Gloucesteshire’s Joint Strategy for Children and Young People with Additional Needs, including Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) 2018-2021

ANNUAL REPORT
OCTOBER 2019
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1. BACKGROUND

In 2018 Gloucestershire County Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group produced the first joint strategy to set out the county’s vision to develop and provide services that achieve positive outcomes for children and young people (aged 0-25) with additional needs; including those with SEND.

THE STRATEGIC VISION

“Services from across education, health and care enable growth and development so that each child can thrive and reach their potential to become an independent, health and happy adult” remains as valid today as it was in 2018.

The purpose of this report is to provide an update following the first year of the strategy on the progress made to support children and young people with additional needs, and the direction of travel to come.
2. NATIONAL CONTEXT

Since the 2014 SEND reforms, there has never been so much national interest in support for children with SEND. Much of this stems from the extensive pressure on school funding and the council’s high needs budget, as well as that on other partner agencies - with 90% of local authorities forecasting an overspend in 2019. There has been much lobbying on this issue which relates to education funding not meeting the increasing demand for supporting children and young people with additional needs. In particular:

- There has been a significant rise in the number of children and young people requiring an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) which has increased by 47% nationally since 2015;
- Whilst the average proportion of excluded children has remained relatively stable at 0.1% of the school population, there is increasing concern about the rise in children who are electively home educated (estimated to have increased by 27% between 2017 and 2018);
- There is increasing necessity to use specialist provision in the independent sector; which now provides education for 5% of children and young people with an EHCP

Following the reforms, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) were commissioned to carry out Local Area SEND inspections to monitor progress in meeting the expectations of the Children & Families Act. Since 2016, 91 out of the 152 local authority areas have been inspected and half (45) have been given written statements of action based on inadequate support for children and young people with SEND in their area.
3. LOCAL CONTEXT

Whilst these challenges are reflected in Gloucestershire, we are in a better position than many local authority areas.

We had a positive Local Area SEND inspection in 2016, and in July 2019 we were identified by IMPOWER as the 7th highest performing area nationally in providing support for children with additional needs. We therefore have a strong base upon which we continue to build from.

In the past 18 months the number of children and young people with additional or more complex needs across education, care and health continues to rise. The below table shows the comparison of key data between 2017/8 and 2019:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017/18</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CYP people aged 0-17</td>
<td>124,799</td>
<td>127,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population under the age of 20</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children under 16 living in poverty</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CYP with Joint or Continuing Health Care Funding</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled CYP receiving LA services</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults (25+) with a long-term health problem or disability who have never been in paid employment</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in Need (per 10,000)</td>
<td>273.6</td>
<td>304.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children subject to a Child Protection Plan (per 10,000)</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in Care</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children excluded from school</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children home educated</td>
<td>1032</td>
<td>986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in school with an EHCP</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CYP with an EHCP</td>
<td>3518</td>
<td>3784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children receiving SEND support in school</td>
<td>12,016</td>
<td>12,372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EHCPs for children under 5</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following the ending of the previous Parent Carer Forum in April 2018, we are pleased that the new forum was established in July 2019 and work is already underway to ensure this important strategic relationship is developed so parent carers have a voice in determining the support for children and young people with additional needs in Gloucestershire.
4. PROGRESS AGAINST PRIORITIES MADE WITHIN THE STRATEGY

The following states the achievements to date and the intended next steps for delivery against each of the ten priority commitments made

**Priority 1**

A child or young person with additional needs will have their needs identified and met in a timely way

**We have:**

- Continued to raise awareness of additional needs and SEND across all services, focusing on effective use of the graduated pathway
- Increased opportunities for strong multi-agency working for the most vulnerable children with a clear governance structure through the JAN Management Board
- Introduced an Education Inclusion Service built on strong joint planning and working with Families First+
- Revised guidance for GPs, parents and schools on referral pathways into Paediatrician’s for diagnoses to ensure clear joint understanding
- Implemented the Health Notification Process to facilitate contact with all families of children aged under 5 years who have, or may have, SEND and reviewed the effectiveness of this
- Developed a pilot for an early intervention pathway for early years children who may be vulnerable to poor outcomes, especially around their language, communication and interaction
- Included contributions from the Family Information Service into decision-making in our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to ensure children referred to the MASH who have, or may have, SEND are identified and the appropriate support provided

**What’s Next:**

- Working with schools to find opportunities for diverting more resources into earlier stages of the graduated pathway (in the 2019/20 academic year)
- Developing health therapy toolkits for school professionals and parents to aid self help (in the 2019/20 academic year)
- Develop and publish an Early Help Practice Guide to provide guidance on assessment, the provision of early help and sources of support for practitioners (in the 2019/20 academic year)
Priority 2

Outcomes for children or young people with additional needs will be most effectively achieved by recognizing their needs as a whole and as part of their families, and integrating assessment and personalised care planning across education, health and social care.

