

Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People (ages 0-25) with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Swindon

SEND, Inclusion and Alternative Provision Strategy
2023-2028



Photos provided with consent from the children, young people and families working with STEP.

Foreword from the SEND Shadow Board

We are all the members of the Shadow Board; we are young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who speak to and talk on behalf of other young people like us.

We are here to make sure Swindon Borough Council and the adults that make the important decisions about things that help us, listen to what we want and how we think things can be better for all children and young people like us.

We think it's important that if things that affect us are being decided or planned, we should have our voice heard, because it's about us, and for us (we are the experts!). Swindon Borough Council and the adults have been really good at listening to us, and we get to talk to some of the most important people in the council.

This strategy is for all adults who work with children and young people with SEND and will help us feel included (and not feel too different from everybody), lead happy and successful lives (whatever that looks like for each of us), reach our full potential (follow our dreams), get the best support and help when we need it, and get to have a say in all the decisions about us and our lives.

Ben Rhailand Casey Jayne Lucy



Ben, Rhailand, Casey, Jayne and Lucy



Members of the SEND Shadow Board.

STEP are a group commissioned by Swindon Borough Council as an independent organisation, who work with children and young people with SEND on developing skills, organisational and strategic decision making and the promotion of inclusion across education, health and care.

Foreword from Swindon SEND Families Voice

We are Swindon SEND Families Voice (SSFV) a parent carer forum. We were founded in January 2018 by a few parents and carers of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We have grown over the years and are now a team of 12, with a Facebook following of over 2,800. We all have children with SEND ranging from Autism and ADHD to more complex medical needs and life limiting illness. When we created our group, we realised there was not much in the way of support available for parents like us and that so many parents felt alone and isolated by their children's challenges and were struggling to know where to go for the much-needed support.



We are the strategic partners to the Local Authority and BSW Integrated Care System (health services). We listen to local parents and carers experiences and share their feedback to improve local SEND services.

The life journey of child with SEND can be a minefield if you don't know what services are available, so at SSFV we work as a sign posting service, a listening ear, provide Early Years transition packs, visit schools and workshops including:

- **SEND Stay and Play sessions for children aged 0-5 years.**

- **SEND Sharing Service**

<https://swindonsendsharingservice.lend-engine.com/>

- **Phone Line**

This is another lifeline when parents need a listening ear, for those impossible days or just a quick sign post. There is someone on the end of that phone to listen and as the saying goes a problem shared is a problem halved. **Tel: 07486 873405**

- **Branches Support Group and The SEND Room**

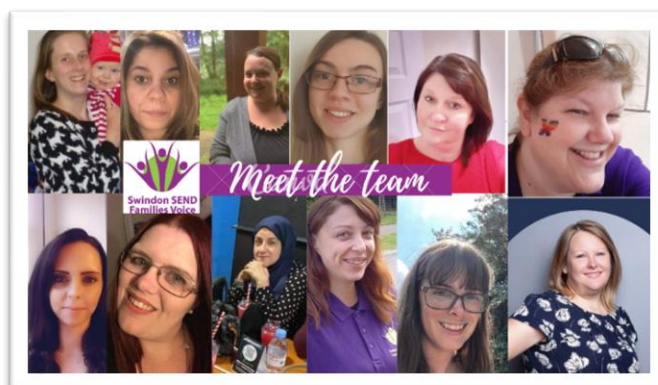
You can find out about sessions by joining our mailing list:

<https://swindonsendfamiliesvoice.org.uk/mailling-list-sign-up/>

At SSFV we are very passionate about getting that much needed support in place for our families and yours. To find out more about what we do, please follow us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/SwindonSEndfamiliesvoice>

One SEND Family, One Voice



Introduction

In Swindon, we believe that Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) is everyone's business, which means everybody has a key role to play in making sure that children, young people and families with SEND receive the support they need. Our vision is that everyone in Swindon lives a healthy, safe, fulfilling and independent life, and, where required, are supported by professionals and the wider community.

We know that nationally, and locally there is still room for improvement in SEND provision, we can do better with the services that we offer and the impact that these have on the outcomes of children and young people.

This strategy outlines:

- The current picture of SEND in Swindon, compared with regional and national benchmarks.
- An update on our previous commitments to supporting children, young people and families with SEND, and how we have done in achieving them.
- The pledge we make in moving forward, to ensure that outcomes for children and young people with SEND continue to improve.

We are committed to having children, young people and families with SEND at the heart of everything that we do as SEND professionals. We know that it is vital that individuals receive the right support, in the right place, at the right time, in order to successfully meet needs.

We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who provided their feedback, and to the children and young people working with STEP for sending in some wonderful pictures and drawings that can be found throughout this document.

All children, young people and the families who support them living in Swindon are enabled to have their voices heard and acted upon at all levels, i.e. in the individual support they receive and also strategically as to how services/organisations operate.

[Swindon's Children and Young People's Participation Strategy 2021-2024](#)



Artwork provided by the children and young people working with STEP.

Our Priorities – An Overview

As a part of the community feedback survey which was undertaken during September-December 2022, we asked people to tell us how they think we have done in achieving our 6 current priorities. The majority of responses told us that we still have lots of work to do to achieve our priorities moving forward.

In October 2021, OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) and CQC (Care Quality Commission) visited Swindon to reinspect the Local Area following the original inspection in 2018. At the time of the original visit, Swindon were judged as requiring improvements in 8 areas and were required to work to a Written Statement of Action (WSOA). In October 2021, Inspectors found that the Local Area had made significant progress in all 8 areas and the Local Area were no longer subject to regular monitoring by the DFE. Read what Inspectors said about Swindon's progress here:

[Swindon SEND Service OFSTED Report](#)

Whilst leaders in the Local Area were pleased with the outcome, they knew that there was still more to do and a further improvement plan was developed that worked on areas outlined in the previous SEND & Inclusion Strategy. During our consultation we asked you how you felt that the Local Area had done in meeting the priorities set out in this plan during the past 12 months, you said that:

We had done the best at:

Priority 3 – We ensure that every Child and young person with SEND makes good progress.

We needed to improve the most upon:

Priority 6 – We ensure financial stability and sustainability for SEND.

In response to this feedback, and having listened to your views, our 6 Priorities for SEND in Swindon over the next 5 years will be:

Priority 1: We will make sure that every child and young person is able to access, and be included, within their community.

Priority 2: We will make sure that we all work together within the community to plan services, and provide support to children and young people with SEND.

Priority 3: We will make sure that we do everything we can to help children and young people with SEND achieve their goals, ambitions, and prepare for the future to live happy and fulfilling lives.

Priority 4: We will make sure we are delivering consistently timely, high quality and effective Education Health and Care Needs Assessments, reviews and plans.

Priority 5: We will make sure that accurate and accessible information is readily available to children, young people and their families, including transparency around key decisions.

Priority 6: We will make sure that we work towards financial stability for SEND, to ensure we can continue to provide support in the years to come.

More information on what we have been working on, and what we will be doing moving forward can be found later on in this strategy. To skip the numbers and head straight to it, click [here!](#)



Artwork provided by the children and young people working with STEP.

