

A photograph of two children, a boy and a girl, sitting outdoors and looking up at the sky. The boy on the left is wearing a white t-shirt and blue-rimmed glasses. The girl on the right is wearing a white cardigan and a necklace. They are both looking upwards with expressions of wonder. The background is a blurred green hedge.

Richmond upon Thames SEND Transformation Plan

2019/20 to 2021/22

For consultation

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1. Introduction

Our transformation plan sets out how we - as the main providers and commissioners of services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) - want to work with children, young people and families to improve our services on a continuous basis, within the financial resources available to us.

We have an opportunity to bring new energy and focus, with new leadership, a stronger commitment to work together as partners in the new SEND Partnership Board, and renewed collaboration with parents and carers who are volunteering their time to work with us on improving the local SEND system.

We are all part of a system which is both highly complex and chronically underfunded. Over recent years we have been campaigning and lobbying government for a fair level of funding, and we will continue that fight.

In the meantime, it is more crucial than ever that we all work closer together to make better use of our collective resources. We want families to experience the services they receive as genuinely joined up and sympathetic to their needs. Above all, we want every child and young person to have an educational experience that unlocks and nurtures talents, health and social care support that meets needs, and provides a solid foundation for a happy and fulfilling life.

Over the last few years, many children, young people, parents and carers have been involved in an ongoing conversation with us about the services they receive. Within the plan, there are examples of how the views they have shared with us have informed the priorities and actions in the plan. We want to continue that conversation, so that the plan evolves to reflect these views. We are committed to working with families in a transparent and honest way, to find creative and sustainable solutions to the funding challenges we face.

2. Our vision for 2020 and beyond

Every child and young person belongs to a local, inclusive community that provides the education, health and social care support they need to develop their talents and skills for a happy and fulfilling life.

Our shared principles guide how we will make decisions and work to achieve our vision.

- Children, young people, parents and carers are listened to and **engaged** in the design and delivery of strategies, services and the support provided to them. Children and young people have a right to say what they think, have their opinions taken into account and be involved in decisions and planning around their own lives. In the vast majority of cases parents and carers know their children better than anyone, and it is essential that their views and knowledge are incorporated in decisions being made about their child.
- **Local provision** is expanded so that children's education, health and care needs can be met locally through high quality services that are focussed on achieving the best possible outcomes for children and young people with SEND, promoting their **independence** and supporting them to live their lives with confidence and resilience.
- **The whole system**, with education, social care and health services at the core, works together and with families to understand and respond to children and young people's needs in a coherent way, with each partner contributing to robust assessments, plans and funding arrangements, and monitoring the impact of their services and support. There is a focus on working better together for children and young people with SEND who are also vulnerable in other ways, including those who are looked after, missing education, excluded from school, or at risk of exploitation and criminal behaviour.
- Provision is high quality and delivered by well trained and supported professionals who work effectively together and use evidence to inform their work, **promote resilience** and achieve positive outcomes for children and young people with SEND. Services that cannot demonstrate this positive impact are re-provided or re-commissioned.
- The community is supported to meet the needs of all children and young people by embracing diversity and **inclusion**, so that all children and young people with SEND have the same opportunity as their peers to play, learn and grow-up all together in their local community

3. Our context and challenges

Around 48,387 0 to 19 year olds live in the Richmond Borough¹. Approximately 4,500 children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities live in or educated in the borough. 1,408 of these children and young people (34%) aged between 0 and 25 years have education, health and care plans (EHCPs) to describe and put in place the educational provision and support that they need. Three percent of students at maintained and academy schools in Richmond have an EHCP, and 9% are registered as SEND Support. Eight percent of girls at these schools either have an EHCP or are registered for SEND support, whilst the equivalent figure for boys is 16%. One hundred and forty four children and young people with EHCPs are open to children's social care in Richmond (13% of all children and young people open to children's social care). Twenty nine percent of children who are looked after and 13% of children who are the subject of a child protection plan have EHCPs.

