Warwickshire SEND & Inclusion Strategy 2019-2023

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION:
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Introduction

The SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2019- 2023 builds upon the Vulnerable Learners Strategy 2015 - 2018, which has delivered over 250 more specialist places locally (with more on the way) for high needs learners with complex needs including the development of three new special academies.

This strategy is informed by the work of an external SEND Demand Management Strategic Review and the SEND & Inclusion Board consisting of key strategic partners across education, health, social care schools and the Parent Carers Forum and will be the Delivery Board for the identified priorities. This strategy also support the overarching priorities of the Warwickshire Education Strategy (see https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/educationstrategy).

The aim of this strategy is to turn high aspirations for all of our learners with SEND into a reality. All children and young people grow up to become adults and need to be equipped to live in a diverse and challenging society. Whatever their ability, they need to have the opportunity of employment, to be able to take part in their local community, to assess and take appropriate risks, and to live as independently as possible.

Our Aims and Principles

We will:

- work in a spirit of co-production and partnership with parents and their children and young people with SEND, involving them in all key decisions
- work in partnership with partner agencies and schools to deliver an effective SEND system that ensures effective early identification of need followed by robust assess-plan-do-review processes and clear pathways
- have the highest expectations for children and young people with SEND, ensure that they are fully included in all educational settings and that their needs are met by high performing local schools
- maintain a commitment to Warwickshire's state-funded schools and academies, promoting and championing strong leadership and inclusive practice for children and young people with SEND across all phases, mainstream and special
- ensure a rigorous focus on the preparation for adulthood outcomes and life after school
- ensure that resources are fairly and consistently allocated according to needs

Our Vision for Learners with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

- We believe that all young people with SEND have the right to lead a normal life and to be part of their community.

- We believe that every child has the right to attend a good local school. Our default position is that children should be able to attend a mainstream school unless there is an overwhelming reason why this cannot happen.

- We believe that every child and young person has a right to have their health, social care and education needs met within their local community.

- We will enable the views and wishes of children and young people with SEND and their parents to be heard, and we will work with them to ensure that they have confidence in the ability of local providers to meet their children's needs.

- We expect every early years setting, state-funded school, further educational college and training provider to make good provision (as determined by Ofsted) for children and young people with SEND; to ensure that they make good progress in their education and development; that they transition smoothly into the next stage of their education and; that they are helped to secure independent living and opportunities for employment as far as possible.

- Whilst we are an inclusive authority, this does not mean we undervalue our specialist provision, which we recognise as an essential and valued component of our county's education system; we will continue to work in partnership with our specialist education providers to ensure they provide excellent services for those pupils who are unable to attend mainstream schools.

The case for inclusion

As part of its commitments under articles 7 and 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the UK Government is committed to inclusive education of disabled children and young people and the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation in mainstream education.

The Government have reinforced their commitment to an inclusive education system; in a recent speech by Damian Hinds, the Education Secretary, he said:

> *"We know there has been a steady movement of children with special educational needs out of mainstream schools and into specialist provision, alternative provision and home education. At the same time, rates of exclusion have begun to rise after a period of having calmed down. And I hear too many stories about off-rolling. I want to be clear right now: this is not okay. SEND pupils are not someone else's problem.*

Every school is a school for pupils with SEND; and every teacher is a teacher of SEND pupils."

In Warwickshire, as elsewhere, we have seen a drift away from inclusive education provision in mainstream settings, with a growing proportion of learners placed in specialist provision. The percentage of pupils with an EHC plan (or statement) attending state funded special provision has risen by 6% from 2010, and in January 2018 stood at 44.2%. The percentage of those pupils with an EHC plan attending state funded secondary schools has decreased since 2010 by 7.9% to 20.9%.

The vast majority of children benefit academically, socially, in confidence and self-esteem from education in community mainstream schools rather than further away from home or in what are often described as more "specialist" settings. This will not be true for all children or in all circumstances but research strongly supports Warwickshire's policy of adopting this as the default position as it aspires for high outcomes for all [i & ii].