Our Principles and Values

Collective Responsibility: SEND is everyone's responsibility, and we must all work together to make sure that the system is fair – and that everyone is contributing to solve even the most difficult problems.

Early Support and Intervention: A high quality graduated response should be given to all children and young people, to make sure that there are no negative effects of unmet needs over time.

Inclusion: The majority of children and young people with SEND will attend mainstream settings, with additional support from specialist providers. All settings will make inclusion a priority, to ensure that individuals are able to access all of their childcare entitlements.

Keeping it Local: Children and young people should be educated as close to their home as possible, and be supported to meaningfully engage with their community.

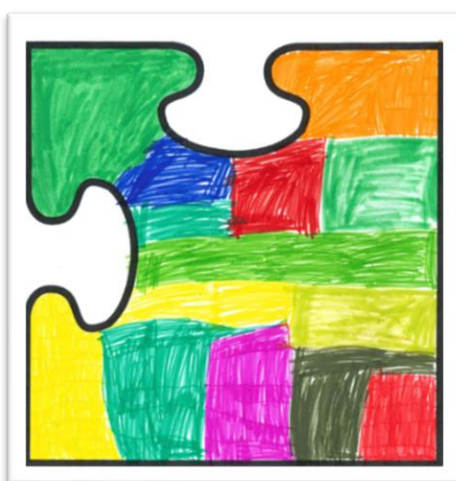
Personalisation: We should all work within a person-centred approach, giving greater choice and control to families. We should value and respect everything that makes a situation unique.

Co-production: Parents and carers know their families the best, and so they should be at the centre of decision making to help develop and shape services.

Partnership: We can help to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND by working together through joint commissioning and coordination of approaches.

Culture Change: Our 'SEND Offer' must change to make sure that it works now, this means we need to think creatively and ensure we are taking a flexible approach to support.

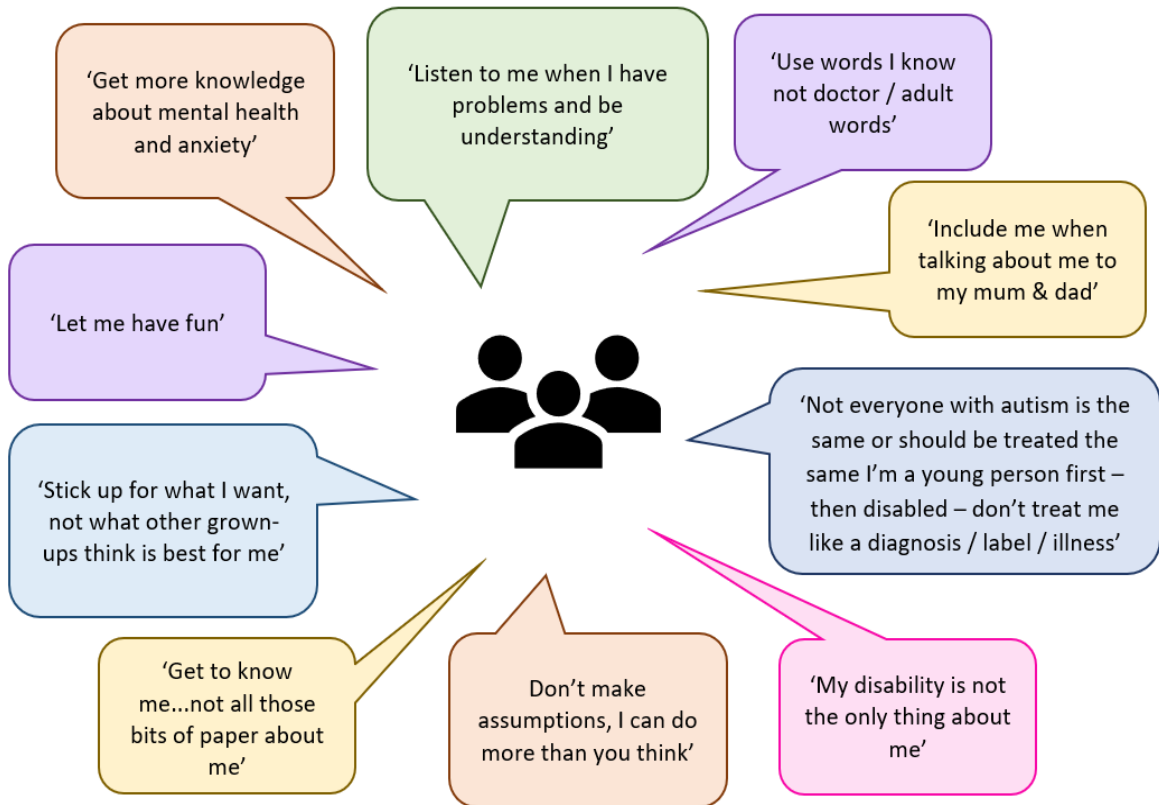
Our Principles and Values are monitored across the work that we do within our Delivery Plan. This is a document that is used to track all work taking place to help improve the way that we support children, young people and families with SEND in Swindon, and is held to account by the SEND Executive Board and SEND Strategic Partnership Board.



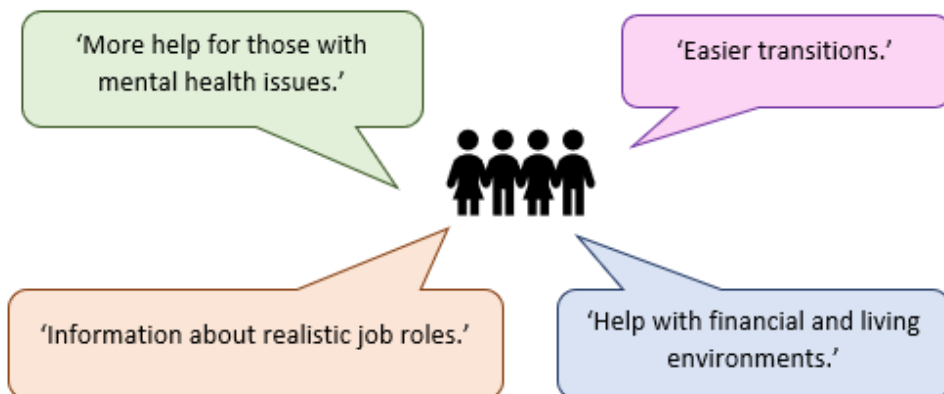
Artwork provided by the children and young people working with STEP.

The Children and Young People of Swindon's Voice

The voices of children and young people with SEND **must** be at the heart of all discussions and decisions, which is why alongside the community feedback survey we also asked schools and other organisations working with children and young people with SEND, to gather feedback. The children and young people working with STEP provided us with the following statements about what they want us to focus on moving forward, and how they feel about what we are doing now.



The children and young people of Churchward School also provided us with feedback, and let us know what they would like to happen in the future to help make things easier for them.



The National Context

Who are the Children and Young People with SEND?

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

As outlined in the Children and Families Act (2014), a child or young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- Have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of their peers the same age **or**
- Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools / post-16 institutions.

Disability

A child or young person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that is substantial and has a long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (long-term is defined as a year or more, and substantial is defined as more than minor or trivial).

