SPECIALIST PLACE PLANNING STRATEGY 2022- 2027

SANDWELL MBC

Contents

Introduction	2
Meeting the educational needs of children with SEND	3
The rising demand for specialist places	4
Early Years Provision	7
Provision for children/young people with autism	9
Provision for children/young people with SEMH	11
Provision for children / young people with severe learning difficulties	13
Post 16 and Post 19 provision	14
Summary	15
Appendix 1 – Capital and revenue cost	16
Annendix 2 – Complex Communication and Autism Team expansion	17

Introduction

The aim of the Sandwell SEND Specialist Place Planning Strategy is to ensure that there is sufficient capacity within our Sandwell schools, so that children with more complex Special Educational Needs & Disabilities have access to high quality provision.

Our **vision** for children and young people in Sandwell with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is that they will be able to:

- Achieve their aspirations for a healthy ordinary life through meaningful employment and fulfilling relationships within the community of their choosing.
- Have choice and control over decisions about their health, education, employment, friendships and relationships.
- Successfully participate in the community and access meaningful occupation, employment and life-long learning opportunities.

We have high aspirations for all our children and young people and want to ensure they have the **right support**, that is provided in the **right place** and at the **right time** so that they can thrive and be the best they can be.

Sandwell's SEND Strategy 2021 – 2025 outlines our priority areas (link to SEND Strategy here). The Specialist Place Planning Strategy reflects the outcomes of the workstreams identified by the following priority areas:

Quality Assurance of Statutory responsibilities: Ensure that a multi-service integrated approach is used when working with children/young people and their families to identify their needs and aspirational outcomes and provide the support required in a timely manner.

Workforce Development: To ensure that we have a well-led and properly supported multi-agency workforce development programme so that the whole workforce have the knowledge and skills to support children and young people with SEND to reach their potential and realise their ambitions.

Improving Provision: To promote alignment, collaboration and creative solutions across all services in the Local Area to make best use of available resources so that children and young people can be supported locally to achieve their aspirations.

Improving Progress and Attainment: To identify and address key improvements in Sandwell that will help ensure children and young people are able to achieve their best possible

educational outcomes leading to meaningful occupation, employment and life-long learning opportunities.

Based on these principles we will strategically plan based on evidence of what is required now and in the future to provide a flexible continuum of support that will:

- Focus on local resources to enhance the total provision so that children and young people can be supported in or close to the community where they live.
- Ensure families report that there is a good and appropriate local choice for children and young people in all but the most exceptional cases
- Ensure that there are sufficient mainstream and specialist school places to meet the forecast demand and achieve best value for money

The specialist place planning strategy is informed by evidence-based analysis of need and demography which has forecasted the number of specialist places to 2027. This data has also been used to predict the impact on the High Needs Block finances.

Meeting the educational needs of children with SEND

Our vision for all children in Sandwell with SEND is that they will have their needs met within a range of inclusive provision available through our mainstream schools, specialist resources bases (Focus Provision) and SEN Units and special school provision.

Children with SEND will have access to a high quality, broad and balanced differentiated curriculum which holistically supports their education, health and social care needs.

This strategy looks at meeting the demand for specialist school places in Sandwell, however this demand cannot be viewed in isolation.

We need to further develop a continuum of provision, with a focus on further enhancing inclusion within mainstream provision yet having a sufficiency of specialist places for our children/young people with the most complex needs.

The government has recently published DfE SEND and AP Review and Green Paper proposals.

The review has identified 3 key challenges facing the SEND and Alternative Provision system.

- 1. Navigating the SEND system and alternative provision is not a positive experience for too many children, young people and their families.
- 2. Outcomes for children and young people with SEND or in alternative provision are consistently worse than their peers across every measure.
- 3. Despite the continuing and unprecedented investment, the system is not financially sustainable.

We believe that this strategy will be in-line with the governments Green Paper on how

they will address issues and modify established practice implemented by SEND Reforms in 2014. This strategy will require updating once the national consultation within the Green Paper is complete and any resulting changes to the SEND Code of Practice (2015) are completed.

The focus on inclusive schools, collaborative partnerships and increasing local provision to meet the needs within our community is a shared vision within the strategy.

Sandwell Continuum of Provision

In recent years our C/YP have been presenting with increasingly complex needs. Currently the most prevalent needs for C/YP with EHC Plans are autism spectrum disorder (ASD), speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), social emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH), Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD).

Our challenge is therefore to support and further develop the existing inclusive practice of our mainstream schools whilst commissioning sufficient additional specialist places for those with the most complex needs. We are bound by a strong community ethos through our networks and partnerships and it is imperative that we ensure best value in terms of outcomes for our C/YP.

Priority One

Inclusive mainstream schools where staff are trained and have the right resources to educate the majority of children and young people with SEND, including those with EHC Plans.

Priority Two

High quality, specialist places within our local communities for children / young people with the most complex SEND

Universally Available Offer.

This is the offer that all Sandwell mainstream schools will provide to pupils with SEND following the SEND Code of Practice. Universal provision forms the foundations for all other provision or support in schools, colleges and other settings and comprises of high quality teaching that is available to all. This includes strategies, resources and adaptations to the curriculum and environment.

This offer is then further personalised to support the specific needs of groups or individual children /young people through an effective identification, assessment and provision management cycle. This includes promoting high quality inclusive education for C/YP with more complex needs.

Focus Provision / SEN Units in Mainstream Schools

Mainstream schools with Focus Provision or resource bases receive additional funding to provide pupils with a higher level of support. Focus Provisions (FPs) support

children/young people with specified types of needs and have specialist support staff and equipment in place to do this. Most FPs have specific areas within school to discreetly teach the pupils according to their needs and expected outcomes. Pupil places with an FP are allocated by the SEN Team through either an EHCP needs assessment or Annual Review. The placement is agreed at Placement and Provision Panel, a panel of senior SEN officers and senior Inclusion Support staff (Education and Child Psychologists and Specialist Teachers).

This strategy seeks to increase the number of schools with Focus Provision / SEN Units so that there is sufficient FP resource with each learning community. This will support pupils with SEND to stay within the community where they live.

Special School

All pupils in Special School will have an Education Health and Care plan that requires very high level of specialist provision. Special Schools provide small classes and a peer group to support both learning and social and emotional development in a nurturing environment. They have highly personalised learning programmes taught by specialist staff with specialist resources.

