

Tower Hamlets SEND Improvement Board Annual Report 2021

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Introductions from the Chairs

Welcome to the Tower Hamlets SEND Improvement Board Annual Report 2021-22. This report outlines the progress that has been made in delivering improvement across the SEND system in the borough during the last year and sets out priorities for 2022-23. The report is organised around the five priorities of the [SEND Strategy](#) (2020-24).

Our vision in Tower Hamlets is for all children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to lead a fulfilling life, to be as independent as possible, and supported to learn, thrive and achieve by their families, services and local communities. This drives everything we do to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND and the programme of improvement work, which is structured around the priorities within the Tower Hamlets SEND Strategy 2020-24. We are proud of our ongoing strengths, which include low levels of exclusion for children and young people with SEND, as well as educational outcomes which consistently exceed national levels.



Our SEND population is diverse, and we recognise that other characteristics will contribute to individual need and the nature of provision required. The well received parent and young person SEND Ambassador scheme closely reflects the borough's ethnic demographic, including representation from a range of backgrounds, including Bangladeshi, Somali and White British communities. These proactive parents are passionate about creating a more inclusive community for SEND families through local engagement.

In June 2021, The Tower Hamlets Local Area was inspected by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in relation to the support and services provided to children and young people with SEND. The [inspection](#) found that much of this support is of good quality, including the *highly regarded and valued* sensory service, SENIASS and the Behaviour and Attendance Support Service, and that area leaders are aware of what works and what doesn't. However, inspectors identified four areas of significant weakness which required the local area to develop a Written Statement of Action (WSoA) to address these issues and this was developed through a process of engagement with parents in late 2021.

The SEND Partnership has been striving to build the momentum of improvement to deliver on our WSoA, including the introduction of *Let's Talk SEND* events providing an opportunity for parents and carers to actively engage with strategic improvement plans and feedback on progress directly to senior leaders. This initiative builds on existing engagement and co-production work, including the Local Offer steering group and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) pathway workshops, as work progresses to embed a co-production approach as a crosscutting element across all workstreams.



Introductions from the Chairs

During 2021 work to procure additional resources to drive WSoA improvement priorities was initiated, including additional investment across the partnership to boost SEN caseworker and ASD diagnostic capacity, as well as development of a business case for delivery of a contract with Barts to deliver a Speech and Language Treatment Pathway for age 3-5s and a Social Communication Difficulty Pathway for age 0-5s. Additional investment was also crucial in addressing increasing need and demand across the system, especially in referrals to the ASD Assessment Service and Children's Therapies.

Tower Hamlet's SEND budget is funded by the high needs block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Over the last four years the Council has overspent on this block accruing a funding deficit of £12m which needs to be repaid in the longer term. Over the next eighteen months the Council will benefit from a consultancy programme from the DfE to support this process. Tower Hamlets will see a significant funding increase to the high needs block of the DSG in 2022/23 (of 12%) putting the Council into a more manageable position with the current levels of demand, contributing to a continuing sustainable position in the long term, offering both better value and better outcomes for our young people.

Strong partnership working arrangements remain a central feature of our improvement work. The SEND Improvement Board brings together partners from across agencies and services to deliver improvement activity and is responsible for monitoring progress against the WSoA and the SEND Strategy. This is steered by feedback from children, young people and parents as active partners, with programmed reporting from the Our Time Young Person's Forum and Independent Parents' Forum now effectively embedded. More rigorous monitoring of issues raised by parents and young people also enable the Board oversight of where feedback has resulted in service level change. Over the past year ownership and understanding of the SEND agenda has visibly extended beyond the Board and across the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Northeast London (NEL) partners, with SEND priorities reflected in the Tower Hamlets Together (THT) borough plan and through the Local Delivery Board.

Looking ahead we will be working closely with the new Mayor and Cabinet to deliver on their manifesto pledges including to "*Restore specialist support for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities as a boroughwide service*".

Whilst the last two years have presented challenges, SEND partners are confident that we can continue to build on lessons learnt through the pandemic to further strengthen and develop our SEND services, and, through the work of the SEND Improvement Board and partners, strive to improve the outcomes for all children and young people with SEND.



James Thomas, Chair of Tower Hamlets SEND Improvement Board. Corporate Director of Children & Culture.



Warwick Tomsett, Deputy Chair of Tower Hamlets SEND Improvement Board. Joint Director of Integrated Commissioning.

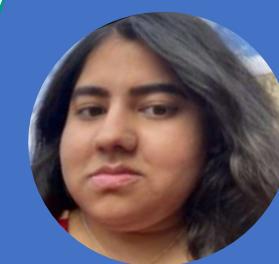
Introductions from the Chairs

Over the past year the [Our Time All Abilities Youth Forum](#) has:

- Secured funding to do film making based on Being independent, the Young Person's Advice Centre, Our Time and Living with SEND.
- Visited schools to do Our Time presentations and recruit more young people.
- Promoted SEND and spread awareness at different events and places.
- Worked closely with the Spotlight Youth Centre, including presentations, running a stall at Spotlight Takeover event to spread SEND awareness, working closely with Spotlight SEND Superheroes, taking part in Youth Empowerment Board at Spotlight, attending a new launch for Spotlight, representing Our Time and inviting the mayor of Tower Hamlets to come to an Our Time meeting.
- Our Time members have been part of the Families Director interview panel.
- Run a workshop at the National Council for Disabled Children 'Making Participation Work' Conference.
- Sat on a panel at the National SEND Information Advice & Support Service Children and Young People's Practice and Innovation Board.
- Delivered a presentation at the National Youth Voice Matters Children and Young People's SEND Conference.
- Delivered a presentation at the Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee.