Children and young people with a disability, do not necessarily have Special Educational Needs.

Legislation

Links to access all of the following legislation can be found at the end of this document in the [Appendix](#).

The Children and Families Act 2014

The Children and Families Act (2014) implemented major changes in the way in which Local Authorities and their partners (such as Education, Health and Care) help and support children, young people and their families with SEND.

Part 3 of this act outlines the legal responsibilities of Local Authorities, Education, Health and Care providers in regards to the provision of care and support for children, young people and their families with SEND. It also details the formal processes that must be followed in providing this care and support.

The Act supports a vision for children and young people that is shared by Swindon Borough Council, and make the following legal requirements for good practice:

- Local Authorities and their partners have a responsibility to integrate services, and to deliver support for children and young people between the ages of 0-25. This

support should be offered as early as possible, and any and all decisions should be made with the full involvement of the parent /carer, child or young person.

- High quality, plentiful information should be available to individuals in order to enable them to make informed decisions. This should include an online Local Offer, which provides easily accessible information and resources for families with SEND.
- Better commissioning of new provision to ensure needs are met early, in a timely way and within educational settings by local community services and providers.
- Positive transitions at all key stages of education between the ages of 0-25, with successful preparation for adult life being the overarching goal for all children and young people with SEND.
- Services should support families to meet their children's needs, and help children to remain in their local community.

The Equality Act 2010

Under the Equality Act (2010), education providers have statutory duties to ensure that they do not discriminate against children and young people with SEND. They should ensure that pupils with SEND can be involved in every aspect of school life, and that adjustments should be made in the way in which settings teach pupils to allow for this.

The SEND Code of Practice 2015

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) provides statutory guidance for organisations who work with, and support, children, young people and their families with SEND. It outlines the core principles that organisations should work within, and provides guidance on how to work within statutory frameworks to best support children and young people with SEND.

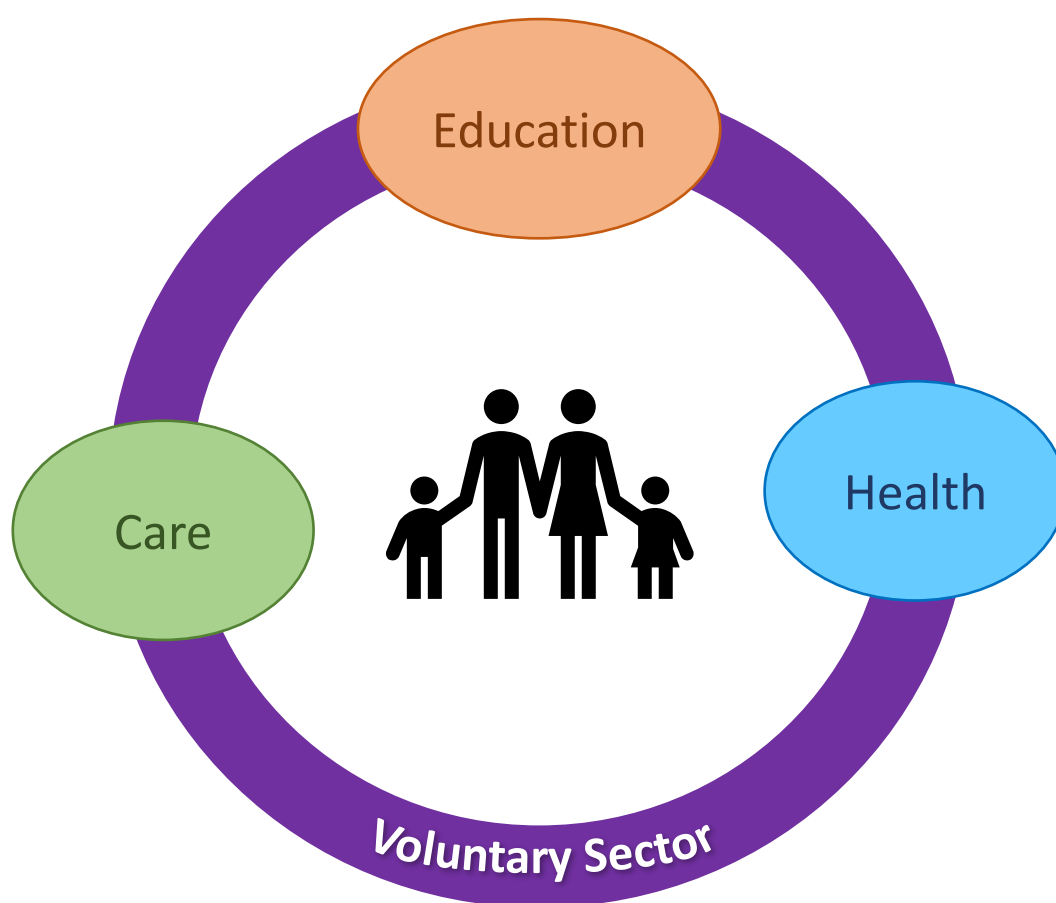


Artwork provided by the children and young people working with STEP.

Joint Agency Working

A range of public bodies are required to work within the Children and Families Act (2014) and the SEND Code of Practice (2015), these include the following:

- Local Authority Maintained Schools
- Early Year's and Childcare Settings
- Further Education (FE) Colleges
- NHS Commissioners and Providers
- Local Health and Wellbeing Boards
- The Voluntary Sector



This legislation places clear duties on all bodies to work together in integrating their services in order to deliver timely and well-coordinated holistic support, with the child or young person and their families placed at the centre. Swindon Borough Council works closely with its partners to ensure that this duty is acted upon across all areas of SEND provision, and has implemented joint agency working across services.

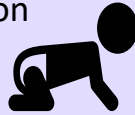
The Swindon Context

Academic Year 2021-2022 Data

36531 Pupils in Swindon Schools



379 Funded Early Years Providers in Swindon



44.26% of

Children and Young People in Swindon with an EHCP are educated in mainstream Early Year's and school settings, compared with 40.45% across England.



4715 Swindon Children and Young People receive SEN Support in an Educational Setting, that's 12.88% of the Swindon School Population (compared with 12.55% across England).



82 Mainstream Schools in Swindon:

- 61 Primary
- 13 Secondary
- 9 Post-16 (Colleges &



31.58% of

Children and Young People in Swindon with an EHCP are educated in Specialist Provisions, compared with 34.78% across England.



1707 Swindon Children and Young People in School have an EHCP, that's 4.66% of the Swindon School Population (compared with 3.95% across England).