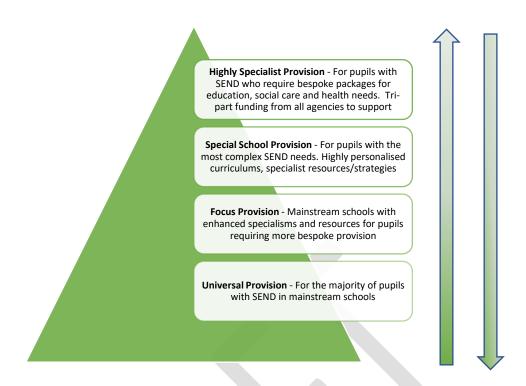
This strategy seeks to increase the number of Special school places for those children / young people with the most complex needs. We need to re-evaluate and review our Special School estate in order to ensure we have provision for the increasing complexity and holistic needs of complex children.

Going forward Sandwell needs to reduce its dependence on independent settings by creating additional provision; especially for children / young people where are current specialist settings are struggling to adapt to their increased level of need.

Highly Specialist Provision

A very small amount of children / young people will require highly specialist provision due to the severity of their education, health and care needs. These children / young people will probably require residential packages providing 24hr care and provision for 52 weeks in the year. These packages are tri-part funded through education, health and social care.

Our continuum of provision should use a flexible approach. Whilst most children and young people will continue to need specialist provision throughout their education, some children, through specialist intervention at the right time may require less specialist support as their independence grows.

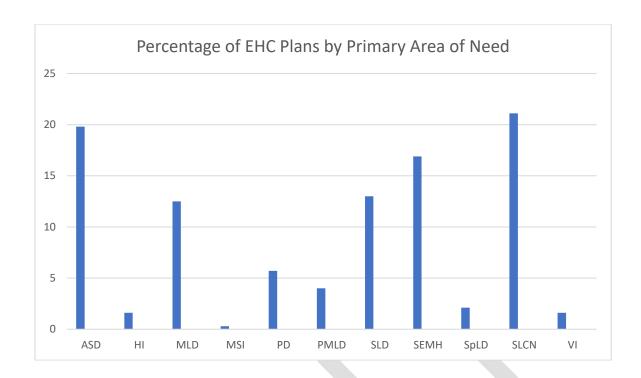


The Rising Demand for Specialist Places

Sandwell has seen a significant rise in the numbers of children and young people (C/YP) with SEN requiring additional support through an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan). Since the introduction of the SEND Reforms, the number has doubled and we currently maintain over 2850 plans for our young people. There has been a significant increase in requests for support since the return to school following Covid. If the current growth in population continues we predict that there could be an estimated 3500 C/YP with EHC Plan by 2025

Please see Appendix 1 for Sufficiency Data Analysis

It is also reported by schools and professionals that the level and complexity of the children's needs are also increasing. The Covid pandemic and the disruption to education and other services has had a negative impact on children/young people with SEND. There has been a significant increase in referrals to Inclusion Support and partners such as CAMHs, therapies and school nurses in order to meet the needs of our pupils. Currently the most prevalent needs for pupils with EHC Plans are autism spectrum disorder (ASD), speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), social emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) and Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)



The population of children and young people with EHCP has risen significantly in the last 2 years. An additional 500 children and young people have plans. Mainstream schools are struggling to meet the needs of the children / young people and there is a lack of capacity within Specialist settings. One new special free school for Secondary aged pupils with ASD and associated learning needs has opened within Sandwell in Sept 2021 and a new Primary aged free school for pupils with ASD will open in Sept 22. However, even with this increased capacity there will be a short fall in Specialist Provision going forward.

Sandwell Council has a duty to promote high standards of education, fair access to education and a general duty to secure sufficiency of school places. In addition, it must consider the need to secure provision for children with SEND, including the duty to respond to parents' representations about school provision. These are referred to as the School Place Planning Duties (S13-14 Education Act 1996).

Currently funding to support children and young people with SEND through the High Needs Block is not overspent. However, recent projections show that without significant increases, we will start to go into deficit soon if the forecasted rise in population of pupils with EHCPs continues. In the SEND and AP Green Paper, the government expresses concern that the current system is financially unsustainable. During the SEND and HNB review in December 2021, schools voted to fund the incremental increase of Specialist places to meet demand as a priority.

The DfE recently announced plans to provide Local Authorities with further capital monies for building works. This is to support accessibility and inclusion in mainstream schools as well increasing specialist places. Sandwell will be provided with:

- £4, 012, 902 2022 / 2023
- £4, 955, 529 2023 / 2024

The DfE has also announced a new round of applications for Local Authorities to bid for new Special Free Schools. LAs must enter the preliminary bids in July 2022. Our previous new free special schools took approximately 4-7 years to be built and open to children. A new special free school would be a long-term solution, however the authority still needs to support a specialist programme in the short-term to address immediate need.

Specialist Provision Forecasts 2022 – 2027

Figure 1 shows the rise in children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans and predicted increases to 2025. The forecast uses predicted general school population data and the average percentage increase of C/YP with an EHCP for the statutory school population and post 16 data. This data will need to be reviewed and updated each year, as it predicts the forecasted need through historical data sets which does not show a sudden surge in need and demand.

| 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2020 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 | 2020 |

Figure 1. Forecast for increases in Children / Young People with an EHCP

Figure 2. Projected Specialist Place requirements

The table below shows projected specialist placement requirement based on current percentages of pupils within specialist settings (33%) and predicted increases in the population of C/YP requiring an EHCP (Figure 1). These figures do not include independent specialist provision, mainstream schools in Sandwell with Resource Bases or Sandwell PRUs.

		2022	2023	2024	2025
Predicted number of pupils with EHCPs (upper + lower	lower	2632	2827	2995	3190
confidence bands)	upper	2826	3061	3263	3488
Predicted Specialist place requirements	lower	868	933	988	1043
(upper + lower confidence bands)	upper	933	1010	1077	1151
Planned places in Sandwell Special schools		791	845	899	899

Planned places in Focus Provision		212	232	242	242
Predicted shortfall in Specialist Places	lower	77	88	89	144
	upper	142	165	178	252

Currently the shortfall in Special school places in Sandwell is found within the independent sector. However, it is becoming increasing difficult to place children within this sector due to competition from neighbouring authorities and lack of capacity. The Local Authority cannot direct an independent school to take a child, even if they can meet their special educational needs.

By 2027, the planned extension of specialist places for students with ASD through the new free schools should be complete High Point Academy will offer a total of 90 places and Elm Tree Primary Academy will offer 126 places. The free school programme will offer much needed additional capacity.