- Participated in Young People's Rise and Shine Conference.
- Met with an Ofsted Inspector.
- Participated in a consultation at the new SEND youth provision Linc Centre.
- Attended Every Chance for Every Child Forum.
- Attended First Love Foundation to promote Our Time.
- Advised on Local Offer, Young People's Zone to make changes.



Sornnaly Hossain, Our Time Forum Member, Young Person Ambassador and Member of SEND Improvement Board

Introductions from the Chairs



[Tower Hamlets Independent SEND Parents' Forum](#) (IPCSF) had a successful 2021/2022 continuing to build on the relationships and foundations of 2020/2021. Eight small but successful steering group meetings took place via Zoom and WhatsApp, along with number of successful consultations and co-production work with both the Local Authority and Health Partners.

The Forum and its members played a crucial part in this year's Ofsted review and many forum members took part in both the inspector's discussions and survey. Members felt the Ofsted review was fair - most of all members felt listened to as many members concerns were in the WSoA.

Over the past year the forum has continued to consult with the Local Authority on Education, Health & Care plans (EHCPs); Supported Parents with returning to school; Provided up to date NHS Covid-19 information; Encouraged Parents/Carers to take part in consultations and workshops including the co-produced 'Let's Talk SEND' events. Our relationship with Health Partners and the Local Authority is continuing to grow and we now have parent representation on several Boards.

We planned to hold our second conference in 2021 on the theme 'Transition at all stages of a child/young person's life'. Unfortunately, this was postponed due to the pandemic for a second time. The Forum is still adapting to the new challenges presented by Covid 19 and we continue to use other means of communicating with and supporting parents but are keen to restart Face to Face meetings and workshops as soon as possible.



**Samantha Gager, Chair of the
Tower Hamlets Independent Send
Parent Forum and Member of SEND
Improvement Board**

Local Area Ofsted and Care Quality Commission Inspection

In June 2021, the Tower Hamlets Local Area was inspected by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in relation to the support and services provided to children and young people with SEND. Although the [inspection](#) found that much of this support is of good quality and that area leaders are aware of what works and what doesn't, inspectors identified four areas of significant weakness which required the local area to develop a Written Statement of Action (WSoA) to address these issues and this was developed through a process of engagement with parents in late 2021.

The following key areas were identified for improvement:

The poor quality and oversight of Education, Health and Care plans including the annual review process.

The lengthy waiting times for an assessment and diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

Fragmentation in the provision of speech and language therapy which means that too many children and young people do not get the specialist help and support they need.

Weaknesses in communication between area leaders and parents leading to misunderstandings. Many families are not aware of services that they could access and have no knowledge of area's plans to improve.

View our [Written Statement of Action](#).

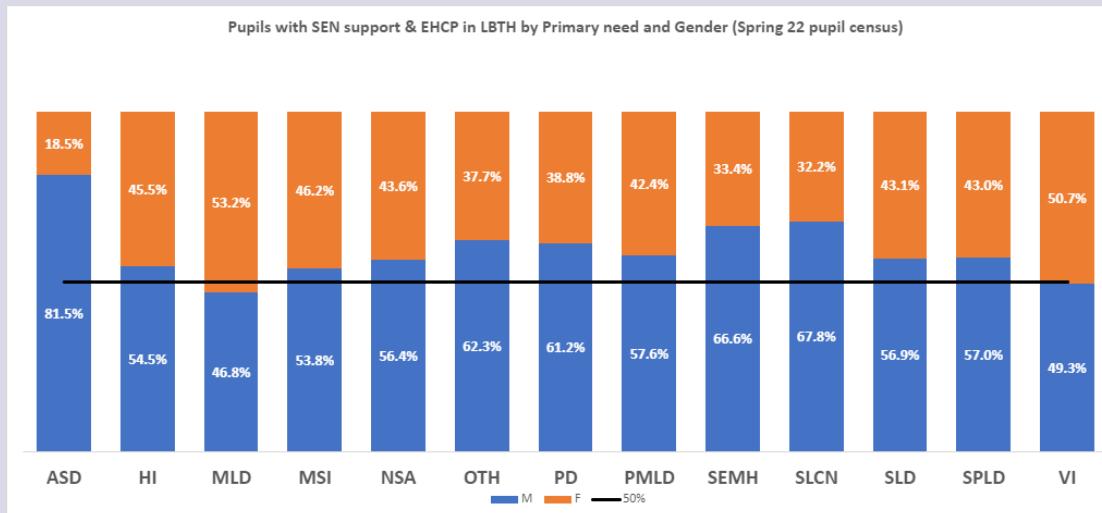
View the [Ofsted response letter](#).



We will be working hard to deliver on our WSoA over the next 18 months and will provide termly updates on progress published on the Local Offer website, Family Matters magazine, other social media channels and through *Let's Talk SEND* meetings with local area leaders.

The independent parent carer forum which is represented on the SEND Improvement Board will also keep parents/carers informed on a regular basis. Progress against our WSoA will be formally reviewed as part of six-monthly monitoring meeting with DfE, Ofsted and NHS representatives.