18 Specialist Settings in Swindon:

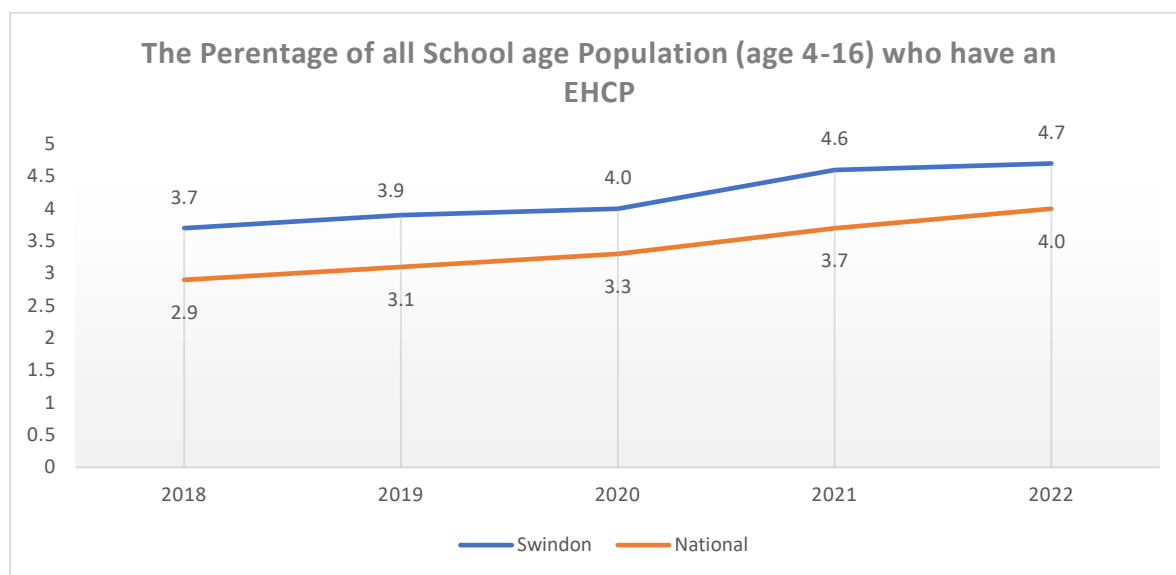
- 4 Primary
- 4 Secondary
- 2 Post-16 (Colleges & Sixth Forms)
- 11 Specially Resourced



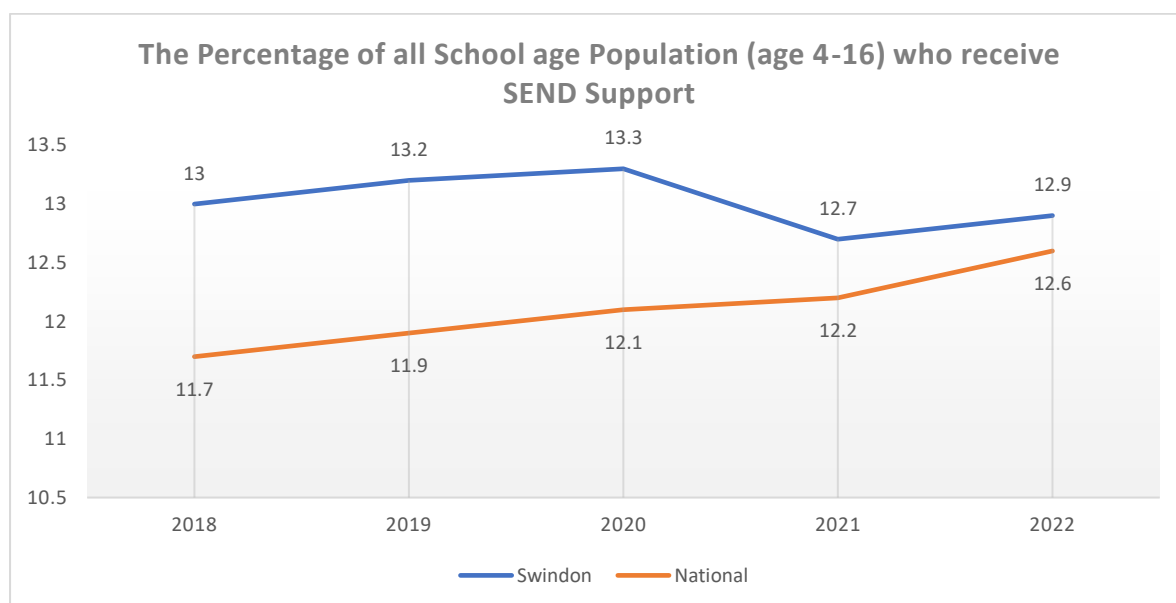
14.75% of

Children and Young People in Swindon with an EHCP receive provision at a Post-16 Provider or 6th Form, compared with 16.56% across England.

Children and Young People with SEND



[Figure 1: The Percentage of all School age Population (aged 4-16) who have an EHCP.]



[Figure 2: The Percentage of all School age Population (age 4-16) who receive SEND Support.]

The number of children and young people with identified SEND in Swindon has remained consistently above national figures. The number is also predicted to increase as the population grows significantly by 2028.

The percentage of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) attending school in Swindon has steadily increased over the past few years. As of January 2022, a total of **4.7% of the Swindon School age population have an EHCP**, compared with 4.0% Nationally.

Similarly, the percentage of students within this cohort receiving SEND Support (meaning they have Special Educational Needs, but do not require a statutory plan – EHCP) whilst at school has also remained above the national average. In Swindon, this cohort accounts for **12.9% of the wider Swindon School age population** compared with a slightly lower national figure of 12.6%.



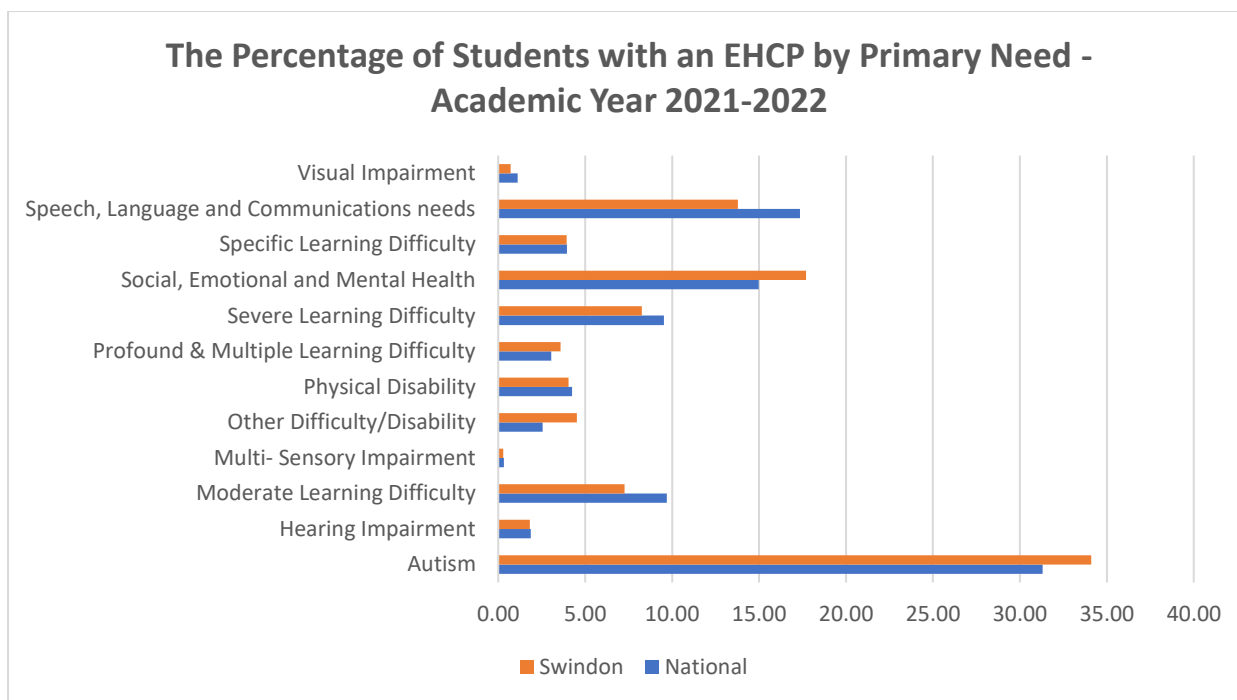
Artwork provided by the children and young people working with STEP.

