

SEND Sufficiency plan

People and Families Scrutiny Committee

**Cllr Andrew Sheldon –
Deputy Cabinet Member for Education Excellence,
Lifelong Learning and Employability**



What are the challenges we are addressing?

- Continued and significant increases in the number of new Education Health Care Plans issued in Essex
- The profile of SEND in Essex has changed considerably over the last ten years
- ASD as a primary need has grown year on year
- Reliance on the independent special school sector
- Pressures on all of our special schools with regard to numbers and admissions
- Budget pressures across individual school budgets
- A growth in the overall school population with new housing continuing at pace across the County
- Rising levels of permanent exclusions;
- Recruitment and retention
- Parental confidence in our health, social care and education services' offer
- A sharp rise in the number of SEND tribunal cases
- An under-developed post-16 and 19-25 offer across the local area

Growth in the SEN population

The number of children and young people with an EHCP has risen every year since the implementation of the SEND reforms.

2016	7550
2017	8057
2018	8536
2019	9183
2020	9768
2021	10,824
2022	11,275
2023	12,193

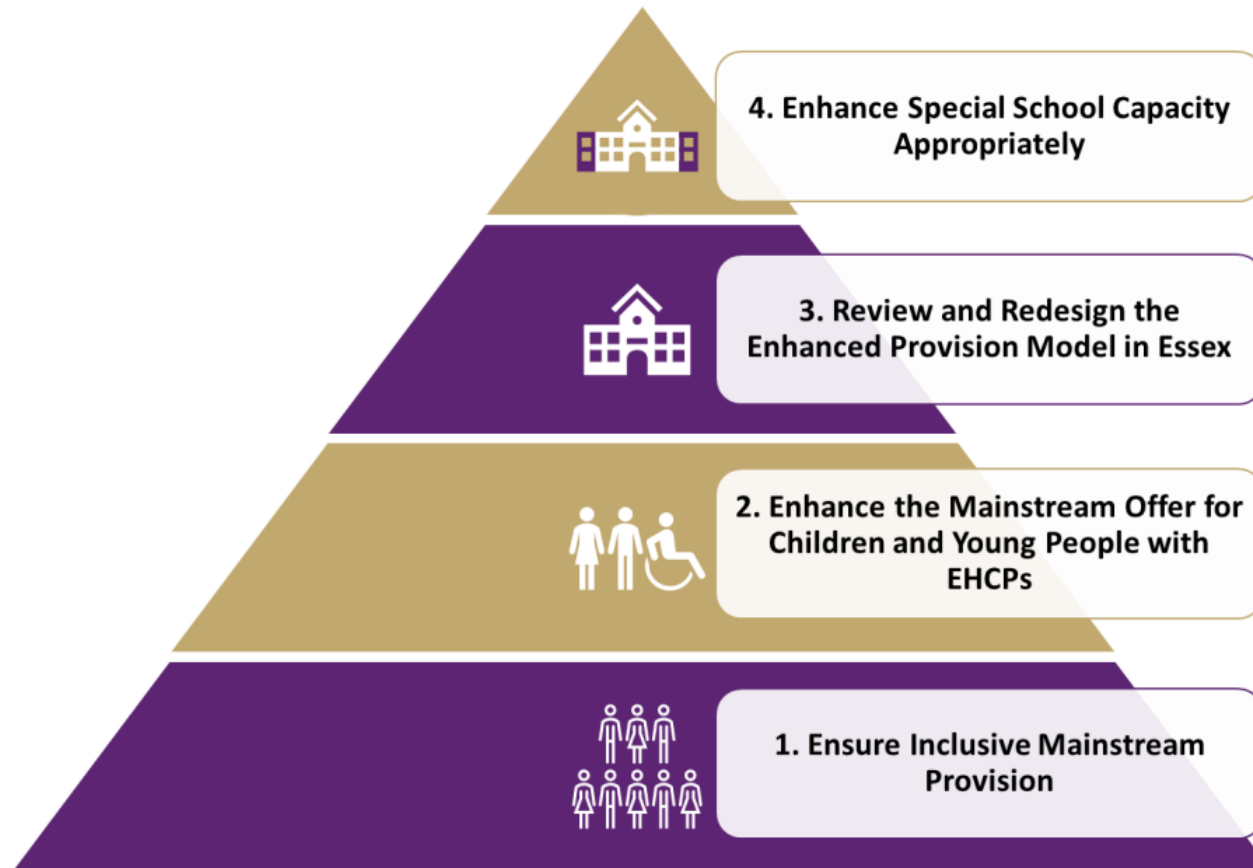
Growth in the special school population

The increase in children and young people with an EHCP in Essex has been one factor in the steady rise in the growth in numbers in Essex's special schools.

