

`LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD

Report Title	<b>Scrutiny Report SEN</b> <b>SEN Services Effectiveness</b>
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Assurance Board	SEND Board
Appendices	

## 1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide an update to councillors on SEND including comparative data, updates on changes nationally, regionally and sub-regionally. The challenges facing Enfield and current expenditure.

## 2.0 Relevance to the Council's corporate Plan

2.1 Priority 3; A Fairer Enfield. "A Fairer Enfield is one where all residents, service users and Council staff are supported to fulfil their potential, are treated with respect and are actively involved in shaping the decisions that will affect their workplace and wider community"

2.2 A fairer Enfield for Children and Young People (CYP with SEND means that the wider SEND partnerships work is to make certain that there is dignity and respect and opportunity to participate safely and fully in the community and make a positive contribution to society. To be heard and fully involved in shaping and developing services and being at the centre of decisions that affect CYP lives. This is achieved by having strong co-production in developing the services and by having co-produced Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and Care packages

## 3.0 Background Summary

3.1 The SEN Service provides for a statutory function to children and young people up to the age of 25. It is governed by legislation from the Children and Families Act 2014, SEND Regulations 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015 as well as Care Act Assessment 2014, and Equalities act.

3.2 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) nationally is considered challenging with reflection that the reforms were necessary but that the demands on the service has led to insufficiencies in funding, a legislative challenge to both parents and local authorities, and an exponential growth in the EHCP population partially due to the change in age range from 16-25

3.3 There are now nationally 430,697 EHCP's which is a 10% growth since 2020

#### 4.0 Legislative Changes

4.1 The OFSTED framework for SEND is under review and pilot reviews will take place in spring 2022. The [SEND Overview](#) and [One Year on](#) reports identify the boroughs with a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) and sets out OFSTED main findings stating that parents found the system confusing. In addition the reports found that effective Early years interventions provided a better outcome but that the quality of EHCP's were variable, commissioned pathways were poor and leaders were not always fully cognisant of the importance of the SEN Service.

4.2 The the Ofsted Review [Old and New](#) report sets out the feelings within the system of parents, carers and local authorities and the anger and frustration within the system. Further it sets out the next steps in terms of the reforms. There is still concern about Joint commissioning and aspirations for children and young people, parents still fighting for their rights, the quality of EHCP's and the outcomes for children and young people.

4.3 The SEND Code of Practice is under review and is expected to be released in Autumn, although there have been previous release dates that have not been realised. It is likely that there will be further delays. There is also going to be a new NHS Act looking at integrated care services and also a new all age strategy on autism.

## 5.0 Current Position

### 5.1 EHCP Population

5.2 Enfield SEN service is seeing a fast growth in EHCP's and whilst the national average is 11%, Enfield is seeing a 14% increase in the number of EHCP plans. That is, in May 2020 there were 3,262 plans and in May 2021 there are now 3,783 plans.

This growth puts pressure on existing schools to meet need as well as putting a considerable strain across the whole SEND system.

**Fig 1: Enfield EHCP population against neighbouring borough (SEN2)**

LA	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Barnet	0	0	412	1162	2142	2372	2682	2899
Enfield	0	0	184	907	1682	2465	3057	3435
Haringey	0	0	170	606	1280	1877	2164	2398
Waltham Forest	0	5	228	616	1423	1880	2025	2285

5.3 There is lots of anecdotal assumptions for the increase in plans in Enfield LA. Some of which are:

- Higher level of complexity,
- consanguinity,
- insufficient early intervention.
- School funding reductions, schools under-resourced to manage pupils that are not PMLD (Physical & Mental Learning Difficulties)

5.4 Until we can demonstrate a fuller understanding of the need by conducting research we will be forever "plugging the dam" of increasing EHCPs.

## 6.0 Performance

Fig 2 Special Education Needs Return (SEN 2) February 21; The above performance relates to the Department for Education, (DFE) return of data, known as SEN2 and is reported annually in January each academic year.

LA	EHCP excluding Exceptions	EHCP Including Exceptions	EHCP Excluding Exceptions	EHCP Including Exceptions	EHCP Excluding Exceptions	EHCP Including Exceptions
	2018	2018	2019	2019	2020	2020
Barnet	99.2%	91%	97.1%	93%	98%	97.3%
Enfield	4.1%	3.6%	60.6%	47.2%	62.2%	44.4%
Haringey	25.2%	25.8%	70.3%	70.1%	67.5%	68.9%
Waltham Forest	75.5%	70.5%	56.5%	47.5%	89.6%	89.1%

6.1 The reported 20-week statutory performance of 62.2% is above national average but is brought down in the exception figure of 44.4%. This is where there is an allowance made available to schools during holidays, or if a child or young person misses an appointment.