We have:

- Developed a framework for ensuring children with complex medical needs can be supported in school and secured funding for additional community nursing capacity to train school staff
- Produced a guidance document for professionals to support early help activities
- Through the Quality Lead role, provided further training for education, health and care professionals to improve decision making and content of EHCPs
- Revised the EHCP template to ensure that provision (Section F) has greater quantification and specificity
- Introduced a ‘Team Around the School’ pilot in six areas of the county for multi-agency collaboration around groups of vulnerable children
- Introduced early help Team Around the Family/Child meetings for disabled children at the start and end of every episode to improve working together and shared plan ownership

What’s Next:

- Further integrating care and education discussions around individual vulnerable children to facilitate earlier identification and holistic planning (by December 2019)
- Further develop multi-agency outcome writing, decision making and quality assurance of plans (by April 2020)
- Develop community hubs for therapy services to be co-located and facilitate a more joined up approach to health assessments and interventions (by October 2020)
- Evaluate the ‘Team Around the school’ pilots to develop a best practice approach for work with schools across the county
Priority 3

Good outcomes for most children or young people with additional needs will be achieved in more universal settings where their needs can be met appropriately

We have:

• Reshaped our education specialist support services (i.e. Advisory Teachers and Educational Psychologists) to enable a greater focus on the diversity needed to support universal provision across different areas of the county
• Increased the number of education settings changing their environment and practice to achieve the Autism Quality Mark
• Started work with primary schools to develop ‘Local Inclusion Clusters (LInCs)’ to make best use of existing resources and more creative solutions to meeting needs
• Gained views on what ‘inclusion’ means to children, young people and their families
• Provided a range of training, support and advice to early years settings to enhance their inclusive practice – with 95% more children now able to access mainstream provision with additional support
• Improved the understanding of, and input to, the graduated pathway and EHCPs across education, health and care services
• Started a Community Engagement project with Post 16 providers to provide more meaningful and sustainable community placements for students who are isolated from their communities and have barriers to work
• Developed a Champions Network across education, social care and health professionals to improve understanding of SEND

What’s Next:

• Continued development of school locality working and education support services to meet the needs of children and young people better (in the 2019/20 academic year)
• Developing a countywide understanding of inclusion within schools (in the 2019/20 academic year)
• Reviewing information, advice and guidance across education, health and care to ensure that it clearly identifies where children and young people with additional needs should be able to access universal and targeted provision (by October 2021)
Priority 4

Children, young people and parents will be encouraged to be equal partners in developing plans, agreeing outcomes to be achieved and every effort made to seek their views to reflect the vital role parents/family play in supporting their child’s development

We have:

• Supported the creation of the new Parent Carer Forum
• Expanded the Restorative Practice pilot in schools to provide meaningful relationships for children and parents - enabling a more personalised approach
• Co-produced a draft additional needs engagement and participation strategy ready for consultation
• Ensured that EHCPs meet the NHS England criteria for a personalised plan
• Attended more annual reviews and actively encouraged the presence of the children or young person; or that their views are represented; challenging where their views, or that of their parents are unclear
• Increased the number of Participation Champions across education teams attending the Young Ambassador group alongside social care and early help colleagues to share good practice and learn from one another
• Continued the use of MOMO (Mind Of My Own) to capture the views of children and young people and recommissioned MOMO express targeted at children with additional needs

What’s Next:

• Implementation of the additional needs engagement and participation strategy (December 2019)
• Looking for consistent ways to monitor children’s and young people’s views on their progress and what is important to them, building on My Progress Chart tools (in the 2019/20 academic year)
• Developing a good practice toolkit for any review of plans within the graduated pathway for professionals, children and young people and their parents to ensure all have an equal voice (in the 2019/20 academic year)
• Continue to improve outcome based therapy plans with progress tools built in to facilitate better input from health at annual reviews (in the 2019/20 academic year)
• Regular reporting on education engagement activity to the Participation Champions group and Young Ambassadors
**Priority 5**

Children, young people and parents will play a key role in co-producing and developing services across health, education and social care – particularly those specifically for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