Figure 3. Commissioned places within Mainstream Schools with FP and Special Schools

Designation	Focus Provision	Commissioned Places
	MAINSTREAM MAINTAINED	01/04/2022-31/3/23
ASD	Christ Church C.E. Primary	11
PD	Crocketts Lane Primary	12
ASD	Ferndale Primary	10
MLD	Galton Valley Primary	10
ASD	Grace Mary Primary	18
ASD	Great Bridge Primary	12
HI	Hargate Primary (HI)	12
SEMH	Hargate Primary (SEMH)	10
SEMH	St Martin's CE Primary	5
SLCN	Uplands Manor Primary	2
	St Michaels C.E. High (PD)	20
	Total	142
	MAINSTREAM ACADEMY	
	WAINSTREAM ACADEMI	
ASD	Devonshire Infant Academy)	5
ASD	Devonshire Junior Academy)	5
ASD	Ocker Hill Academy	10
ASD	Bristnall Hall High	25
	Wodensborough Ormiston	
ASD + HI	Academy	25

Total 70

Total FP Places 212

Designation	SPECIAL SCHOOLS	Places
200.8.101.011	SPECIAL SCHOOLS	
		01/09/2022
	Maintained	
	Orchard	147
	Meadows	215
	Westminster	241
	Westminster Specialist	
	Institution	10
	montanon	
	Academy	
		27
	Brades	37
	Shenstone	58
	Free Schools	
	High Point	70
	Elm Tree	18
		10
	Total	700
	Total	796

For a full data analysis for sufficiency planning please see Appendix 1

Early Years Provision

Context

Under 5's accounted for just 2% of the total number of Education, Health and Care Plans in 2021, in 2017 this figure was 5%. The percentage has decreased in the past 2 years which shows the impact of the pandemic and younger pupils not accessing nursery provision.

14.3% of new EHC Plans in 2021 were for pupils under 5, compared to 29.3% nationally. However, Sandwell, unlike other local authorities, will additionally fund EYS pupils without an EHC Plan through EYS Intervention Grant Funding from Nursery until the Easter term in their Reception year.

Feedback from Primary schools suggest that more resource should be allocated to the Early Years Sector to support identification and earlier applications for EHC statutory assessment when needed.

In total there has been a 138% increase in referrals to the Inclusion Support Early Years Team (ISEYS) this year (2022) compared to 2 years ago.

Currently of the 135 pupils known to ISEYS who will be transitioning into Reception in September 2022, 25 pupils have EHC Plans, 17 pupils have statutory assessments underway and 64 pupils have additional Early Years Intervention Grant Funding in place.

Currently children with SEN are supported within their early years settings with support from Inclusion Support Early Years Area SENCos and Development Workers. Specialist assessment "playgroups" have reconvened following the pandemic so that pupils with sensory needs, physical needs and complex communication needs can be observed and assessed by multi-agency teams.

There has been a large focus on multi-agency working and early identification and intervention through the CLASS strategy and the Early Years Transformation Programme (see below) with private day nurseries are becoming increasingly inclusive.

Private day nurseries also receive training on statutory SEN (SEND Code of Practice, EHCP applications, managing provision) as well as specific intervention strategies to support needs (e.g. SEMH, speech, language and communication)

At times children are referred into the Inclusion Support EYS service just before entering school. Mainly this is due to new children entering the area, however the Covid pandemic has impacted on the number of late referrals into the service for children already living within Sandwell.

Early Years Initiatives – Universal Provision

Early Years Transformation Academy

Currently pre-school children with additional needs are supported by multi-agency teams through the child development centre at Coneygre Centre in Tipton. Multi-agency teams, including Community paediatricians, Speech and Language, Physio and Occupational therapists as well as health visitors have worked together through the Early Years Transformation Academy to look at further developing provision. There has been a specific focus on development of Speech, Language and Communication skills within the pre-school cohort, as data shows that our children require additional support to develop. This will supplement the work of the CLASS strategy (Communication, Language and Social Skills) and the Early Years Transition Plus Pathway that has already been established. It will enhance the universal offer to all children within PVI settings using the WELLCOM assessment at 18 months and providing targeted intervention for pupils who need "the watchful eye" to improve their Language and Communication skills. 18 Libraries have also received training in language development to extend support through additional play groups. A Speech and Language Therapist has joined the Health Visiting Team to provide earlier identification and support for intervention as early as possible.

Early Years Multi Agency Assessment (MAA) Pathway and Autism Education Trust Training

Through joint working with health colleagues Sandwell has also implemented an Early Years Multi-Agency Assessment pathway to support earlier diagnosis of autism differences. 35

pre-school children received a diagnosis last year with a further 100 on the pathway for assessment.

Inclusion Support Early Years Team are trained to deliver accredited Autism Education Trust training to private day Nurseries. The roll out of the training "Making Sense of Autism" will start in the Summer Term 2022. This will help develop the skills of the early years workforce.

Early Years Well-Being Charter Mark

Public Health are currently funding the pilot of the Well-Being Charter Mark for early years settings. The successful schools charter mark has been revised and piloted to support a whole setting approach to mental health and well-being for very young children and nursery staff. This will establish a universal bench-mark for good practice in Early Years settings.

Covid Funding

Covid funding has supported a small refurbishment of the Child Development Centre at Coneygre Centre. This has provided additional areas for clinics and playgroups by creating multi-functional spaces.

Additional funding has also been used to temporarily increase staff capacity to help mitigate the significant rise in referrals. Two further Early Years Development Workers have been employed as well as a Family Support Worker for children who have hearing loss to support language and play skills in the family home

Future Universal Provision

0-5 CAMHS Service

Commissioners in the CCG have announced that they will fund a 0-5 CAMHs Service for pre-school children with Social and Emotional difficulties. Referrals will be through the IS EYS team and further the work already established at the Coneygre Centre.

Family Transformation Hubs

Funding has been gained to create Family Hubs at 7 children centres across in town localities across Sandwell. The Family Hubs will use an Early Years model of multi-agency working but widen the age range so that all children are included. Key activities will include:

- Development of one single family offer across the full age range, promoted through a
 communications campaign and branding. Information will be available online,
 through social media and leaflets. Local portals will be revised to reflect the single
 offer and provide digital access to services. Impact of branding and communications
 will be evaluated.
- Redesign of further pathways: initially, the Health Pregnancy Pathway.
- Continuation of work to identify opportunities for integrated working, co-location, multi-agency teams, data sharing and aligning of ICT systems, drawing on best practice from the Early Years and Child Development Centre, which has very effective integrated working with health visiting and school nursing.

