

CABINET	DATE 24 July 2024	ITEM NO 12
TITLE SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024 - 2029	WARD (S) All	
CHIEF OFFICER Director for Children’s Services	CABINET MEMBER Children and Young People	
DECISION CLASSIFICATION Key: added to forward plan I 5.05.24 Non-exempt report/ appendices	IS THE FINAL DECISION ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THIS REPORT TO BE MADE AT THIS MEETING? Yes	

1. Decision required

This report makes the following recommendations to the decision-maker:

- 1.1 To approve the objectives set out in the Local Area’s revised SEND & Inclusion Strategy (2024-2029)
- 1.2 To approve proposed publication and communication arrangements

2. Links to Our Greenwich missions

2.1 This report outlines our plans to work effectively with our partners to support children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). It therefore relates to the following ‘Our Greenwich’ missions:

- Children and young people can reach their full potential.
 - The plans ambition 2: Schools and nurseries to support us better and have enough places to get the right support; and Ambition 3: to be independent and ready for work and/or college when we leave school contributes to this mission.
- We design our services around the needs of our residents.
 - The plan was developed in consultation with children and young people with SEND and therefore is directly designing improved services based on residents' contributions.
- People's health supports them in living their best life.
 - The plans ambition 4: to be as healthy as we can contribute to this mission.

- People will not experience discrimination.
 - The plans ambition 1: to be a part of our local community and go to inclusive fun activities like everyone else does; and Ambition 5: we want others to understand our needs and be able to support us better contributes to this mission.
- Everyone in Greenwich is safer, and feels safer.
 - The plans ambition 4: to be as safe as we can contribute to this mission.
- Our Council is better at listening to communities, and communities feel they are heard.
 - The plan was developed in consultation with children and young people with SEND, Parents/ carers and communities and professionals who work with children and young people with SEND. This contributes to understanding the needs of the community in relation to children and young people with SEND.

3. **Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 3.1 This report sets out the background to the development of the draft SEND & Inclusion Strategy (2024-2029). Cabinet members are asked to approve the strategy's objectives (outlined in Annex I of this report) and plans for publication and promotion.

4. **Introduction and Background**

- 4.1 Section 25 of the Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on Local Authorities and its partners to ensure integration between educational and training, social care and health provision in support of children with SEND. The SEND 'Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years'¹ provides further detailed guidance to local areas about how these statutory duties are to be carried out in partnership.
- 4.2 SEND services in Greenwich were inspected in March 2023, the outcome of which was the highest available - with inspectors finding that the local area partnership's SEND arrangements 'typically lead to positive experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND'.
- 4.3 A number of key drivers have meant we need to review our SEND strategy, including:

¹[SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/401221/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)

- This strategy replaces the previous strategy which came to an end in 2024
- This strategy builds on recommendations from the recent SEND Area Inspection (March 2023) and the actions outlined in our post-inspection action plan².
- This strategy reflects findings from our self-evaluation (completed in advance of last year's inspection).

- 4.4 The SEND & Inclusion Strategy provided to Cabinet for discussion and agreement describes how partners across health, education and social care will fulfil their statutory obligations outlined in the code of practice, as well as outlining what actions partners will take to continue to improve our services.
- 4.5 The strategy sets out 5 key ambitions. These were developed with input from our children and families. A summary of our engagement with children can be found at Annex 2. The proposed ambitions outlined in the strategy are:
- We want to be a part of our local community and go to inclusive fun activities like everyone else does.
 - We want schools and nurseries to support us better and have enough places so we can go to the “right” school for us.
 - We want to be independent and ready for work and/or college when we leave school.
 - We want to be as safe and healthy as we can be.
 - We want ourselves, our families and friends to understand our needs and be able to support us well.
- 4.6 These ambitions align with missions and outcomes described in the ‘Our Greenwich’ plan – especially those relating to improving opportunities for young people to access suitable educational and training (including improving educational attainment), providing more opportunities for children and young people to learn, play and socialise as well as preparing young people to move into adulthood.
- 4.7 The newly established SEND Improvement Board has overseen this work. Reflecting existing strong strategic and operational partnership arrangements, this board is jointly chaired by the Director of Children’s Services and Chief Operating Officer (South-East London Integrated Care Board).
- 4.8 The SEND Improvement Board has already begun to develop and agree detailed actions which will contribute to the delivery of our ambitions. The

² [PowerPoint Presentation \(openobjects.com\)](https://openobjects.com)

Board will furthermore play a key part in overseeing the delivery of these actions.

- 4.9 The Strategy has been written at a time when there are many changes to the landscape of SEND - significant challenges in meeting demand and responding to funding pressures. These have been recognised within the strategy, which is sufficiently flexible to respond to changing national guidance.