Tower Hamlets Contextual Picture



4.1%
of secondary school
pupils with an EHCP
– highest in England
(2021)

39.5%
pupils with speech,
language and communication
needs - second highest in
England (2021)

ASD - Autistic spectrum disorder	HI - Hearing impairment	MLD - Moderate learning difficulty	MSI - Multi-sensory impairment	NSA - SEN support but no specialist assessment of need	OTH - Other difficulty
PD - Physical disability	PMLD - Profound & multiple learning difficulty	SEMH - Social, emotional and mental health	SLCN - Speech, language & communication needs	SLD - Severe learning difficulty	SPLD - Specific learning difficulty
VI - Vision impairment					

3549

Active EHCPs

Above England & statistical neighbour average (March 2022)

5.2%

of pupils in all schools with an EHCP 3rd highest in England (2021)

311

new EHCPs in 2021

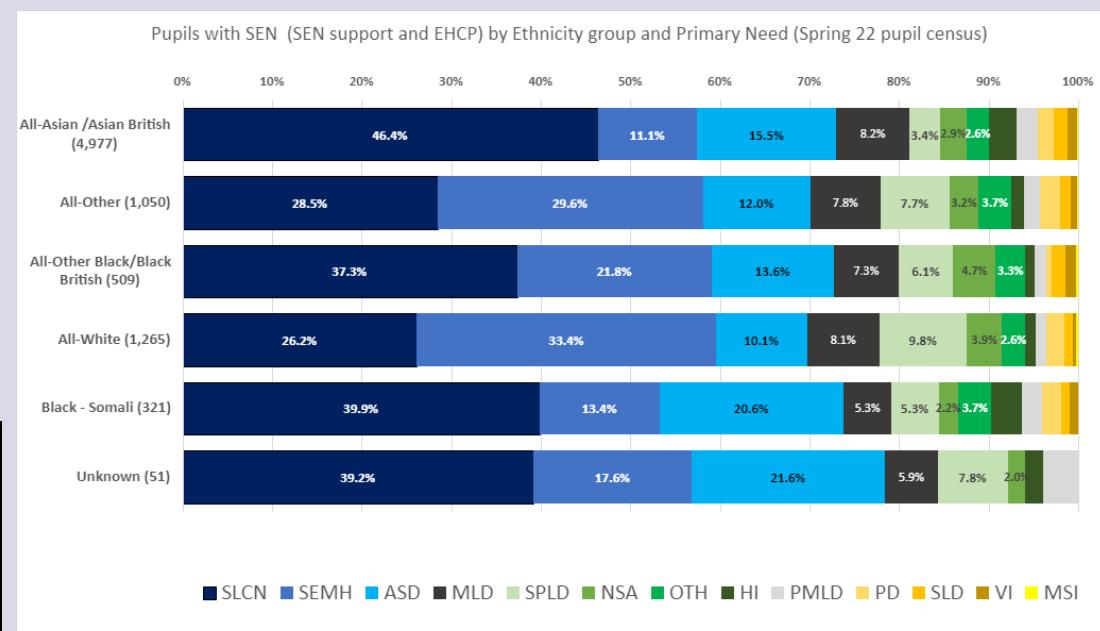
below England & statistical neighbour average

1.6%

of EHCP cohort aged under five one of the lowest across England (2022)

41.5%

on SEN Support with a child protection plan 2nd highest in England (2021)



Priority One: Leading SEND

Key achievements in 2021

Regular reporting from the Our Time Youth Forum and parents' forum to the SIB is well embedded and a tracker has been introduced to allow more rigorous oversight of issues raised by parents and young people, and raise awareness at board level of how this feedback has influenced service changes.

The number of Parent Ambassadors has remained stable at 18, with plans to recruit more Ambassadors in the coming year. The number of Young Person Ambassadors has increased from three in 2020-21 to five in 2021-22.

Termly EHCP workshops and termly Annual Review workshops for parents and professionals were well attended pre-pandemic with on average 16 attending each session. However, these sessions were paused because of the pandemic and are due to restart in 2022.

[Bartlett Park](#) in LB Tower Hamlets nominated as a finalist in the 'Excellence in Public Health and Wellbeing' category of the Landscape Institute Awards 2021.

Tower Hamlets Together, a partnership of local health and social care organisations, won the [Local Covid-19 Response Partnership Award](#) at the 2021 Health Service Journal (HSJ) Awards in recognition of its work supporting clinically extremely vulnerable children and their families who were shielding during the pandemic.

Work to enhance the Local offer website and increase awareness has continued via co-production work with parents and young people, including input from the local offer focus groups - as a result views have increased from 13,058 in 2020-21 to 16,822 in 21/22.

Plans for inclusion of a professional's zone within the local offer website did not go ahead, as it was acknowledged that all the information relevant to professionals was already integrated into the site.

Let's Talks Listening events launched in November 2021, with a planned programme blending face to face and online ZOOM sessions. A termly event cycle has been established with Local Area leaders, key stakeholders and partners attending offering parents the chance to feed back to senior leaders directly on the pace of improvement.

Following a surge in What's App participation from parents in 2020, this social media channel has remained popular with parents in 2021, increasing from 264 users in 2020 to 327 in 2021.