The Primary Needs of Children and Young People with SEND

Every January we receive data about children in our schools from the National School Census. This information tells us the percentage of students with an EHCP broken down by each primary need, which we then use to gain a better understanding of the children and young people in Swindon.

The most recent data we have is from the Academic Year 2021-2022, which shows that the primary need with the largest percentage of children and young people in Swindon is Autism – which is currently 34.11% of all EHCPs (an increase of 2.67% compared with the previous year).

The percentage of many types of need in Swindon is different to the rest of the country, sometimes we have larger percentages and sometimes they are smaller. To make sure that we plan our services correctly, we need to understand we are all different and what we can do to support everyone.



[Figure 3: The Percentage of Students with an EHCP by Primary Need – Academic Year 2021-2022.]

Outcomes for Children and Young People with SEND

Nationally, children and young people with SEND do not achieve outcomes as good as their non-SEND peers – this is mirrored in Swindon. Persistent absence is a particular concern in Swindon, especially for children and young people with an EHCP / SEND Support. The Academic Year 2022-2023 saw the implementation of a Local Area Wide Attendance Strategy, which aims to support children, young people and families with making sure that as few days of education are missed as possible. Attendance is key for all children and young people but is even more important for those who have additional learning needs.

More information on how you can support a child or young person with attendance can be found on the Swindon Borough Council website through the link below:

[Swindon Borough Council - School Attendance](#)

We understand that in many cases, missed days for children and young people with SEND are unavoidable, and so we recognise the importance of working together, across services, to make sure that our children and young people are not missing out on their education whilst continuing to meet their needs.



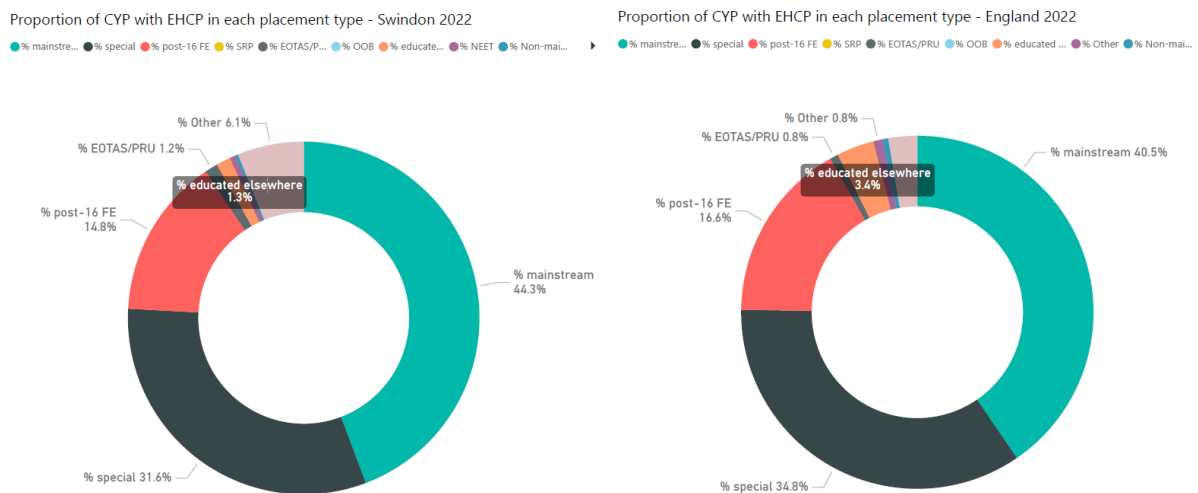
Artwork provided by the children and young people working with STEP.

Best Use of Our Resources

In Swindon, we have a range of Special Schools as well as Special Resourced Provisions (SRPs) and Special Educational Needs Units that are attached to mainstream schools. You can find more information on each of these settings in the Continuum of Provision; an annually updated document available on the Swindon Local Offer:

[The Continuum of Provision](#)

As of January 2022, 31.54% of Swindon children and young people with SEND were placed in a Special School, compared with 34.78% nationally.



[Figure 4: Graphs showing the percentage of children and young people with an EHCP in each placement type, in both Swindon and Nationally.]

The largest percentage of students with an EHCP however attend a mainstream school. In Swindon, 44.26% of children and young people with an EHCP are in mainstream education compared with 40.45% nationally. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of

Practice (2015) is clear that all schools **must** focus on inclusivity, and should be able to meet the needs of the majority of children and young people with identified SEND.

Support Services:

In Swindon, we offer a range of education support service and therapies:

- Advisory Service for Visual Impairment (PAVES)
- Swindon Autism Support Service (SASS)
- Swindon Hearing Support Team
- The Advisory Service for Assistive Technology
- Cognition and Learning Advisory Support Service (CLASS)
- The Advisory Service for Physical Disability

Funding for these services is available through a budget for complex needs called the High Needs Funding Block, as well as in some cases being joint funding with health.

Resources Available:

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and the High Needs Block (HNB) provides extra top up funding for individual children and young people placed in any settings, and is additional to the funding already available through schools – this recognises the need for additional help and provision above what is already offered as part of the graduated response.

The Graduated Response, as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (2015), is a four-part cycle of support that education providers are required to implement as SEND Support.

‘Assess, Plan, Do, Review’

Through this, actions are reviewed to further understand the individual’s needs, and the support required to help them succeed.

Swindon’s financial commitments to providing support to children, young people and their families with SEND are already above the available budgets. In the High Needs Block alone we are facing substantial pressure, which is likely to grow significantly unless action is taken. Swindon isn’t alone in this, many other local authorities in England are facing similar budget problems.