Children and young people rate their social relationships as the most important aspect of their education[iii]. Mainstream schooling increases the friendship groups of young people, increasing opportunities to experience and practise diverse social interaction and development.[iv] Long term benefits of this are increased social integration and emotional wellbeing. Additionally, increased access to mainstream social interactions correlates positively with sustained participation in the labour market in adult life[v].

Those learners with SEND who are able to achieve within the average range of their peers are more likely to take GCSEs and develop higher aspirations for academic and vocational achievements and consequently independent living within mainstream schools. Cultural and social isolation and limited awareness of opportunities can result in lower aspirations.

Students with physical disabilities identify the benefits of spending time with non-disabled peers, making "ordinary" friends, allowing them to feel "normal" and to forget about their disability. Despite encountering problems and difficulties in mainstream schools, such students can see it as essential preparation for the 'real world'. They feel isolated from the 'real world' in a specialist setting and report feeling overprotected both on site and in the local town in terms of attitudes, facilities and access[vi].

Away from the school day, although bullying is an unfortunate feature of any type of community life there is evidence that young people who attend a specialist school experience far more bullying by children from other mainstream schools and from peers and outsiders in their neighbourhood [vii].

Additional but not inconsiderable benefits of mainstream education for all are the positive changes in the attitudes and skills of teaching staff in mainstream settings when children with significant difficulties are recognised as full members of their community [viii] and the reduction in negative attitudes in the rest of the community [ix].

The inconsistent inclusive practice that was identified back in mainstream settings in 2015 in the Vulnerable Learners Strategy has persisted and, in some schools, continues to be an issue. We believe that all children should be educated as close to their home as possible, which not only reduces the time they spend travelling, but also enables them to be an integral part of their local community, where they are able to feel welcomed, included and valued as equal members of society. We want to support children, young people and their families by encouraging and challenging schools to cater for as wide a range of needs and abilities as is possible. We want mainstream settings to nurture positive attitudes to children and young people with SEND, both in their own school and in their wider community.

Personalisation

Personalisation means a change to way services are assessed, planned, delivered, and reviewed, for children and young people aged 0-25 years. The aim of Personalisation is to develop the service around the individual, rather than to slot the individual into the service.

It requires early identification and a clear understanding of individual need. It is essential to consider the individual's life from their viewpoint, discovering with them what their needs are rather than assessing them from the outside. Getting this process right will reveal their strengths, vulnerabilities, skills, aspirations, and preferences including what resources the individual can contribute, as well as the contribution available from informal support such as their family, friendship and community network. It is also essential to identify who can act as advocates for the individual early on in the process. This might be family, friends, an advocacy service or any person who is recognised by the individual as being able to help them understand others and express themselves.

Personalisation recognises individuals as the experts. This is why it is so important to listen to the voice of the child or young person.

Warwickshire's Strategic Priorities – What we want to achieve

Complementing the strategic priorities outlined in the Warwickshire Education (WE) strategy:

- **Promoting Inclusion**. Wherever possible children and young people with SEND will be educated alongside their peers. We expect all providers to use their best endeavours to ensure high quality educational provision so that parents can be confident that this is in place for all learners at SEN Support and for those with EHC Plans in their existing setting.

- **Delivering outcomes for school age learners with high needs**. Identification and assessment of need will be effective and joined up across agencies at SEN support, early help and through the statutory Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan process

- **Improving health and social care for learners with SEND,** working with our partners to see the holistic needs of the child and improving our local offer of services.

- **Preparation for Adulthood.** We will promote with partners opportunities to develop resilience and learn to be as independent as possible and fulfil their potential as they transition to adulthood.   This will inform our joint commissioning activities. We believe that the overwhelming majority of young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are capable of sustainable paid employment, with the right preparation and support. With our partners, we want to embed this 'presumption of employability', by ensuring there are significantly increased opportunities for our learners with SEND as they enter adulthood

- **Transport.** Ensuring that the local authority meets its statutory obligations, works within allocated resources and seeks to remove transport issues as a barrier to success.