Work to scope development of a SEND Training & Professional Development Programme began in late 2021, but a training needs analysis across the wider partnership is yet to be finalised. A successful e-learning package from another LA is being explored as a starting point for a similar offer in Tower Hamlets.

Responding to feedback

YOU SAID

Parents and young people wanted the local offer site to be easier to navigate and accessible for all

Young People said they wanted a separate page for Young People Zone on the Local Offer

You said you wanted to see information about “You said we did” section to be in a prominent position

Our Time Forum requested more frequent meetings at different times, with some young people requesting virtual meetings and others to meet in person

WE DID

We have relaunched our new website in June 2021 which is more user friendly and easy to navigate with themes, colours, and sections. Including improved search function

We have worked with the young people from Our Time Forum to create a separate new Young People Zone which went live in June 2021.

The relaunched local offer site includes a section on the front page, so it is more accessible and easier to find

Forum now meets fortnightly early evening and once a month on Saturday. Meetings are now blended – virtual and in person

What next?

Key priorities for 2022/23

- Completion of refreshed SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment which has been delayed from the original September 2021 timescale.
- Expansion of capital programme for inclusive playgrounds with four more playground upgrades planned in 2022.
- Parents Forum to build on positive links with other SEND groups, including work in conjunction with Newham parents' forum and City of London Parents' Forum to extend reach to newer and higher platforms.
- Parents Forum to explore ways to increase numbers and continue to maintain its pan disability connections by inviting all SEND groups to join under The Forum umbrella and to nominate a member of each group to the steering group.
- Parents Forum to restart face to face workshops and consultations, including the annual parent conference in September 2022.
- Our Time Forum to work with professionals to develop a Co-production Charter for Young People with SEND – including a survey of young people with SEND to find out about their experiences of Youth Service Providers.
- Our Time Forum to further develop use of social media, including promoting inclusion via videos and making changes to the SEND Information and Advice Support Service website to make it more applicable to young people.
- Our Time Forum to work with GPs and other health professionals to help them better understand the SEND conditions of young people and respond accordingly to their needs.
- Our Time Forum to make videos on Living with SEND.
- Our Time Forum to co-design Let's Talk SEND session in July 2022.

Priority Two: Early Identification and Assessment

Key achievements in 2021

Work to strengthen our approach to quality assurance (QA) has continued with the development of a QA matrix clarifying the criteria for a high quality EHCP, with input from schools and support from the Social Work Academy.

The twelve Children's centres have transitioned into twelve 'Children and Family Centres' but are now working across four distinct localities extending the remit from 0-11 to families of children aged birth to 19 (25 with SEND).

Habilitation Specialist recruited to the Sensory Support Service for children and young people with visual impairment to work with schools and early years settings assessing habilitation needs, delivering programmes of work with children and young people and carrying out environmental audits to facilitate inclusion and promote independence.

Two-year-old integrated reviews were paused during the pandemic; however, these reviews have since resumed in a different format.

Restructure of the Support for Learning Service & SEND Service was completed in June 2021. The newly restructured Learning Advisory Service (LAS) will work with services and schools to identify training needs to support capacity building in schools and support for children both at SEN Support and those with EHCPs. Two new SEN managers joined the SEN Team and a bid for additional investment was submitted to increase caseworker capacity to further drive the pace of improvement.

Development and introduction of SEND Support Grid clarifying thresholds & criteria for categorising primary need to support a common understanding of different types of need. The approach aims to set expectations around inclusive practices for all pupils.

New record-keeping standard with guidelines for school care plans developed, led by the GP Care Group with training for all staff completed. Audit of clinical records carried out to provide assurance that development review QA standards are being met, as part of a Health Visiting Service rolling audit programme.

A multi-agency action plan was developed in June 2021 to drive forward learning from the audit exploring early identification of children in nursery and reception with additional needs.

Development of multi-agency under-fives notification panel including colleagues from Early Years, Learning Advisory Service, Educational Psychology Service and schools.

The effects of the pandemic have continued to impact timeliness of EHCPs, which have ebbed and flowed through the past year. Educational Psychology capacity has been expanded on a temporary basis to tackle the backlog in cases. There has also been a full review of the EHCP process, including introduction of more rigorous monitoring of EHCP timeliness via weekly performance meetings and an 18-week assessment model. There has been month on month improvement since January 2022, with assessment timelines expected to return to business as usual by Autumn 2022

Extension of an initial early years' audit of children with unidentified needs to school age children was paused to focus on maintaining front-line health visiting services during the pandemic. This work is being progressed via a new survey with schools and Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) providers to explore processes for sharing information, contact with key services and communication with parents to inform guidance on best practice for effective transitions.

Priority Two: Early Identification and Assessment

Responding to feedback

YOU SAID

More support for families waiting for diagnosis -
the child still needs support in this time

Didn't understand EHC process and how best to
contribute

WE DID

Barts Health Children Therapies are starting a pilot
to support the 'Invitation to Play' sessions in
Children and Family Centres from January 2022.
This will work with families of children with a
diagnosis and those waiting for a diagnosis

Implemented termly EHC workshops and termly
Annual Review Workshops for parents and
professionals

Priority Two: Early Identification and Assessment

What next?