- Analysis of user and service data will be improved to ensure hubs are reaching vulnerable families and this will inform outreach.
- Partnership working will be strengthened, drawing on models of systems leadership to obtain buy-in, improve relationships and embed cultural change.
- The hub offer will be broadened through work with the voluntary sector, mental health services, debt and housing advice.
- Town-based Prevention Networks, co-chaired by Targeted Early Help and Children centres to promote preventative work, currently include education, police and voluntary sector, but will be broadened to include children's social care.
- Family hubs will align to the new children's social care locality model to strengthen transitions.

The new family hubs model will comprise:

- 7 physical family hubs based on core children's centres.
- An eighth specialist SEND hub (the current Early Years Child Development Centre).
- A ninth midwifery hub based at The Hawthorns/Football Stadium.
- Both SEND, and midwifery will provide outreach into children's centres, and children's centres will provide outreach of a broader range of services into specialist hubs.
- Flexible outreach in community venues such as schools, libraries, community centres and voluntary agencies based on demand and community need.
- A virtual offer, building on Covid experiences of what works, but remaining mindful of safeguarding requirements and digital poverty.
- Key staff across all hubs trained in the 'one single offer' who support families to access services, signposting, arranging meetings and facilitating face to face handovers where appropriate.

Extension of Universal Provision - Inclusion Support Early Years Service into School Nurseries / Reception

Primary Head Teachers have requested that the current Inclusion Support Early Years Service includes early years pupils who attend school nurseries and Reception classes. This would support greater early identification and intervention as pupils start their statutory education. The team would also further support schools and nurseries to help individual children transition into full time education.

This would be achieved by an expansion of the current team by an additional Area SENCO, 4 early years development workers and additional specialised Education and Child Psychology Support. This would cost approximately £250,000 which would be funded through the high needs block.

Future Specialist Provision

Once Elm Tree Special Primary Academy are established on their new site (Sept 2023), the new facilities at Connor Education Centre for EYS/ KS1 children will become vacant. This will provide opportunities to develop further provision within this age range. This could provide

a second child development centre in different part of the borough to meet the needs of pupils.

Provision for pupils with ASD

Context

There has been a significant rise in the population of pupils diagnosed as having autism differences. ASD and Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) are the primary areas of need in the majority of EHCPs (ASD 19.8% and SLCN 21.1%). Despite the Early Years Multi-Agency Assessment pathway being implemented, there was a further 264 school aged pupils requiring multi-agency assessments of school aged children last year. This figure is expected to rise to approximately 300 this year.

Over the past 5 years Sandwell has opened 3 new Focus Provisions for pupils with ASD within mainstream primary schools and significantly increased another existing provision. This has resulted in an additional 44 places. However even with these additional places, there is very little capacity to meet the growth in demand. Individual ASD FPs have increased by 2 or 3 places over commissioned numbers to support the LA in meeting the rising demand.

C/YP with autism differences are also educated within Sandwell Special Schools.

The research showed that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the challenges many of our autistic children and young people already faced, such as social isolation and anxiety. Many of our autistic children and young people have been communicating their anxiety through their behavioural responses. Despite things returning to a 'more ordinary' school life, some of our autistic young people have continued to feel distressed, fraught, anxious and unsafe. These are the young people that need extensive planning and preparation for transition and change. Many of them had to try to adapt to new rooms, new staff and in some cases, new schools, without this robust pre-preparation. Schools have struggled to keep the young person, their peers and staff safe, meaning increases in requests for change of provision and the threat of permanent exclusion.

<u>ASD Initiatives – Universal Provision</u>

Autism Education Trust (AET) Training

Inclusion Support (Complex Communication and Autism Team and Inclusion Support Early Years) have become accredited trainers for AET training. Making Sense of Autism training will be free to all schools through Learning Communities and Nursery settings within the Summer Term 2022/ Autumn Term 2022. We plan to provide all schools and settings opportunities to become accredited Autism friendly. Further specialist training and higher levels of accreditation will be available to individual schools, groups of schools and learning communities on request.

Sensory Difference Pilot

NHS Charitable Trust and Education Directorate have jointly commissioned a pilot to support Sensory Processing Difference using the partnership for change model. The model looks at supporting pupils and families by using a tiered approach. Universal support will provide training opportunities to all to schools and parents on Sensory Processing. Targeted support will be through auditing classroom environments and observing pupils within pilot schools and providing whole class strategies and group intervention to support pupils with their sensory learning. Individual support will be for identified pupils within target school who require a more detailed sensory assessment, strategies and advice. Pilot schools are a mix of both Secondary and Primary and data from the Complex Communication and Autism Team and Occupational Therapy is used to identify schools with possibly high numbers of pupils with difficulties. Impact data from the pilot will be used by both agencies to inform future commissioning.

Covid Funding

Additional Covid funding has secured the temporary recruitment of two Specialist Teachers for Complex Communication and Autism and two additional Specialist Development Officers for the next 2 years. This will help to increase the capacity of the team in providing on-site support to schools for individual children/YP, implementing AET training and further support the multi-agency assessment for diagnosis.

Future Universal Provision

Head Teachers have requested that the Complex Communication and Autism Team is permanently increased to meet the rising numbers of children with ASD / social interaction difficulties. The team are part of the Multi-Agency Assessment process for diagnosis, and therefore are currently a needs lead service. Head Teachers have requested that the CCAT Team move to a school allocation model, however to ensure that work continues additional time would need to be dedicated to the diagnostic pathway. Further capacity would not only support individual pupil casework, but would also support the development of good practice throughout the LA through additional training opportunities and quality assurance of existing and future ASD provisions. Please see Appendix 2 for a full business case.

As stated above a temporary increase of the team is currently being funded to Sept 2024 through Covid funding.

The cost of expansion of the team would be approximately £283,000 whilst Covid funding is in place and then £649, 596 thereafter This expenditure would be through agreement of schools and schools forum through the HNB.

Future Provision

Special Free Schools

The LA have commissioned the opening of 2 new special free schools within Sandwell to meet the rising need of pupils with ASD and associated learning difficulties. High Point Academy opened in September 2021. It has been agreed that the school will gradually fill places over 3 years until full. The school has capacity for 90 pupils from Yr.7 to Yr.11.

Currently school has provision for Yr.7 to Yr.9. Last year school went over numbers in Yr.7 to accommodate need, this year the Yr.7 cohort is full.