**We have:**

- Worked with young people and parents in developing the new arrangements for mental health support in trailblazer schools.
- Established a multi-agency working group to develop proposals for how children receiving blended feed through their gastrostomy tube will be supported in school based on parent feedback.
- Conducted a review of the Local Offer with parent carers to inform future actions.
- Developed a clear “Future Me” brand (named and designed by young people) and begun co-producing online platform design and content.
- Developed a quality and improvement approach across education to improve our engagement, participation and co-production practices based upon feedback.
- Used feedback from parent carers on EHCP processes to inform improvements to communication (e.g. producing ‘talking heads’ films explaining statutory processes).
- Employed an engagement officer to work directly with children and young people and parents carers to promote their voice and shaping of services.

**What’s Next:**

- What’s Next:
  - Ensure Parent Carer Forum representation on appropriate boards, meetings and working parties to enable effective co-production (by December 2019).
  - Launch Future Me platform (November 2019) and set up a young people’s Steering Group (by July 2020).
  - Following a successful trial in diabetes, to continue to support parent developed electronic care plan through the national digital programme (by October 2021).
  - Develop regular communication with parents, professionals and the public via Education Matters and associated social media (in the 2019/20 academic year).
  - Update the Local Offer following the review with parent carers to ensure information is relevant, comprehensive and easily accessible (in the 2019/20 academic year and on-going developments).
Priority 6

Children or young people with additional needs should be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education, based on the National Curriculum and, for pre-school children, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum

We have:

• Developed a commissioning strategy which supports children and young people to thrive in universal settings but to have access to more tailored specialist input where needed through maintained and independent providers

• Provided training to schools and Early Years settings regarding the new Ofsted framework (from September 2019) which provides greater focus on the learning of vulnerable children

• Provided advice and support to Reception Teachers regarding the EYFS curriculum

• Developed an early years inclusion funding process to extend funding into reception year where needed to support transition and to facilitate assessment of longer term learning needs

• Revised our intervention approach to schools causing concern in order to ensure that school leaders are addressing the curricular needs of all children

• Worked closely with the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) to provide targeted training and information to schools in order to support the closing of the attainment and achievement gaps in primary schools

• Lead programmes in targeted schools in order to develop best practice in Reading at Key Stage 2 and oracy in EYFS/Key Stage 1

What’s Next:

• To review the alternative provision services available for vulnerable children who require a more vocational route to achieve educational success (by October 2021)

• To provide a medical task training service for school staff to ensure children are safely cared for in school; enabling them to access the curriculum and reduce absence from the classroom for health reasons (in the 2019/20 academic year)
Priority 7

Transition arrangements between different phases of education or agencies working with children and young people are in place to ensure assessments, plans and reviews are co-produced and families know who is taking over the coordination of their child’s support

We have:

• Established a multi-agency children/adult transition group to work holistically on continuing to meet the needs of young people as they turn 18 years old – helping us to change the support we provide to young people as they become more independent, or need greater levels of support in the community following the end of their education

• Produced a leaflet for parents and children on the process from moving from primary to secondary school for those with EHCPs

• Developed process and supporting documents to support better transitions from Early Years to Reception – including a leaflet giving advice about how to support a child to be “ready for school”

• Fully embedded Ready Steady Go for families to work with health services to plan for a smooth transition to adult health services and developed documentation to assist those with learning difficulties

• Piloted Year 11 to 12 transition panels with 4 mainstream secondary schools to support the transition of those young people most at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training)

• Raised the employment aspirations of young people with SEND, their families and professionals by listening to young people and designing plans that encourage their ambitions and support their needs

What’s Next:

• To develop a transition strategy and agreed funding arrangements from children’s to adult’s services (by December 2020)

• To continue to develop smoother transition for young people with complex medical needs and palliative care needs into the adult services – revising Gloucestershire’s End of Life Strategy to become all age (by October 2021)

• To rollout the Year 11 to 12 mainstream transition panels to all secondary schools where a significant number of their young people go on to become NEET (in the 2019/20 academic year) and to expand these panels to include young people attending special and alternative provision schools (by the 2020/2021 academic year)
Priority 8

Resources to support all children or young people with additional needs will be proportionate, fair, equitable and deliver best value

We have:

• Established a quality framework within council education services to ensure that children, young people and their families can contribute to how services are provided

• Implemented a banding system of funding for Post 16 establishments so they are able to better plan their provision in advance of new students joining them and alter their education offer to meet changing needs