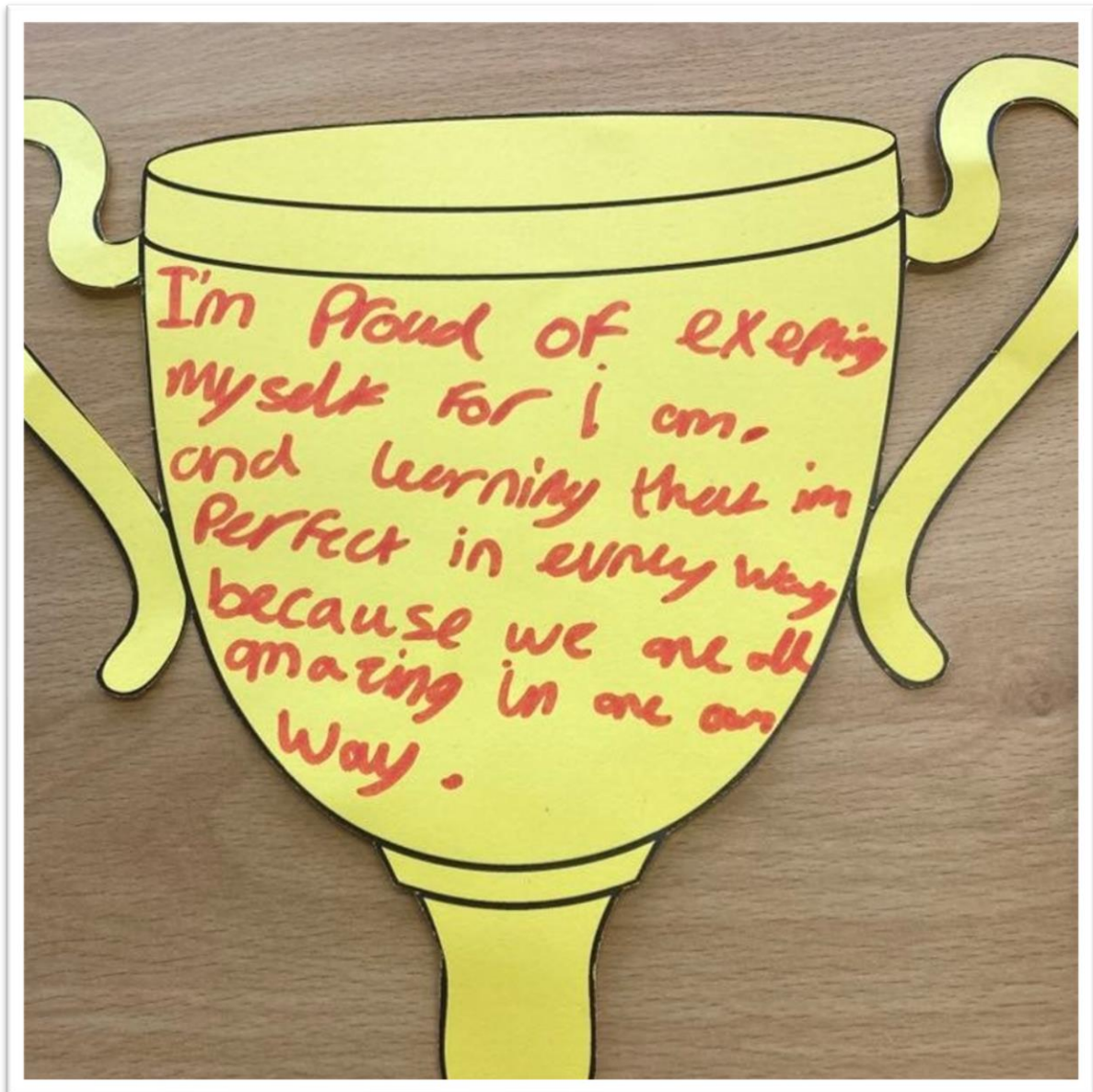
Alternative Provision:

There are also a range of Alternative Provisions available in Swindon. These are organisations that provide additional support for children and young people struggling to thrive within a mainstream setting, and use both academic and vocational provisions to support learning.

In response to the Government’s Green Paper published Summer 2022, professionals are exploring what Alternative Provision looks like in Swindon, and how it can best be utilised to support children and young people with SEND. Work is ongoing and developing when

identified, in order to ensure that we are doing everything we can to meet needs and improve outcomes.

Services provided by Alternative Provisions are rarely free of charge, and so if you feel as if they would best suit the needs of your child, young person or yourself then please speak with a SEND Professional – who will be able to advise you on the matter.



Artwork provided by the children and young people working with STEP.

How We Have Done So Far



For the past 3 years, we have worked on the following 6 priorities:

Priority 1 – We ensure that every child and young person feels included and part of their community.

Priority 2 – We are all working together to plan services.

Priority 3 – We ensure that every child and young person with SEND makes good progress.

Priority 4 – We deliver consistently timely and good quality education, health and care assessments and plans.

Priority 5 – We ensure that our young people enjoy happy and fulfilling adult life.

Priority 6 – We ensure financial stability and sustainability for SEND.

To make sure that our priorities moving forward reflect the views of the community, the Special Educational Needs and Disability, Inclusion and Alternative Provision Strategy (SENDi & AP Strategy) was developed through joint working with all partners; including schools, health and the wider SEND community. Feedback on how we should be working over the next 5 years was gathered from **166** individuals through our Online Community Feedback Survey, as well as through the following methods:

- A focus group led by STEP
- Specially designed resource packs distributed to schools, to gain feedback from children and young people
- Engaging with members of the community at Local Offer Events

We asked the community to choose 4 priorities which they think should be our focus moving forward. The choices given were:

- Helping people to feel included within the community.
- Making sure we work together to plan services.
- Making sure everyone makes progress.
- Making sure Education, Health and Care Assessments and Plans (EHCPs) are always timely and good quality.
- Making sure that young people with SEND enjoy a happy and fulfilling life.
- Financial stability and sustainability for SEND.
- Having as much information as possible easily available, as well as improved transparency.
- The SEND Service being visible within the community.

According to the community feedback, the most important of the above pledges is the following:

'Making sure that young people with SEND enjoy and happy and fulfilling life.'

Children and young people with SEND are at the heart of everything we do as SEND Professionals, parents and carers; and so this statement will be reflected at the core of the SENDi & AP Strategy 2023-2028. We pledge to do this by:

- Focusing on improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- Routinely checking that our Local Offer is providing accurate and accessible information for children, young people and families with SEND, and acting when we find that this is not the case.
- Building and maintaining the trust and confidence of the children, young people and families, by listening to them and respecting their experiences.

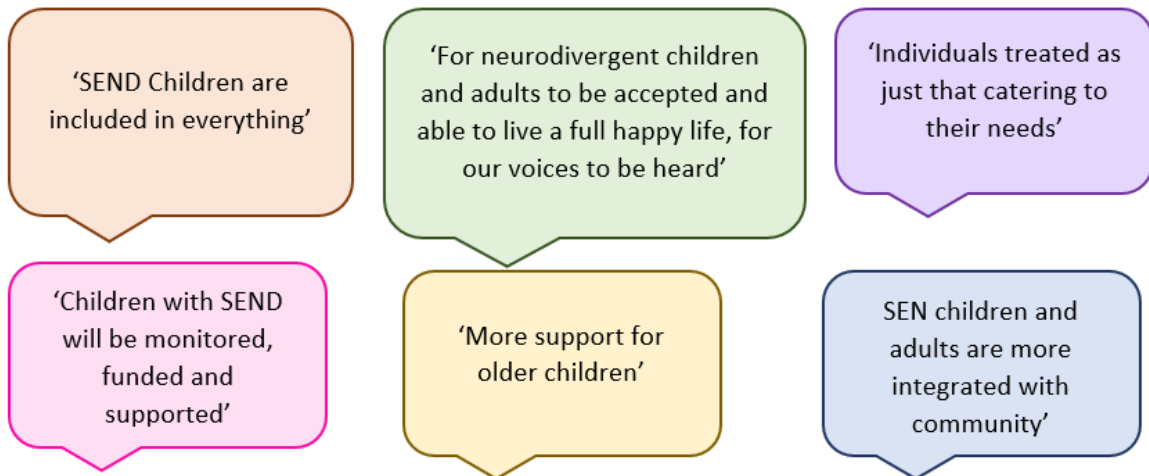


Artwork provided by the children and young people working with STEP.