	2015	2019	2023	% increase
Mid	690	774	908	32%
North-East	577	814	1105	91%
South	795	1015	1143	44%
West	231	324	342	48%
Total	2293	2927	3498	53%

SEND Sufficiency - Intentions

To better meet the forecast needs of children and young people with SEND in Essex, we have four key intentions:



1. Ensure Inclusive Mainstream Provision

Implementation of the agreed Ordinarily Available Provision across all Essex mainstream schools, at universal and targeted levels will enable high quality inclusive teaching for all pupils.

The Essex Ordinarily Available sets out the agreed expectations about the provision and practice in all Early Years settings, mainstream schools and Post 16 providers for all children and young people, including those with SEND. It is what a young person, parent/carer or family can expect to be “ordinarily” available to their child without the need for involving specialist support.

Delivery of early intervention through the Inclusion Support Offer, including the Inclusion Framework, Inclusion Reviews, outreach, Continual Professional Development, access to evidence informed advice and guidance and proactive support from Inclusion Partners and Educational Psychologists are key in enabling schools to meet this challenge.



2. Enhance the Mainstream Offer for Children and Young People with EHCPs

Effective implementation of the provision specified in high quality EHCPs, through:

- Development of a comprehensive SEND workforce development offer;
- Development of an Essex outreach model to support inclusion and SEND provision through collaboration between mainstream and specialist settings and partners;
- Sustainable funding of EHCPs;
- Investing in increased capacity/ spaces/ resources for mainstream schools that enable effective SEND provision;
- Sensory specialist teacher service support.

Support for mainstream schools with children for whom special school has been deemed appropriate but where there is insufficient capacity at present to source a special school place.



3. Review and Redesign the Enhanced Provision Model in Essex

Develop new and reclassify existing enhanced provisions appropriate to the needs of Essex children and young people e.g. provision for children/young people with Moderate Learning Difficulties;

Ensure that pupils are placed appropriately in Enhanced Provisions across Essex, in relation to their needs, banding and postcode;

Ensure that pupils who attend Enhanced Provisions in Essex have measurable value added to their educational and wider outcomes;

Develop Service Level Agreements to ensure quality and accountability.



4. Enhance Special School Capacity Appropriately

Re-modelling and re-classification of current specialist provision to better match need, for example more provision for Severe Learning Difficulties and less special school provision for Moderate Learning Difficulties where that need can be met in mainstream schools.

Support special schools to be more flexible in the needs they are able to meet.

Satellite provisions of special schools on mainstream sites.

Seizing opportunities where council owned buildings become vacant.

Free school applications – we have both supported and led 5 special free school applications in Essex since 2014.

Determine what post 16 provision is needed to ensure sufficient, high quality opportunities for young people.



Enablers

To achieve these intentions, we will need to

Improve the opportunities to work together as a system:

Develop processes for health partners to share with ECC where a child is very likely to require specialist education at the earliest stage.

Review the impact on special schools of Social Care thresholds and wider system capacity gaps.

Develop an effective model of outreach/ in-reach between sectors.

Through the Balanced System, ensure appropriate and effective therapy provision.

Develop approaches to transition children back to mainstream provision when appropriate, working closely with parents.

Explore all potential opportunities to access additional funding for SEND provision.

Work with our special schools to consider the range of need that each of them meets.

Explore how we support more children and young people with moderate needs in mainstream schools.

Reviewing appropriate routes for returning children to in-county provision.



Recommendations

We ask that the committee:

- Supports the approach detailed in the SEND sufficiency plan;
- Supports helping us to raise awareness of both the challenges and our approach in addressing them.