- **Workforce Development.** Building confidence in the system through staff able to assess, plan, do and review across the professions with an emphasis on meeting need locally. Warwickshire will maintain good quality specialist provision locally through strong school to school support between mainstream and special. With our partners, we will strive to create a smooth education pathway from childhood to adulthood for children and young people with SEND. This will include an increased focus on effective transitions into and between education providers.

Resources to achieve our aims

In 2018, two reviews have taken place regarding resources: a demand management review for identification, assessment and provision for learners with EHC plans and a review of the Dedicated Schools Grant. As with other local authorities, demand is increasing for SEND, whilst resources are diminishing. In the 2018/19, the County Council is forecasting significant financial pressure in both the High Needs Block (Dedicated Schools Grant) and SEN Transport.

Our six priorities reflect the strategic goals needed to best support our SEND learners and turn high aspirations for all of them into reality. The strategy needs to be set against the context of reduced resourcing levels within which we need to operate. Actions in the delivery plan may change and develop depending on future resource allocations and decisions. Where proposed changes in service have a direct impact on learners, then further consultation as necessary will take place before any change is implemented.

How will we measure success?

The following measures will be reported to the SEND & Inclusion Board at the specified intervals, further measures will be added as agreed:

Description	Frequency
No. of EHC plans	Monthly
% of new EHC plans issued within 20 weeks, excluding exceptions	Monthly
% of new EHC plans issued within 20 weeks, including exceptions	Monthly
No. of new referrals for EHC plans	Monthly
% referrals resulting in decision not to assess	Monthly
No. of EHC plans ceased	Monthly
Number of children supported with Inclusion Grant (Early Years)	Termly
Number of early years settings awarded kitemark (WIncKS)	Annually
No. of learners with EHC plan educated in SEND Resourced Provision	Monthly
% of learners with an EHC plan educated in independent specialist provision	Monthly
Number of learners with high needs packages (over £15k) in mainstream schools	Monthly
Number of requests to County Admissions Panel for Specialist Provision	Monthly
Number of learners with EHC plans registered as elective home education	Monthly
Number of learners with EHC plans not on roll at an educational setting or receiving educational provision	Monthly
% of school age learners in mainstream school with EHC plan	Monthly
% parents/carers who reported that they were happy with the outcomes set out in the draft EHC plan	Termly
% permanent exclusions from school for pupils with SEN Support	Monthly
% permanent exclusions from school for pupils with an EHC plan	Monthly
% parents/carers who were happy with the time it took to complete the EHC Needs Assessment and issue the final plan	Termly
% parents/carers who felt their views were fully taken into consideration throughout the whole process	Termly
No. of unique visitors to the Local Offer website	Monthly
No. of schools completed SEND Audits	Termly
No. of school consortia/clusters achieving Inclusion Award	Termly
No. of professionals completed 'Outcomes training'	Termly
No. of school professionals participants in Autism Education Trust Training Level 1	Termly
% of SEN pupils with a statement or EHC plan achieving a 'good level of development' at foundation stage	Annually
Attainment 8 score (pupils with SEN Support)	Annually
Attainment 8 score (pupils with SEN with a statement or EHC plan)	Annually
Progress 8 score (pupils with SEN Support)	Annually
Progress 8 score (pupils with SEN with a statement or EHC plan)	Annually
Number of supported internships offered	Termly
% of supported interns going into employment	Annually

Conclusion

This strategy has inclusion at its heart and sets out how Warwickshire plans to address imbalances and effect change across the SEND system.

As champion for children and families, the County Council has a duty to ensure that all services that are provided, brokered or commissioned are informed by latest research and best practice, whilst providing good value for money. This will require effective partnership working based on a shared moral purpose committed to raising aspirations and maximising life chances for all children and young people but particularly for the most vulnerable. This strategy will grow, change and develop over time as schools and other educational settings embrace their increased responsibility for school improvement including closing educational gaps for vulnerable children and young people.

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