Elm Tree Special Primary Academy is due to open in Sept 22. Due to delays in the construction of the new school, the DfE has funded the refurbishment of an alternative site at Connor Education Centre so that school can open with its first cohort (18 places for Rec/Yr. 1 aged pupils). Elm Tree Primary Academy will also progressively fill their places over the next 4 years.

All pupils have significantly been impacted upon due to the Covid pandemic and the resulting lockdowns. Schools and other professionals are reporting that more C/YP with autism are displaying associated challenging behaviours. This is clearly signalling the need to provide more specialist places at the right time.

The table below (Figure 4) shows how High Point Academy and Elm Tree Primary Academy will fill to their capacity over time. It also shows the number of additional specialist places.

Figure 4. Free school population growth and additional specialist places by year

	2021 / 2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
High Point Academy	38	72	92		
Elm Tree Primary		18	54	90	126
Special Academy					
Total additional		56	58	36	36
places combined					

Increase in Focus Provision / SEN Units for ASD pupils

Currently, not all towns have mainstream primary schools with a focus provision or SEN unit for pupils with ASD. It is proposed that additional focus provisions are established within West Bromwich Central and Wednesbury learning communities so that children in each locality have opportunities for this provision closer to their home.

Provision for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties

Context

Currently there is 1 special school for SEMH in Sandwell offering 95 places for KS2 – KS4 across 2 sites. The primary site is in Staffordshire whilst the Secondary site is in Oldbury. The Primary site was expanded in 2020 through SEND Capital funding to increase by 10 places. However, there is currently a large percentage of pupils on the primary site are from other local authorities. The primary site has retained a cohort of Yr.7 pupils as they cannot be accommodated on the Secondary site.

The site also has a residential facility, which is open from Monday – Thursday. Some pupils will stay between 2-4 nights a week. The cost of a full-time residential placement was £59,550 per pupil in addition to the cost of their day placement in school. Currently the LA

pays £200,000 to school as part of a stabilisation fund, this provides 4 full time places in residence.

The Secondary site within Sandwell is a converted community centre and has limited classroom sizes and capacity to expand. Currently this site does not admit girls although the Primary site does. This makes it difficult to provide females who require specialist SEMH provision a place within Sandwell.

Many secondary aged students with SEMH difficulties requiring specialist places are placed within independent schools. Some of these schools are in or near Sandwell. The costs of these provisions vary however some are extremely expensive (£80,000 - £100,000 per year).

Sandwell also has 1 Primary aged SEMH Focus Provisions (10 places in total) and a primary aged Pupil Referral Unit (Primrose Centre). However, there is currently no similar Focus Provision within the secondary sector. This makes it difficult to transition some pupils who have made great progress with regulating their emotions so do not require special school but require additional therapeutic support during transition.

Albright Education Centre is Sandwell's home / hospital provision but also provides support to pupils with emotionally based school refusal and mental health issues such as anxiety. The provision was expanded in 2019/2020 to 50 places to provide support for KS2 children. The provision is also piloting a small Post 16 provision which is funded through dual registration with schools. Due to the increase in pupils who need additional support with their mental health there is now a waiting list for pupils to access the provision. The Centre moved to new premises in Tipton to support the further expansion of The Westminster special school in 2018, however they now have limited space to bring additional pupils onto site. They currently rent accommodation to support their Post 16 cohort.

Sandwell has a PRU for secondary aged pupils with sites located in Smethwick, Wednesbury, West Bromwich and Tividale. Currently the PRU are part of the AP Task Force project funded by the DfE. They have received additional funding to support the development of multi-agency teams such as Speech and Language Therapy, Mental health support, attendance teams and post-16 advisers to provide holistic support to their vulnerable cohort. The project will be reviewed next year.

Initiatives – Universal Provision

Senior Mental Health Leads and Whole School Approaches

Following the return to school, there has been a large emphasis on emotional health and well-being. Sandwell has a well-established whole school approach through the Well-Being Charter Mark which has currently been awarded to 83 schools. Schools are also taking the opportunity of grant funding provided by the DfE to train staff to become a Senior Mental Health Leads.

Mental Health Support Teams

36 schools are also supported through Mental Health Support Teams, with an identified Education Mental Health Practitioner (EMHP) to work in school providing evidence based psychological intervention to pupils with mild to moderate mental health needs. Further schools will be included in Wave 7, expanding the programme. The EMHP will work with the education and child pyscholistst and school staff to strengthen whole school approach and targeted intervention to support mental health and well-being.

The Link Programme

School representatives are also working with multi-agency partners including CAMHs, Reflections Teams, Community Organisations, Early Help and Inclusion Support through the Link Programme. This programme aims to deliver sustainable change in the delivery of children and young people's mental health services through building better understanding and communication and sharing good practice

Trusted Adult Training

Schools and the wider workforce can still access Trusted Adult Training

Covid Funding

Additional Covid monies (£1 million) has been given to selected Volunteer and Community groups to provide support to children and families with their mental health within their local area. The impact of this funding is being monitored through the Thrive Board. Provision to support Mental Health can be found on Sandwell Family Life website.

www.sandwallfamilylife

Funding has also been given to temporarily extend the Preventing Primary Exclusions team to support schools and add an additional Assistant Educational Psychologist.

Future Initiatives – Universal Provision

Emotion Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

Currently the EP team are researching and developing a training programme for schools to understand and support pupils with EBSR. A small pilot is taking place. The training will be launched across schools in September 2022.

Behaviour Recovery and Trauma Informed Behaviour Policies

Currently a steering group of schools, Inclusion Support and Primrose Centre staff are reviewing and refreshing the Behaviour Recovery whole school approach. This is to include support for children with more complex SEMH/SEND needs using Trauma Informed, relational and restorative approaches. The reviewed model and guidance on Trauma Informed Behaviour Policies will be ready for further roll out to schools in September 2022

Future Specialist Provision

Shenstone Lodge / Brades Lodge

The LA is working with Manor Academy Trust to extend the Brades Site using a stand-alone 8 classroom block. This will add a significant amount of capacity to the school as it will almost double the available teaching and learning space. Place numbers will increase year on year over the next 3 years in agreement with the Trust and LA. School will be able to teach Yr. 7 on-site, releasing capacity at the Shenstone site for more primary school places. The new site will also enable girls to be taught at Brades.

A smaller 10 place extension will be place for September/October 2022 in order to accommodate some of the current Yr.7 and Yr.8 cohorts.

The LA will also begin a consultation with parents, residents and schools to determine the future need for the residential places for KS2 pupils at Shenstone Lodge. This would provide additional space to reconfigure the school site.