5. Available Options

- 5.1 The following options are available to Cabinet:
- **Approve the SEND and Inclusion Strategy (2024-2029)** – this option would approve the proposed new SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2029. This option is recommended for agreement.
 - **Reject the SEND and Inclusion Strategy (2024-2029)**– this option would reject the proposed strategy. This option would require going back to partners to revise the plan. As the proposed plan has been developed with input from a wide range of stakeholders, and as the development of the plan has been overseen by the SEND Improvement Board this option is not recommended.
 - **Do nothing.** – this option would not produce a new plan. This is not recommended as it is felt that the plan provides a helpful framework that strengthens partnership working within the borough and supports the improvement of outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

6. Preferred Option

- 6.1 **SEND and Inclusion Strategy (2024-2029)**- The preferred option for Cabinet is to approve the proposed strategy set out in Appendix A.

7. Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 The strategy sets out how the Local Authority and its partners will fulfil their statutory obligations. It was developed in consultation with children, young people, families and partners and what is important to them for the partnership to improve within the local area.

8. Consultation Results

- 8.1 Over the last year, we delivered a comprehensive programme of engagement with key stakeholders. Their views have directly shaped the content of the strategy and the ambitions it articulates.

- 8.2 In total, we received 428 individual responses to a survey across all Greenwich schools. 27 separate settings supported the distribution of the questionnaire.
- 8.3 The survey was supplemented by a comprehensive programme of face-to-face consultations:
- 116 of our parents who either completed an online questionnaire or attended an in-person session at Eltham library.
 - 43 of our schools and several nursery settings through an online survey and facilitated in person sessions
 - Health professionals who work with us including Therapists, Health Visitors, GPs, CAMHS, School Nurses and dieticians
 - Royal Borough of Greenwich staff who support us including the people that are responsible for our Education, Health Care Plans, Educational Psychology, Outreach and Inclusion services that visit us in school.
 - Royal Borough of Greenwich Social Workers including those who focus on Moving to adulthood as well as the people that organise our Short Breaks.

9. **Next Steps: Communication and Implementation of the Decision**

- 9.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, the SEND Strategy is due for publication on the council website and Local Offer webpages in September 2024 at the beginning of the new school year. Prior to publication the strategy will be proof-read and our design-team will work on including art-work from Greenwich children and young people.
- 9.2 More detailed publication plans will be worked up closer to the time and will include:
- Promotion via Social Media
 - Promotion via the Schools Bulletin (published weekly)

10. **Cross-Cutting Issues and Implications**

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Legal including Human Rights Act	By virtue of section 27 of the Children and Families Act 2014 a Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to keep under review its special educational, social care, and training provision for children and young people with SEND in its area as well as those for whom it is responsible placed outside of area.	Andre De Freitas, Assistant Head of Legal Services 31/05/24

	<p>The Local Authority must consider the extent to which such provision is sufficient to meet the educational, training and social care needs of the relevant children and young people.</p> <p>Section 27 (3) provides that in exercising its functions in this regard a Local Authority must consult with a number of specified people and agencies in its area including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i, children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and the parents of those children;ii, the governing bodies of maintained schools and maintained nursery schools,iii, the proprietors of Academies;iv, the governing bodies, proprietors or principals of post-16 institutions;v, the governing bodies of non-maintained special schools;vi, the advisory boards of children's centres;vii, the providers of relevant early years education; and the governing bodies, proprietors or principals of other schools and post-16 institutions where they are or are likely to be attended by children or young people for whom it is responsible, or children or young people in its area who have a disability;viii, a youth offending team that the authority thinks has functions in relation to children or young people for whom it is responsible, or children or young people in its area who have a disability.viii, such other persons as the local authority thinks appropriate.	
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<p>Finance and other resources</p>	<p>The decision maker is required to approve the objectives set out in the Local Area’s revised SEND & Inclusion Strategy (2024-2029). Whilst there are no financial implications arising directly from this report any decisions arising from any of the objectives/ambitions will be subject to a further report.</p> <p>The report author indicates that this is a key decision.</p>	<p>Akosua Boachie Accountancy Business Change Manager</p> <p>24.05.2024</p>
<p>Equalities</p>	<p>The SEND and inclusion strategy is directly developed to positively affect the experiences of those children and young people with protected characteristics.</p> <p>The requirement under the Public Sector Equality Duty (s149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups, and (iii) foster good relations between people from different groups are deemed to be met.</p> <p>The SEND and inclusion Strategy will directly contribute to the Council’s Equality and Equity Charter and the Council’s Equality Objectives 2020-2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with partners and the community to make our information, services and products more accessible and inclusive. - Challenging discrimination, harassment, bullying, hate crime and victimisation. 	<p>Roz Weeks – Head of SEND Outreach Services</p> <p>21/05/24</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listening to and understanding the diverse needs of all people. - Eliminating barriers, encouraging a growth mindset, raising aspirations and creating opportunities for growth beyond limit. 	
Climate change	There is no deemed impact on the Carbon neutral plan, as agreed by Cabinet on 18th November 2020.	Roz Weeks – Head of SEND Outreach Services 21/05/24

11. **Report Appendices**

11.1 The following documents are to be published with and form part of the report:

- *Appendix 1: SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2029*
- *Appendix 2: Summary of the survey responses from children and young people to support the development of the SEND strategy*

12. **Background Papers**

None

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