You said – We Will Do!

We asked you to let us know what is important to you, and so we have shaped our priorities for the next 5 years accordingly.

We received hundreds of comments and suggestions from our online survey, in-person events and group sessions! Here are some examples of what you said you wanted to be different by 2028:



In response to your feedback, we have come up with the following 6 priorities for SEND in Swindon over the next 5 years.

Priority 1: We will make sure that every child and young person is able to access, and be included within their community.

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) outlines the good practice that they expect settings to implement to support children and young people with SEND at an early stage.

Making sure that children and young people with SEND have access to, and are included within the community is key in improving outcomes and ensuring individuals live happy and fulfilling lives.

In response to our consultation, you told us that you wanted:

'More specialist places for children who need it - we are missing so many opportunities.'

'Children with SEND having access to the same opportunities as neurotypical children.'

'Everyone in the community should feel included.'

What we have done so far:

- Implemented the Core Standards, and embedded them within practice across Education, Health and Care in Swindon.
- Expanded services across the local area to make sure we support as many children and young people with SEND as possible, including bids for funds for additional support mechanisms – such as sensory rooms and shepherds' huts.
- Early help services continue to expand and adapt to best meet the needs of children, young people and families in Swindon with SEND.
- Implemented a robust Attendance Strategy, to focus on attendance and exclusion.
- Out of Borough visits take place regularly to ensure that children and young people in settings outside of Swindon are receiving quality and targeted support.

What we will do next:

- Continue to embed Core Standards and good practice across all settings in education, health and care
- Identify areas in which additional capacity can be created, including both special school places and clinic spaces.
- Further develop our community support offer, to ensure that children and young people with SEND have the opportunity to engage in non-education focused activities (such as short breaks and activity groups).
- Further exploration into Alternative Provision in Swindon is underway, in response to the Department for Education's recent green paper on Alternative Provision and SEND.

Priority 2: We will make sure that we all work together within the community to plan services, and provide support to children and young people.

All organisations within Education, Health and Care have vital roles in ensuring that children and young people with SEND receive the support that they need. Joint working allows us to better make sure that support is tailored to the individual, and is provided in a timely and rounded manner.

Partnership working is key, and should be considered as a foundation for all other priorities to be achieved. Ensuring that all bodies are represented in strategic (such as SEND Strategic Partnership Board) and operational (such as SEND Panel) decision-making forums, is a vital part of this, as it allows for the improving children and young people's outcomes to be considered from all perspectives.

In response to our consultation, you told us that you wanted:

'Continued closer working between social care, health and education.'

'Departments that communicate with each other, transparency'

What we have done so far:

- Developed a number of boards, forums and panels including professionals across Education, Health and Social Care, as well as representatives from our local parent-carer forum (SSFV) and children and young person representatives. This includes (but is not limited to):
 - o The SEND Strategic Partnership Board
 - o Joint Funding Panel
 - o Strategic Inclusion Forum
- Worked with the local Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCO) and SENCO Champions to improve practice within education in Swindon.
- Implemented robust quality assurance processes across SEND provisions.
- The creation of the Integrated Care Alliance (ICA) in partnership with Bath & North East Somerset and Wiltshire, to improve healthcare across the Local Area.

What we will do next:

- Continue to work with the local parent-carer forum, children and young people when identifying, commissioning, planning and reviewing services.
- Work together to ensure that SEND is everyone's business, and support is provided to children, young people and families in all aspects of their lives.
- Report on the progress of key lines of work to central boards and forums, to ensure all organisations are informed of developments – information that can then be provided to families.

Priority 3: We will make sure that we do everything we can to help children and young people with SEND achieve their goal, ambitions, and prepare for the future to live happy and fulfilling lives.

Children and young people with SEND are at the heart of everything that we do as SEND professionals. We plan to continue to listen to what individuals want for their lives, and support them to achieve and succeed through early intervention and continued support.

In response to our consultation, you told us that you wanted:

'More Young People with SEND in employment when they reach adulthood. This therefore means they are in education to achieve qualifications.'

'Real job opportunities to enable young people to have realistic goals and a sense of achievement.'

'For neurodivergent children and adults to be accepted and able to live a full happy life, for our voices to be heard.'

What we have done so far:

- Swindon Borough Council have used capital funding to provide additional accessibility provisions to schools throughout the borough, including sensory rooms, shepherds' huts and lifts.
- Planning Live has helped with directing young people during the transition to adulthood within educational settings, and work is taking place to introduce this approach elsewhere.
- The successful implementation of the attendance strategy is providing further support to families to improve attendance and educational outcomes.

What we will do next:

- Work continues with schools to ensure that the medical needs of children and young people are being met whilst they are in education.
- Further develop post-16 and transition to adulthood support to ensure that young people with SEND have the same opportunities as their non-SEND peers in terms of work, and life, experiences - and that they receive the support that they need in order to transition successfully.
- Continue to celebrate the successes of children, young people and families with SEND, and the professionals working with them through community communications (such as newsletters).
- Improve collaborative working across children and adult service to ensure that individuals with SEND have the tools to live fulfilling adult lives.

Priority 4: We will make sure we are delivering consistently timely, high quality and effective Education Health and Care Assessments, reviews and plans.

The statutory 20-week timescale is in place to ensure that all children and young people receive the support that they need to thrive in a timely manner, and to reduce any negative implications of not having support for prolonged amounts of time.

Work is always taking place to improve practices within the statutory assessment and annual review processes, and to ensure that named provision within EHCPs is tailored and delivered.

In response to our consultation, you told us that you wanted:

'Increased recruitment and retention of key roles within the workforce to make the SEND system run smoothly and to avoid overloading professionals.'

'I hope EHCP (education health care plan) for SEN children aren't such a battle for parents that the process could be looked at and made a more simpler process with less waiting times and shorter time scale of achieving an outcome'

What we have done so far:

- The EHCP and Annual Review Quality Assurance tool Invision 360 has been implemented to improve the quality of plans. Swindon continues to audit new EHC Plans as 'good' at a much higher rate than nationally – as of August 2022:
 - o Swindon graded 79.9% of EHC Plans as good.
 - o Nationally 43.5% of EHC Plans are graded as good.
- Implemented robust processes for consultations.
- Worked towards ensuring that advice is being written and collated within a timely manner.
- Implemented quality assurance frameworks for advice writing.
- Re-structured the Statutory SEND Service to include dedicated statutory hubs (Assessment, North Review, South Review, Preparing for Adulthood).

What we will do next:

- Continue to quality assure advice, plans, and annual reviews, to ensure that EHC Plans provide meaningful recommendations and support.
- Work together to ensure an all-inclusive approach to EHC Plans is taken, including ensuring representation from all areas at key decision-making points (such as SEND Panel) and whilst quality assuring / auditing EHC Plans.
- Explore further Swindon's levels of Mediation and Tribunal requests, and work towards reducing these so that children and young people receive the right support, at the right time.