SEMH Focus Provision – Primary and Secondary

The LA plans to open further focus provision / resource based for pupils with SEMH needs. As previously stated, a provision for secondary pupils is required to support the transition of Yr.6 leaving our current FPs who will still need enhanced additional support but do not require a special school place.

Additional Mental Health Provision

Albright Education Centre are currently experiencing a high amount of referrals since the return to school following the pandemic. The attendance and CmE teams are also reporting a higher level of C/YP who are struggling to go back to school due to mental health issues. It is proposed that a further expansion is necessary to accommodate the rising needs of pupils within this area. A suitable alternative site will need to be found to accommodate any increase in numbers, as there is limited physical capacity in the current building.

Provision for pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties, Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties and Moderate Learning Difficulties

Sandwell has 2 special schools for severe learning difficulties and complex needs. The Orchard Special School is a 147-place school for primary aged pupils, whilst Meadows Special School is a 215-place school for Secondary / Post 16 aged pupils.

A new 3 classroom block has recently been built at Meadows Special School to increase place numbers by 18. However, even with this expansion the capacity for the school is tight. The school has space for all pupils to transition from Orchard in future years based on current numbers, however does not have further capacity to take additional pupils identified from mainstream schools.

The Orchard Special School has limited capacity to grow on-site. It has been expanded in the past and any further expansion will encroach on playground space. Currently the LA are discussing solutions for storage of large equipment needed by the children within the school as this is becoming increasingly problematic.

Currently primary and secondary aged pupils with SLD/ASD/PMLD are the hardest to place, as capacity within the independent sector is tight and very expensive (£60,000 to £120,000 per place). The LA will try to avoid sending children out of borough where at all possible.

The Westminster Special School caters for pupils with MLD and other associated needs. Their cohort has changed over recent years as children / young people with more complex learning needs and ASD are being admitted. The school was expanded in 2018 / 2019 as it took over the adjoining Whiteheath building to establish a new Post 16 provision. This was to develop their supported internship programme. Numbers could increase to 250, however this is dependent on students being able to access supported internships

School has recently embarked on setting up a pilot programme for Post 19 pupils to access supported internships. This is through the establishment of a specialist independent college or SPI. Currently the SPI only takes 10 pupils.

Future Specialist Provision

SLD SEN Unit

The LA is in discussions with a mainstream school to establish a new 20 place SEN Unit to cater for pupils with SLD and other associated needs. The planned provision is estimated to open in Sept/Oct 2022. This should relieve some of the capacity issues for pupils the Orchard School.

SLD / PMLD Secondary and Post 16 / 19 Provision

There is a need to create a Secondary Satellite school for pupils with SLD / Complex needs as there is limited capacity for the increasing number of pupils transitioning from mainstream primary settings where secondary mainstream would not be appropriate.

A new Post 16 / Post 19 provision for pupils with SLD is also being considered. This would free spaces within the Meadows schools for KS3 and KS4 pupils. The Post 16 / Post 19 provision would focus on life skills and creating independence for pupils with SEND who could not access the supported internship programme already established at the Westminster school.

International New Arrival SLD/PMLD Assessment Resource Base

Sandwell has created the STEPs Centre, to support pupils and their families who have recently arrived in the country. The STEPs manager co-ordinates multi-agency support for those pupils who may have social care, mental health needs, health and SEN needs. STEPs and the Education and Child Psychology team work closely together to identify pupils who may require additional support through an EHC Plan to enter mainstream education However, there are some pupils, with very complex needs, who require a specialist environment straight away in order to provide specialist opportunities for accessing education whilst education, health and social care colleague carry out assessment.

SLD / PMLD Free School Application (subject to approval)

The Local Authority are currently in discussion around submitting a bid to the next wave of Special Free Schools programme. This is currently not decided upon and would be subject to DFE approval.

Post 16 / Post 19 Provision

Context

Currently Sandwell has specialist provision for Post 16 and Post 19 pupils within Westminster and Meadows schools. As stated above, Westminster have piloted the SPI provision this year.

Wodensborough Ormiston Academy provide Post 16 provision for pupils (and others) who were accessing their Focus Provision pre-16. Albright Education Centre have also piloted a very small Post 16 provision this year for students who could not access mainstream college courses due to their anxiety / mental health difficulties.

Pupils with SEND also attend mainstream college courses with additional support. Sandwell College is currently our only local provider, however pupils with SEND access courses in colleges in the region (Halesowen, Dudley, Walsall)

As a local authority, we want to support as many young people with SEND as we can into further education or employment. With partners, we want to expand supported employment opportunities into different settings so more young people have access to vital support to succeed in the workplace.

Initiatives

Project Search

Project Search is an internationally recognised, best practice model for supporting young people into paid employment. Project Search will commence in Sandwell in September 2022 and is a partnership between the Local Authority, Project Search, the Westminster School and DPD. Initially the project will start with 8 students. The LA plan to expand the project in coming years to include students from different schools into the model.

SEND Post 16 Steering Group

A multi-agency Post 16 steering group has been established through the SEND Operations Group. The focus of the group is to identify gaps and support developments in preparing our young people for adulthood. The group have produced a pathway for young people and parents to support entering Post 16 education which has been published on the local offer. They are also focusing on promoting collaboration between schools and colleges to support transition.

Future Provision

Westminster SPI

A small pilot programme for Westminster SPI will be reviewed and decisions to take this forward as a permanent solution will be made. The SPI is focussing on supporting students into employment through supported internships.

Expansion of SLD Post 16/19 Provision

As stated above, suggested satellite provision to support independence and life skills for young people who would not access supported internship programme.

Summary

The LA proposes to use monies from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation Grant (HNPCA) and SEND Capital Grant to expand provision in the following ways (see chart below). If Sandwell is accepted onto the new special free school programme this will release capital in order to make further adaptations to mainstream schools to improve inclusion

The places for the new ASD free special schools have already been accounted for within the HNB budget. During the SEND Review in 2021, schools voted in favour of providing further specialist places. With the increase in funding announced for April 2022, the LA is in a better position to continue to further increase specialist provision going forward.

The chart below shows possible expansion opportunities, however not all have been agreed and ratified by schools' forum or cabinet.