Key priorities for 2022/23

- New partnerships with Speech & Language Therapies and Voluntary & Community Organisations are providing a range of professionals and services families can access through the children and family centres. The recently announced family hub initiative will expand the range of services accessible for families.
- Implement 3/3.5 years targeted face to face review by the health visiting skill mix team which had been delayed by pandemic pressures - to identify children whose needs may have changed since the 2 – 2 ½ years old review and to reduce the risk of children starting school with unidentified and unmet needs.
- Progress work to integrate learning from audits of early years and school age children with previously unidentified needs.
- Build on work to improve take up of two-year-old places to at least pre-covid levels

Priority Three: Commissioning Effective Services to Respond to Local Need

Key achievements in 2021

New SEND commissioning strategy implemented which embeds the requirement for all future commissioning to be co-produced with parents and young people.

Co-production and partnership working emerging as a strength of commissioning process, with active parent and young person membership on steering groups and representation on interview panels for commissioning roles that will lead on some areas of SEND.

ASD Pathway Review underway to improve waiting times and support, including introduction of new diagnostic pathway in early 2022 and additional clinical diagnostic capacity following agreed additional investment. Waiting times expected to significantly decrease by July 2022.

Delivery of the Integrated Therapies steering group was impacted due to a vacancy in the commissioning team, however this work recommenced from December 2021. Focus of the group will be to use the agreed framework and principles and begin to populate the journey of the child with service models and deliverables.

Healios have accepted 37 ASD referrals and have agreed to continue online assessments in the new financial year. The Positive Behaviour Support Service is in operation and delivering functional assessments and positive behaviour supporting planning.

Parents are members on the full ASD Pathway Review Group and the Integrated Therapies Steering Group - their participation and input as equal members has heavily influenced both programmes of work.

Three new roles introduced at Barts Health to support adherence to a national mandate on Continuation Care provision, including interim nurse assessor/coordinator to work on assessments and annual reviews until recruitment is completed.

The Tower Hamlets Education Wellbeing Service (THEWS) has expanded from 23 schools to an additional 21 bringing the total coverage to 44 schools in Tower Hamlets.

The gap identified in delivery for under-fives has been expedited, with a business case finalised in late 2021 and a contract with Barts in place to deliver a Speech and Language Treatment Pathway for age 3-5s and a Social Communication Difficulty Pathway for age 0-5s agreed in early 2022.

New Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Transformation Manager in post and reviewing priorities with the children & young people Mental Health Steering Group. The ongoing increase in need is linked to COVID resulting in more referrals and demand on local mental health services.

Priority Three: Commissioning Effective Services to Respond to Local Need

Responding to feedback

YOU SAID

To inform the GP of the diagnosis as information has not been added to my child's record

All I saw was a table of activities per week, I would have been happy to get more details about the holiday childcare scheme facilities and some practical things like - what happens at lunch time

Parents said they want more services integrated in Children and Family Centres

WE DID

From Jan 2022, all children diagnosed with ASD by the ASD Assessment Service will have these diagnoses clearly coded and shared with GPs as part of the East London Patient Record. The service currently sends a letter to GPs with the diagnosis, a process which will continue.

Website updated to include more information about the scheme. Newsletter timings amended and now sent out prior to the scheme starting, including information and pictures of what activities were delivered at the previous scheme and what is planned for the next. This is then available on our website and e-mailed to all parents who book.

Children's speech and language therapy is now offering initial face-to-face appointments in four children and family centres across Tower Hamlets.

Priority Three: Commissioning Effective Services to Respond to Local Need

What next?

Key priorities for 2022/23

- Explore a co-produced health outcomes framework for children with SEND, whereby providers can track specific outcomes and report on them directly to allow a more holistic view of distance travelled and progress made for individuals and cohorts.
- Hospital at Home was positively referenced in the SEND inspection feedback and recurrent funding is being sought for the service to expand the model, potentially diversifying the offer to include more conditions that can be supported at home to reduce admission and duration of stays in hospital.
- Re-commission the targeted Children and Young People Mental Health (CYPMH) Service, expected to go live 1st July 2022. To include a clearer focus on the Thrive model, ensuring truly integrated partnership working helping the system be easier to navigate and less confusing for young people and families to access.
- The Tower Hamlets Education Wellbeing Service (THEWS) is expanding and has received expressions of interests from an additional 13 schools. Additional trainees are joining the team in September 2023 and THEWS aims to provide coverage to all Tower Hamlets schools in September 2024.

Priority Four: Good Quality Education Provision for All Children

Key achievements in 2021

Tower Hamlets Education Partnership (THEP) continues to build on its leadership network for SENCos and inclusions leads, with a programme of well-attended meetings throughout 2021/2022 reaching 155 professionals across nursery, primary, secondary and special school provision.

Virtual School Education Champions introduced and put in place for those on Youth Justice Service orders with an officer monitoring attendance from the Behaviour and Attendance Support Service. Where children have additional needs and absence is an issue additional funding, monitoring and support is identified in the Personal Education Plan.

Bowden House Special School and Ben Jonson Primary Schools formed a partnership to jointly run a Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) provision, on the Ben Jonson site which opened in September 2021.

A new post-19 ASD provision, Phoenix College was established in 2020-21, through the Phoenix Autism Trust, with the capacity to support up to 50 young people when full. The college will support young people with ASD into employment via apprenticeships and supported internship programmes.

A New Sensory Impairment Hub opened in September 2021 at New City College to ensure the specialist provision that exists at pre-16 is delivered post 16, removing the Council's reliance on out borough provisions. The Hub is currently being accessed by 24 young people.