Current performance to September 2021

7 Progress Completing New Plans in 20 Weeks																
7.1 Total EHC Plans issued, excluding exceptions (DFE-3)	33	390		30	10	13	6	9	30	34	51	41	50	67	49	35
7.2 Of 7.1, issued in 20 weeks (DFE-4)	25	303		14	9	9	6	6	26	33	47	27	44	47	35	25
7.3 % in 20 weeks	n/a	78%		47%	90%	69%	100%	67%	87%	97%	92%	66%	88%	70%	71%	71%
7.4 Cumulative % in 20 weeks	n/a	n/a		47%	58%	60%	64%	65%	71%	78%	82%	79%	81%	79%	78%	77%
7.5 New Requests for EHC Needs Assessments (DFE-1)	n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	19	n/a

6.2 Current statutory 20-week time-line stands at 71% excluding exceptions

6.3 Statutory performance including exceptions will not be available until the October data as it takes time for the impact of data to be pulled through, however the data should not impact significantly on the statutory time-line. We are expecting this to stay circa 70%.

## 7.0 Challenges

- Insufficient School places to manage the number of children and complexity of need.
- Reliance on out of borough placements
- SEN recruitment challenges
- SEN deficit increasing year on year
- SEN travel assistance increasing

7.1 Whilst there are insufficient school places and there are circa 600 children being educated out of borough, there has been a 7. % decrease in out of borough spend in mainstream schools (90,000) and a 4% decrease in out of borough special from last year

saving circa 54,000. Spend at Independent residential schools have increased by 9% (110,259).

Pupil Numbers/Years	Aug-17	Aug-18	Aug-19	Aug-20	Aug-21
No of pupils with an EHCP in OOB schools	362	439	467	546	613

7.2 To mitigate against the need for places, the SEN service has reviewed and developed its Additional Resource provision and increased this and developed a protocol for developing designated units.

7.3 Designated units will enable the local authority to support complex children that cannot fully follow a mainstream curriculum, essentially children that should be in a special school. This will give children and young people the opportunity to be educated in a mainstream school as is the right under the Children and Families Act 2014.

7.4 The first unit has been set up at DeBohun school and is supporting 20 children.

24 new places have recently been agreed to be set up via ARP's at the following:

- St Ignatius Ks 3-4, (age 11-16) 8 Places SLCN
- Raynham Ks/1&2 (age 5-11) 8 places ASD
- Firs Farm Ks 1&2 (age 5-11) 8 places ASD

7.5 The intention of the SEN service is to increase the number of CYP in Units to 120 over the next two years. This would be the size of a small SEN school and allows children to access the local offer as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014, reduce out of borough pressures, reduce the burden on special schools and support the decrease in travel assistance costs.

## 8.0 Recruitment

8.1 Recruitment remains an issue within the SEN service and despite reorganising the service to support staff recruitment and performance; and also increasing the staffing capacity from 8 staff in 2019 to 15 staff in 2021 with an average current case-load of 260 CYP per officer, there has not been a consistently full team since 2020. This now means that there are 8 temps in situ, occupying SEN officer roles.

8.2 SEN recruitment is a national issue and local authorities across the country are struggling to recruit to the role. Using agency staff creates inconsistency within the service and variation for parents as well as putting additional pressure on the High Needs Block.

8.3 Enfield SEN Staff have been provided with training and support to do their job more efficiently and the service has been re-organised to make the role more manageable..

## **9.0 Deficit**

9.1 The High Needs Block is currently at a projected £12m overspend. Within this the borough are implementing invest to save strategies such as Early Intervention (through the autism advisory service and through a SALT hub) at a cost £1m. from the Designated Schools Grant. Creating Resource based and specialist units in special school.

9.2 There has been an Increase in special school places from 879 in 2019/20 academic year to 960 in 2020/21 academic year at a cost of around £1.5-2m. Had the 81 places been in out of borough schools where the average costs is £50,000, this would have cost more than £4m not including travel assistance.

9.3 Officers are developing a management plan to ameliorate the deficit working with the Schools Forum and is an expectation of the DfE. It should be noted that many local authorities are in a similar or much worse position than Enfield.

## **10.0 Successes**

10.1 The council, through the designated schools grant has invested £1m in early intervention programmes and this has been well received by Our Voice, schools and families. There are two programmes, the Speech, Language and Communication Hub and the expansion of EASA, The Enfield Autism, Advisory Service.

10.2 The local authority had a successful Area Wide Covid 19 review last October carried out by Ofsted and CQC and Enfield was considered to be doing all it could to support CYP and was described as a "well-oiled machine"

10.3 Statutory performance data is improving and as mentioned previously and the assessment of applications for EHCPs within 20 weeks is currently at 71%

10.4 Our first SEN Designated Unit is up and running and there are a further 3 applications under review which could potentially see 60 more in borough places.

10.5 Schools and families are telling us that they are happier with the SEN service and feel the service responds with confidence and consideration.