity will be built in education settings across all age phases.
- Children and young people with SEND will have, and make use of, the same opportunities as everyone else because there is an expectation that they will get the right support and encouragement.
- Young people will have more options for post 16 pathways available in their community so that they enjoy a sense of achievement as they continue to build skills, leading to future employment.