The LA will continue to review funding and sufficiency each year and update future planning accordingly. Annual updates will be added to appendices of this strategy showing completed developments, sufficiency analysis and expenditure

Projected capital programmes

Provision	Location	Number of places	Capital Cost	Revenue cost	Expected completion date
EYS provision	Connor Education Centre	Based on referral	£20,000	Additional staffing costs Approx. 100,000	Sept 2023
Secondary Specialist Places	Brades Lodge, Oldbury	Phased implementation over 3 years TBA. Possible 50 places	Approx. £1,000,000 Academy Trust to pay contribution	10 places = 100,000 + 247, 370	First phase – January 2023 if planning/build agreed
Storage solutions – H & S	Orchard		Approx. £40,000		Sept 2022
SLD / SLCN SEN Unit	Uplands Manor Primary School, Smethwick	20	Approx. £250,000	20 places = 120,000 + 262,500	October 2022
SLD Satellite school	ТВА	30 – phased implementation	ТВА		2023 / 2024
Secondary SEMH FP / Mental Health Provision	TBA	10	ТВА	10 places = 60,000 + 131, 290	2023
Primary SEMH FP	ТВА	10	ТВА	10 places = 60,000 + 131, 290	2023
ASD Focus Provision / SEN Unit	ТВА	20	TBA	20 places 120,000+ 262,500	2023
INA SEND Assessment Provision	ТВА	10	ТВА	10 place – 100,000 + 132 500	2023

Appendix 2 - CCAT: 2021-22 and beyond

The trend of increasing learner complexity

The increase in numbers of children and young people with complex learning difficulties and disabilities (CLDD) is widely recognised by the Government,1 independent researchers, 2 academics,3 4 Ofsted5 and educators themselves.

Research commissioned by the Government in 2011 indicated year-on-year rises of 4-5 % in the numbers of young peope with severe and complex learning disabilities and formed the backdrop to the introduction of the Engagement Scales as well as establishing a definition of complex learning Complex Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

Children and young people with Complex Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (CLDD) have conditions that co-exist. These conditions overlap and interlock creating a complex profile. The co-occurring and compounding nature of complex learning difficulties requires a personalised learning pathway that recognises children and young people's unique and changing learning patterns. Children and young people with CLDD present with a range of issues and combination of layered needs – e.g. mental health, relationships, behavioural, physical, medical, sensory, communication and cognitive. They need informed specific support and strategies which may include transdisciplinary input to engage effectively in the learning process and to participate actively in classroom activities and the wider community. Their attainments may be inconsistent, presenting an atypical or uneven profile. In the school setting, learners may be working at any educational level.

The predictions in the 2011 national research describes our local picture, particularly when considering the autistic population. Lived experience, backed by data shows an exponential rise in the numbers of children and young people with autism and complex leaning needs with the demand for specialist support far outstripping capacity of both services and specialist places.

Trend data from July 2018 to July 2021 evidences the exponential rise in our autistic population. The rise in the number of CYP with an EHCP in mainstream illustrates the rise in complexity of need which is characterising our autistic population and creating a significant challenge for schools.

Comparison July 2018- July 2021

		Mainstream Primary	Mainstream Secondary	Special	Out of Borough Special	Out of Borough Mainstream
Jul-2018	EHCP	192	121	169	38	14
	Total EHCP and SENS	270	218	169	38	33
Total- 728						

		Mainstream	Mainstream	Special	Out of	Out of
		Primary	Secondary		Borough	Borough
					Special	Mainstream
Jul-2021	EHCP	368	177	213	58	27
	Total	574	305	213	58	45
	EHCP					
	and					
	SENS					
Total-						
1,195						
64%		112.5%	39.9%	26%	52%	36% increase
increase		increase	increase	increase	increase	

The Pandemic and aftermath has further exacerbated the issues of rising numbers and complexity of need. In the Summer 2020, the Government commissioned the Policy Innovation and Evaluation Research Unit at the London School of Economics to undertake rapid research to improve understanding of autistic people's experiences during the Covid period.

The final report from this study echoes our experience of the local impact on our autistic children and young people and their families.

The research showed that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the challenges many of our autistic children and young people already faced, such as social isolation and anxiety. Many of our autistic children and young people have been communicating their anxiety through their behavioural responses. This has often been very difficult for school colleagues to understand; despite things returning to a 'more ordinary', some of our autistic young people have continued to feel distressed, fraught, anxious and unsafe. These are the young people that need extensive planning and preparation for transition and change and many of them had to try to adapt to new rooms, new staff and in some cases, new schools, without this robust pre-preparation. Schools have struggled to keep the young person, their peers and staff safe, meaning increases in requests for change of provision. This has impacted right through the system, from CCAT's capacity to provide sustained specialist support and SEN's sourcing of specialist places. Every request for a change of provision needs considerable support for parents and an Annual Review with professional report. This against the backdrop of having tried to support school colleagues to stabilise the situation Many of our young people have anxieties borne out of worries, fears and perceptions about things which others might consider innocuous or trivial. There has been a rise in the number of young people experiencing crippling anxiety which is impacting significantly on their usual everyday routines and ability to participate in the community.

Our local experience mirrors the findings of the research study.

Service Delivery

Under Inclusion Support's service delivery model every school has an identified link officer from each of the professional groups.

CCAT specialist teachers have 3 core aspects to their role:

- 1. Casework model relating to the plan, do, review assessment cycle of the code of practice
- 2. Workforce development and training

3. Education lead for the Multi-Agency Assessment diagnostic pathway

Casework model relating to the plan, do, review assessment cycle of the code of practice The Pandemic occurred against a backdrop of a significant and year on year increase in the numbers of autistic young people and an increasing complexity of need. This has impacted the work of CCAT and further compounded by other factors arising from the local and national context including the drive for specialist places.

In 2021-22, CCAT specialist teachers have been supporting an average patch of 21 schools each.

Children and Young People are referred through to CCAT by the school delivery teams of Specialist Teachers for Learning or Social, Emotional and Mental Health, as well as Educational Psychologists, through an internal service mechanism called IS3. Although the IS3 referrals had remained steady at around 50, from 2018-19 to 2019- 20, there was a 25% increase and from 2019-20 to 2020-21 a 40% increase.

There was a total of 115 IS3 referrals in 2020-21; at the end of May 2022, the figure was 170 for the academic year 2021-22.

There are significant numbers of children coming through the early years with autism and complex learning needs. Generally, the greater number are supported through EIG requiring consideration of statutory assessment during the reception year. This does not include those children who are already in a school setting. CCAT carry caseloads in all year groups; these CYP need reviews, consideration of statutory assessment and specialist support.

87 YP with a diagnosis of autism will be starting in Y6 in our mainstream schools in September 2022. This represents a 33% increase from 2021-22. These young people need reviews, transition planning and a focus on preparation for adulthood.

During 2021-22 CCAT has been involved in over 40 annual reviews requesting a mid-key stage change of provision.