• Implemented a tiered decision making system for resourcing EHCPs, and other joint funded cases, which includes multi-agency input across education, social care and health

• Moved to a strengths based, three tiered discussion for understanding social care needs for young people after the age of 18 years old

• Participated in the national My Life My Plan (Child in Care Integrated Personal Commissioning) pilot project and used learning to inform greater personalised practice

• Improved robustness of multi-agency resource panels for effective decision making and resource allocation, including continuing health care assessments

What’s Next:

• To co-produce our short breaks statement and disability services eligibility criteria (by 2020/21)

• To recommission universal and targeted short breaks provision jointly between children’s and adult’ services to support young people in transition (up to March 2021)

• To undertake a review of the Speech & Language (SALT) offer available to children and young people (by December 2020)

• To review the mental health (CYP5) offer for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (by the 2020/21 academic year)

• Implement an electronic customer feedback questionnaire for all services within education and learning and improvement forum (in the 2019/20 academic year)
### Priority 9

**Effective and efficient use of resources will guide decision making based on analysis of need, the allocation of those resources, and evaluation (including feedback and monitoring) evidence against agreed outcomes (the commissioning approach)**

**We have:**

- Integrated child, young person and parent engagement into the council’s services for greater relationship building and enabling effective feedback to be sought and acted upon
- Developed our support services for schools to provide expertise and co-ordinated support to enable children to stay in their local school and maintain connections with their community
- Expanded special school provision to meet increasing need for support in specific areas; enabling more children and young people to have their needs met closer to home
- Standardised the approach to health care in special schools (policies, plans and skills) to ensure school governing bodies are meeting their statutory duties to support medical needs
- Increased support for young people in schools to help them understand different employment opportunities and make informed choices about a post 16 pathways which will help them achieve their ambitions
- Commissioned a Parent Consultant for High Needs to conduct a review of the Local Offer with a group of parents

**What’s Next:**

- To enable young people with social, emotional and mental health needs be educated closer to home with the creation of a new special school (by 2022)
- Supporting Active Impact on developing the You’re Welcome website to enable more intuitive access to, and provide more immediate feedback on, services (by Summer 2020)
- To the Local Offer directory ensuring all services keep their records up to date
- Work with the Parent Carer Forum to co-produce improvements to the Local Offer so it becomes a more valuable resource for families across universal and targeted support, not just specialist services
Priority 10

All agencies working with children, young people and young adults with additional needs will focus on helping them to prepare for adulthood – this will include support to prepare for higher education and/or employment; support to prepare for independent living, including exploring what decisions young people want to take for themselves; support in maintaining good health in adult life; support in participating in society, which includes support in developing and maintaining friendships and relationships

We have:

• Engaged the public to rename preparing for adulthood (PfA) for Gloucestershire – Future Me

• Engaged young people in our schools and colleges to design a logo for Future Me – with the winner working with a graphic designer to refine the logo for its use across a range of media

• Begun co-designing the Future Me online resource (so far engaging with over 70 young people aged 14 – 25)

• Enhanced our focus on preparing for adulthood planning in children’s individual plans and service development

• Created Your Circle website to help adults access community services

• Piloted a Family Learning Programme alongside Adult Education in one secondary school

• Improved support for young people with more complex needs to find opportunities for them to become active members of their community and commissioned a comprehensive research project into this level of community engagement to aid developments

• Established a supported internship programme which will help young people with EHCPs develop the essential work skills they need in order to progress into paid employment – holding our first supported intern of the year awards

• Developed supported pathways for young people moving from education into employment to ensure all young people who have the capacity can progress into paid work

What’s Next:

• Launch Future Me website and develop a sustainable social media profile that engages young people to use the resources and provide feedback (from November 2019)

• Adapt Future Me content based upon young people’s feedback through a new Steering Group (from December 2019)

• To further roll-out the Family Learning Programme into 5 schools or community settings (in the 2019/20 academic year)

• To further develop employment and community placement provision to ensure there are enough opportunities to meet a broad range of young people’s needs (by the 2019/20 academic year)

• Initiating a pilot to engage with young people who are NEET and provide education and employment support to meet their individual needs (by the 2020/21 academic year)
5. SUMMARY

This past year has seen a significant improvement to multi-agency working and important steps have been made to strengthen the holistic framework holding services together to meet the needs of children and young people. This report sets out some clear priorities for the county over the next two years to enable the vision of the strategy to be realised; but the most important focus remains on the on-going dialogue between services, children, young people and their families to ensure active c-creation and co-production is embedded into all areas of work.