Priority 5: We will make sure that accurate and accessible information is readily available to children, young people and their families, including transparency around key decisions.

Making sure that children, young people and families have accurate, and accessible information is vital in ensuring that informed decisions can be made. Whilst this has been something we have been collectively working on over the past three years, feedback shows that you feel as if we should be prioritising this more – and so we've added it as one of our 6 priorities.

In response to our consultation, you told us that you wanted:

'Information easier to find and more provisions for over 16'

'If there are good services etc out there it is not known or information or not shared wide enough'

'Lack of transparency around decisions around specialist provision for young people and families.'

'Everything takes such a long time. Support isn't well advertised or well communicated to parents.'

What we have done so far:

- Continual development of the Swindon Local Offer, to ensure that families have easy access to key information.
- Undertaken an audit of the Swindon Local Offer (ongoing), to ensure that the information stored on the website is relevant, accessible and up-to-date.
- Developed the SEND Service letters to ensure that the information provided within them is relevant, accessible and up to date.
- Annually review and update the 'Continuum of Provision'; a document that provides information on the specialist settings in Swindon.

What we will do next:

- Continue to develop, build upon and review the Swindon Local Offer.
- Continue to publicise the Local Offer, to ensure that children, young people and their families, as well as professionals within the borough are aware of what the resource has to offer.
- Develop how we communicate with children, young people and their families to ensure that the information we're providing is relevant and accessible.

Priority 6: We will make sure that we work towards financial stability for SEND, to ensure we can continue to provide support in the years to come.

Financial stability and sustainability for SEND is vital in ensuring that we are able to continue to provide support for children, young people and families with SEND in Swindon in the years to come.

In response to our consultation, you told us that you wanted:

'More funding.'

'Easier and timely access to funding when needed.'

'Stability in terms of the provision, funding, staffing, how EHCP's are put together, reviewed and monitored.'

What we have done so far:

- Successfully applied for grants from central Government to provide additional support for children, young people and families in Swindon.
- Identified a shared commitment across the local area to addressing key issues around financial stability, and ensuring statutory processes are efficient.
- Working together to ensure best value, and effective use, of the financial resources available to support children, young people and families with SEND in Swindon.

What we will do next:

- Continue to review funding allocation across the SEND landscape to ensure that resources are allocated efficiently and to areas facing the highest pressure.
- Ensure decision making is robust, sustainable and supported by quality assurance processes, and that key decisions are shared across organisations and with the community.
- Monitor and publish performance data to demonstrate how we are managing, and which areas require additional development.



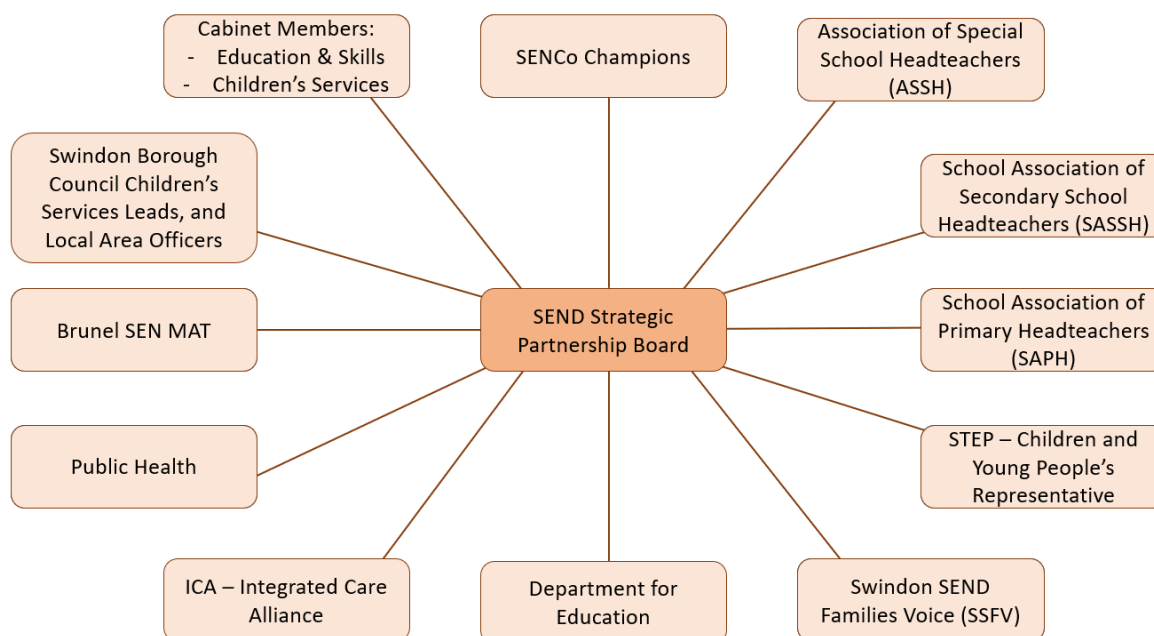
Artwork provided by the children and young people working with STEP

How will we do this? How will you know it's working?

Making sure that we do things the right way is equally as important as doing them, and so a range of robust systems are in place across and within key partners / organisations to make sure this happens.

Our Governance and Partnership Arrangements

In order to ensure that we are working together to improve outcomes for children, young people and families with SEND, the SEND Strategic Partnership Board meets 6 times a year to set out area outcomes, ambitions, and expectations to engage key partners with ongoing work. This board links a range of important groups to make sure that SEND is everyone's business, and that all work considers any potential impact on children, young people and families with SEND.



Parent-carers (SSFV), as well as children and young people representatives (STEP), are also members of the SEND Strategic Partnership Board. This ensures that the ideas and views of children, young people and families are a part of all decisions made within the Local Area, and provides an outlet for key partners to receive feedback from these groups.

It is important for the Board to understand the strengths and weaknesses across the Local Area. At the meeting, SEND data is presented on a scorecard to further hold partners accountable, as well as to compare Swindon with the rest of the country to better understand our progress. The most up to date data is used to allow members to scrutinise and monitor progress, to help identify gaps and propose potential methods of improvement.

More information on Strategic Decision Making within Swindon can be found on the Local Offer Page Titled 'Strategic Decision Making, which can be found through the link below:

[Swindon Strategic Decision Making](#)

This page provides information on:

- Opportunities to get involved, and how you can be a part of them.
- How the wider SEND community is involved within strategic decision making.

Appendix

In this section you will find the links to all of the legislation mentioned, as well as some useful links for children, young people and families with SEND.

Legislation

[The Children and Families Act \(2014\), Part 3](#)

[The Equality Act \(2010\)](#)

[The SEND Code of Practice \(2015\)](#)

[The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2013](#)

Useful Links

[The Swindon Local Offer](#)

[STEP Swindon](#)

[Swindon SEND Families Voice \(SSFV\)](#)

[Swindon SIAS \(SEND Information, Advice and Support Service\)](#)



Artwork provided by the children and young people working with STEP.