Special resource provision for Hermitage Primary Mainstream school has been approved and opened to pupils with ASD (high functioning) in January 2022 but building delays due to Covid mean that full capacity will not be achieved until 2024.

Mastodon C data modelling analysts re-commissioned to carry out borough wide pupil projections, including future special school provision which complemented a refreshed SEND Sufficiency Plan.

Numbers of supported internship opportunities have increased at New City College, Phoenix College, Tower Project and Barts Hospitals. Discussions are taking place with DFN Project Search regarding additional opportunities from Sept 2022 at St. Barts Hospital and the Marriot Hotel Canary Wharf. The development and sourcing of sustainable post-16 education and employment opportunities remains ongoing.

Additional summer activities delivered for children with SEND coming out of lockdown, including SEND at Poplar Baths in partnership with the Disability Sports Coach organisation and Tower Hamlets & West Ham Junior sessions Mile End Mini Pitches in partnership with West Ham United Foundation for young people with SEND and sibling groups.

Five SEN Co-ordinator forums were held throughout 2021/2022 on a virtual basis and were especially well-attended during periods of lockdown, with attendance regularly exceeding 80 at each session.

SEN Inclusion Advisor appointed in March 2022 to lead on identification of provision ordinarily available in mainstream settings and improving support for children and young people at SEN support.

Priority Four: Good Quality Education Provision for All Children

Responding to feedback

YOU SAID

Young people with SEND experience difficulties finding work experience and courses at sixth form which are right for them and called for more employment opportunities, including apprenticeships at the council

WE DID

The number of supported internships has increased year on year since 2017, to 81 in 2022. From September 2022 a pilot scheme offering five supported internships at Tower Hamlets Council will begin

From parents on the annual review process

"We had an excellent meeting yesterday afternoon which resulted in an amended plan that all were happy with"

"I am very thankful to you and your Team. My son has had an opportunity to show his strength and to reach his full potential"

"I would like to also thank you and the SEN Team in supporting and listening to me. My daughter has been thriving at school and home and is very happy"

Priority Four: Good Quality Education Provision for All Children

What next?

Key priorities for 2022/23

- Consultation for George Green's School Resource Base to be redesignated from Physical Disabilities to ASD (High Functioning).
- Schools to be supported to gain 'autism aware' accreditation.
- Plans to further review and commission specification and resource provision within schools to meet needs, including support for pupils with visual impairment.
- Engagement with sixth forms will continue to improve post-16 options for young people with SEND in mainstream school settings.
- Young Work Path and SEN Team to develop a post-16 Education and Training Directory which will be made available on the Local Offer and in paper format.

Priority Five: Supporting successful transitions and supporting independence

Key achievements in 2021

Barts Health refreshed its Transition Policy in consultation with health colleagues, community services and young people of the Barts Health Youth Forum. The policy recommends that 'Ready, Steady, Go and Hello to adult services' should be adopted as the transition framework across health services.

A Roald Dahl Clinical Nurse Specialist is in post with responsibility for advising clinical teams on best practice for transition pathways for teenagers and young adults. Within this team the role of Roald Dahl Transition Nurse Specialist is currently vacant but will be filled by mid-2022. The team has an Executive Sponsor, as well as a Senior Responsible Officer and good links across the Children's & Medicine Board.

Multi-agency transitions board established to focus on ensuring a seamless transition for those with EHCPs from children's to adult services. Terms of reference and an action plan have been approved and work to map different pathways has begun.

Annual Review Team recruited to increase capacity. A more robust approach to co-production in the annual review process will be supported by co-production workshops with parents and young people, as well as capturing their experiential feedback. Work has begun to ensure annual reviews are meaningful, person centred and co-produced, supported by learning from a year 9 pilot project.

Annual Review form reviewed in line with the common advice template and the Preparing for Adulthood Annual Review form and is in use. SEN staff receiving coaching to monitor amendments, identifying evidence to substantiate changes, as well as – through the Phase Transfer process – working to ensure that EHCPs are amended as children and young people move between Key Stages.

Although numbers completing independent travel training have been impacted by the pandemic, the team has continued to increase the uptake of Personal Transport Budgets resulting in 119 families that are now receiving this travel assistance. As a result, families are now making independent decisions based on their individual family needs. Students who have successfully completed training report feeling happier, more confident, having increased self-esteem and are more prepared to access further education, training, or job opportunities.

Priority Five: Supporting successful transitions and supporting independence

Responding to feedback

YOU SAID

Parents highlighted the need for GPs to develop a greater understanding of Personal Health Budgets

Parents expressed the frustration of having to explain about their child's health or additional needs multiple times to different agencies

WE DID

Personal health budgets to be covered as a topic within the 2022 programme of GP webinars to support a greater understanding of this area

Development of a Health Passport being explored, including opportunities to link in with existing E Red Books

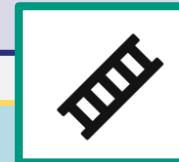
Priority Five: Supporting successful transitions and supporting independence

What next?