CCAT also has 2 primary specialist development officers who provide more intensive and direct support for school staff and the CYP they work with.

In October 2020, we established a key specialist development officer role in the secondary sector. This role has a focussed brief, to work intensively 'for as long as it takes' with young people who are not able to engage in their usual daily routines and participate in their community, including attending school, usually as a result of overwhelming social anxiety. The impact of the officer's work has been remarkable with increased community engagement by several young people including one young person who was able to attend school after three years at home. There has been a considerable and powerful impact on parents who feel empowered, supported and heard.

The Pandemic has contributed to a surge in demand for this intensive support which is beyond the capacity of a single officer.

The primary officers have had to dilute the amount and frequency of support to individual young people and the staff who support them to try to stabilise and maintain a greater number of school placements. Schools are reporting that they are unable to attract quality staff to work with their pupils and want specialist support at the right time.

It is important to reflect on the specialist skills of the CCAT team and the creative solutions employed by staff to support our autistic children which falls outside the remit of other services.

This includes holistic support spanning school and home to support with the establishment of routines and transitions between places.

CCAT have been supporting 5 schools with developing their own 'hub' provision for their young people who need a personalised and attuned curriculum in a small group setting.

One Primary School that is developing a hub provision was recently subject to an Ofsted Inspection and retained their status as a 'good' school.

'Leaders identify pupils' additional needs as soon as they become clear. They are ambitious for pupils with SEND and make sure they study the full curriculum. Staff have taken particular care to meet the complex needs of a group of pupils with autism spectrum disorder'.

Workforce development and training

In July 2021, the Government released the All Age Autism Strategy, including Children and Young People for the first time.

CCAT are leading on the development of the Strategy and aligning it with work already started in 2019 on the Adult Strategy commissioned through Changing Our Lives. CCAT provides both central training and bespoke training in individual or clusters of schools. This training has consistently been well evaluated at 98.7% good or better. In order to promote the concept of the whole workforce trained to at least a level of understanding and awareness, CCAT are co-ordinating training and development through an Autism Education Trust training hub. This is launching through the learning communities during the Summer term and beyond but has required significant team planning and training the trainer preparation. CCAT are also co-ordinating the inclusion of Early Years and Post 16 as well as the wider agency workforce. As an AET hub we are bound by key performance indicators which relate to training quality and number of participants.

Multi- Agency Assessment diagnostic pathway

Data over a 10-year period shows an increase in demand for and completion of, diagnostic assessments through the pathway. The pathway is an example of embedded multi- agency collaboration, based on an inclusive community ethos that autism is everyone's business.

Year	Number of assessments	% increase	Commentary
	assessifients		
2011-12	62		
2012-13	70		
2013-14	64		

2014-15	155	142	MAA Agencies committed to increasing number of assessments due to time well in excess of NAPC and NICE guidelines.
2015-16	162	4.5	
2016-17	172	6.1	
2017-18	183	6.3	
2018-19	197	7.6	
2019-20	222	12.6	
2020-21	264	18.9	
2021-22	Predicted around 300		

CYP referred onto the pathway have an assessment period, rather than being placed on a waiting list. NICE guidelines state that the assessment should be started within 3 months of the referral to the autism team. As Sandwell's MAA is a community-based model, the assessment is already underway at the point of referral with an aim to complete within 30 weeks.

Fractured attendance patterns of CYP and the restrictions placed on services during the Covid period, affected completion of MAA assessments. In 2019- 20, 80.6% of assessments were completed, rising to 82.1% in 2020-21, but this has caused a rolling surge with professionals completing postponed assessments as well as initiating assessments for and assessing new referrals.

Staffing

The School Delivery Model for the 3 of Inclusion Support's Professional Groups is based on a Time Allocation Model. Primary schools are allocated hours based on a graduated quintile system. Secondary schools currently receive a 'flat' allocation of hours, although a current consultation may see the introduction of a graduated model.

Mainstream Head teachers have indicated for CCAT to work a time allocation system. The CCAT team has historically been too small to run a time allocation model. Having secured additional temporary Covid money, two teachers have been recruited on 2-year fixed term posts. Temporary Covid money has also been secured for a year to extend a 0.8 FTE position to fulltime.

The following time allocation model is based on 8.0 FTE,

Phase	Rank	Hours
-------	------	-------

Secondary	Flat	50
Primary	Α	40
	В	38
	С	36
	D	34
	E	32

Increasing the CCAT team by 1.6 FTE specialist teachers as well as securing the 2 temporary posts would bring CCAT in line with the other teaching teams increasing time allocation capacity,

Phase	Rank	Hours
Secondary	Flat	65
Primary	A	60
	В	55
	С	50
	D	45
	E	40

Time allocation places all the capacity for service delivery through the schools which impacts on equality of access for all Children and Young People to the MAA Diagnostic Pathway.

Several factors suggest that capacity for the MAA Diagnostic Pathway should be commissioned separately to school delivery capacity;

- Parents have raised through their forums that they are unable to secure an
 assessment if it is not seen as a priority by the school. While CCAT has adjusted
 process to manage this, it would not be possible without capacity outside of school
 allocation
- CYP are referred onto the Pathway who attend non- mainstream or out-of-borough schools and settings or are EHE. None of these schools and settings form part of a time allocation model

Based on a notional average of 8 hours for an MAA, two additional specialist teachers would service the MAA Diagnostic Pathway without encroaching on the school delivery model

Following the promotion of an SDO internally, the Primary SDO team will be at full FTE of 3 in September 2022. An additional 4 FTE SDO would enable the provision of more intensive support and greater equity of access across the Learning Communities. 1 of these posts will be recruited on a temporary basis using Covid funding.

An additional Secondary SDO will be recruited on a temporary basis using Covid funding.

Costings

School Delivery

Staff	Cost £	Number	Total £
Specialist Advisory Teacher- Complex	61,110	1.6	97,776
Communication and Autism			
Specialist Advisory Teacher- Complex	61,110	2	122, 220
Communication and Autism- securing			
temporary posts from 09.24			
Specialist Development Officer- Complex	37,032	3- Primary	111,096
Communication and Autism			
Specialist Development Officer- Complex	37,032	1-Primary	74,064
Communication and Autism - securing		1-Secondary	
temporary posts from 09.24			

MAA Diagnostic Pathway

Staff	Cost £	Number	Total £
Specialist Advisory Teacher- Complex	61,110	2	122, 220
Communication and Autism			

Jane Campbell CCAT Team Manager

06.22