Key priorities for 2022/23

- Lead GP to be invited to become a core member of the Transitions Board to support in the co-ordination of services at all levels through universal to tier 4 safeguarding support.
- Transitions Board to develop a clear Transition Policy to reflect work undertaken and set out key principles between health, education and social care.
- Transitions Board to undertake an audit across the SEND system to benchmark effectiveness of communication between agencies and develop a quality assurance system for transitions.
- Parents Forum plans to co-produce an emotional first aid course for SEND parents.
- Our Time forum plans to produce videos on becoming independent, including how parents can encourage and support young people.
- Independent Travel Team to recruit one full time and two part time (term time only) members of staff on fixed term contracts to help with the backlog due to Covid. Waiting times and numbers completing travel training expected to improve from summer 2022.

Case Study: Virtual School



Background

OO is a pupil in year 11 with SEND needs below EHCP level, long-term in care and making good progress. This has been a stable placement where excellent relationships have been built between the carer, school and Virtual School. OO presented with social communication challenges, presented with traits associated with autism spectrum disorder and had difficulties making friends. OO was in care from Primary School, so the Virtual School has supported his smooth transition to a mainstream academy that is rated good or better.

Support Provided by Virtual School and School

Support provided with communication skills from a learning mentor, which has supported his social communication skills giving OO the confidence to initiate conversations and articulate feelings.

Pupil premium plus (PP+) funding was used for speech, language & communication interventions, he also received 1:1 home tuition in English for Reading/comprehension, Science, History, and mathematics especially from Years 7 to Year 11.

OO has been encouraged by his Virtual School Teacher and carer to attend the Virtual School Give It a Go (GIAG) enrichment activity. This has included activities in the holiday period and residential and OO has gained the confidence to interact with both his peers and adults while taking part in discussions, team tasks and many sporting challenges.

OO enrichment participation and support also mean he has attended the Virtual School study support and registered for the Step-Up Ladder programme. OO is being supported with college applications in line with his aspirations.

OO has attended Virtual School Award ceremonies gaining awards for 100% attendance and commitment to the Virtual School extra-curricular opportunities/activities programme.

Outcomes

OO's academic progress and attainment has been excellent throughout his time in the Virtual School. OO has worked consistently well in maintaining at least expected national standard for both English and Maths prior to lockdown. The carer and Virtual School teacher maintained excellent communication throughout this period.

Bespoke support and PP+ funded tuition has been ongoing, and OO achieved a Level 9 in his mock for English Language, he is now able to sustain eye contact and confident in attaining Level 6-9 in all his GCSEs. OO has already achieved a Level 6 in his RE GCSE.

Case Study: Holiday Childcare Scheme

Background

Child A has a diagnosis of Autism and is currently attending secondary school in Tower Hamlets.

Support provided

Attendance at the holiday scheme nursery provision began at 5 years old, where support with communication, some physical activities, behaviours and self-regulation was provided. Child A also had 1-1 support within their school / setting.

Throughout child A's attendance at the scheme the Scheme Manager, parents and school SEN Co-ordinator (SENCo) have communicated and met to share knowledge, experience and in-school strategies to create and update plans which help and support child A whilst attending the scheme.

On starting, child A was allocated 1-1 key worker support and scheme staff were made aware of coping mechanisms to support child A settle into the new scheme environment. One successful strategy was lining up toy trains and coaches to 'travel' to quieter parts of the setting and to help regulate behaviour. Scheme staff and child A also used visual cards to help to describe feelings throughout the day.

Staff worked each scheme with child A and their parents introducing various coping mechanisms at different stages of care, familiarising themselves with key objects and routines and recording progress and supporting steps towards independence. Child A regularly attended the scheme and so became familiar with scheme staff and the scheme environment, settling at each scheme became easier as they got older.

Outcomes

From 2014 – 2017 child A attended regularly and established strong relationships with the allocated key workers and a good understanding of the scheme. Child A was happy, and parents were relieved to have appropriate childcare and remained in employment.

In 2018 during a regular review between the Scheme Manger, SENCo and parents it was agreed to trial a 1-3 ratio to support the increasing confidence within the scheme environment and child A's development. This arrangement was monitored with regular feedback between parents and school.

In 2019 child A gradually integrated into the 1:10 scheme ratio, a huge achievement. This became possible due to child A regularly attending, consistent practice / strategies used by key workers and scheme staff and the ongoing and strong communication between parents, school SENCo and scheme staff.

Everyone shared their knowledge and worked in partnership to achieve the best outcome for child A. The school has provided positive feedback following attendance at the scheme and parents have expressed their appreciation of the benefits of the free play scheme environment, the support their child has received, and the level of independence child A now has.

This case demonstrates how early intervention and support over an extended period of time has had a lasting and positive impact for this young person.

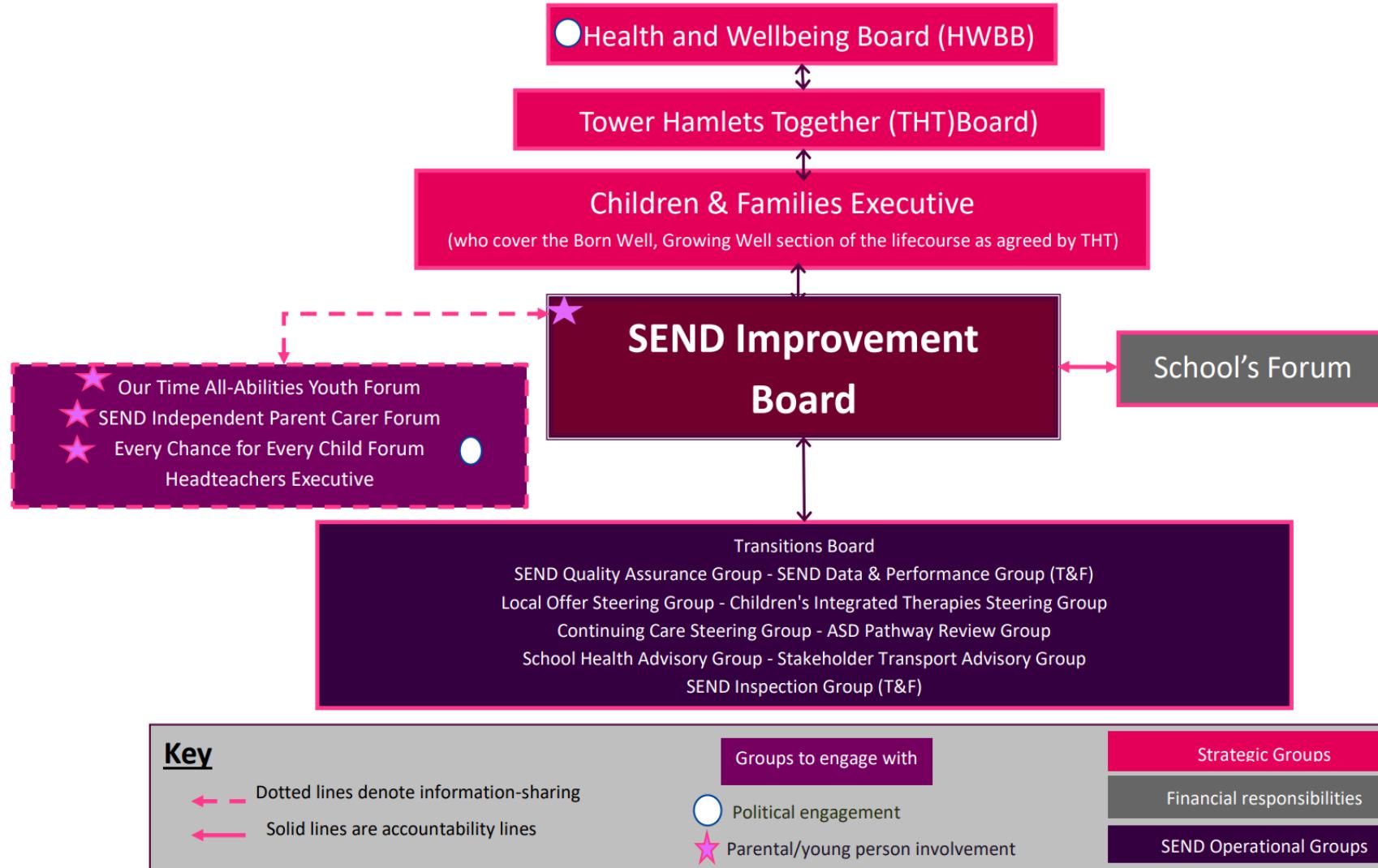
Parent feedback

"My child's confidence, communication and independence has grown by attending the scheme. My child is very mature at home and in school, and often talks about the staff at the scheme. My child talks about their peers and the activities they have joined. It has changed my child's outlook."

Child A feedback

"Thank you for looking after me and teaching me so many things. I made some good friends and all of you guys always made me happy. I was here from the nursery all the way to the teen-space, and I will never forget you guys."

Appendix One: SEND Governance Structure



Appendix Two: Performance

387

Requests for an EHCP assessment -amongst lowest in England (2021)

119

Families receiving personal travel budgets (2022)

51.2%

EHCP pupils attending state-funded mainstream school - 5th highest in England. (2022)

Strong

attainment from KS1 to KS4 for EHCP and SEN Support pupils (2018-19)

8.3%

EHCP requests refused, below the statistical neighbour average (18.6%) and England average (22.3%) (2021)

20.7%

EHCP pupils educated at a state-funded special school, placing Tower Hamlets in the lowest quartile of all local authorities in England (2022)

£438 per capita

Top up funding budget for maintained providers in (2022 - 1st highest in England)

32%

EHCPs issued within 20 weeks (excluding exceptions) – amongst the worst performing quartile in England. (2021)

9.4%

of 16/17 year olds with an EHCP were NEET - second lowest of any statistical neighbour (2021)

7.3%

16–25-year-olds with an EHCP undertaking a supported internship - highest in England. Represents 81 supported internships (2022)

12.7%

16/17-year-olds with SEN Support who were NEET in 2021 - bottom quartile of all England local authorities.

Best performing quartile for exclusions in England, with no permanent exclusions for either EHCP or SEN Support pupils in 2019/20

Appendix Three: Glossary

ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
BASS	Behaviour and Attendance Support Service
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CLA	Children Looked After
CLDS	Community Learning Disability Service
CSC	Children's Social Care
CWD	Children with Disabilities
DfE	Department for Education
EHCNA	Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
EY	Early Years
FNP	Family Nurse Partnership
HVS	Health Visiting Service
IEYS	Integrated Early Years' Service
LA	Local Authority
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
PMLD	Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)
SEN	Special Educational Need
SENco	Special Educational Need Co-ordinator
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SENDIASS	SEND Information, Advice and Support Service
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulties
SHWS	School Health & Well-being Service
SLS	Support for Learning Service