The number of children and young people with EHCPs has increased by over 20% since 2016, and it is anticipated that over the next 12 months more than 100 additional children and young people will receive one for the first time. The average annual increase since 2014 has been 8%. Several reasons account for this growth including reductions in perinatal and infant mortality, more proactive identification of need, and the increase in statutory age range to 0 to 25 years.

The main presenting needs in local EHCPs are: autistic spectrum conditions (28%), speech, language and communication needs (18%) and social, emotional and mental health needs (12%). Figures from health also show that emotional and mental health needs are prevalent in Richmond: the average mental wellbeing score for 15 year olds in Richmond the fourth worst in London and Richmond has the third highest rate in London of hospital admissions as a result of self-harm in those aged 10 to 24. Our draft Richmond Health and Care Plan 2019/21 identifies mental wellbeing and resilience as a priority area.

Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities are supported by a huge range of individuals, service providers, commissioners and strategic planners, including their parents, families and wider communities, staff in nurseries, schools and colleges, volunteers, organisations and Richmond VCS who support, fund and run voluntary services, groups and leisure activities, as well as local public services including Richmond Council, Achieving for Children and organisations in the NHS, including, Hounslow and Richmond Community Healthcare NHS Trust, NHS Richmond CCG, Southwest London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust, Kingston Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Chelsea & Westminster NHS Foundation Trust, community pharmacies and Richmond GPs.

We are facing financial challenges across the system. Our draft Richmond Health and Care Plan 2019/21 sets out how a renewed focus on working together to shift the balance of spending from reactive, high cost care to preventative care will be crucial in better managing our collective financial challenges whilst delivering the health and care the people of Richmond deserve.

¹Draft Richmond Health and Care Plan 2019/ 21

Funding to support the education of children and young people with SEND, from their early years to age 25, comes from the high needs block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). In 2019/20 the total DSG for Richmond upon Thames is £155.728 million of which £25.52 million is allocated for high needs provision by government. The increasing number of children and young people with special educational needs, as well as the increasing complexity of those needs, has meant spending on SEND provision has exceeded the grant from central government every year since 2014/15. That has created a cumulative funding gap of £15 million. The underfunding by government of high needs education services is a well-recognised and escalating national issue and is not unique to Richmond upon Thames. In fact, the Local Government Association estimate that there is a £536m shortfall in funding nationally this year.

So far, Richmond Council has funded the over spend from other areas of the council's budget, but the impact on the council's funding position is significant. If the council and its partners take no action, the continued DSG deficit will result in an overall deficit on the council's balance sheet and outstrip reserves making the council a financially unsustainable organisation. The council considers that government funding of the high needs block is insufficient to meet needs in Richmond and has launched a lobbying campaign on this issue to seek reasonable funding. Nevertheless, the council is committed to responsibly managing its finances and as such it is important the local partnership must work together to try to deliver high quality local provision within current budget constraints.

In Richmond, the largest proportion of children and young people with EHCPs are educated in mainstream nurseries and schools (46%), 7% are in specialist resource provisions within mainstream schools, 16% are in maintained or academy special schools and 15% are in post-16 education provision in colleges or vocational schemes, such as traineeships and apprenticeships. Twelve percent of children and young people are educated in independent and non-maintained schools and special schools, with the remaining 4% educated in other settings.

Many children and young people with SEND in Richmond achieve excellent outcomes and they and their families give feedback that they are happy with the support that they receive from education, health and social care services. We know from our regular conversations with children and young people that the vast majority are happy at their school and like the teachers and LSAs who work with them. We also know that the portage, educational psychology and speech and language services are particularly valued by young people, parents, carers and professionals. Recent investments in early help support and new specialist places in mainstream schools have been welcomed, with further improvements in the pipeline. However, we also know that too many families struggle to navigate a complex system and they can be frustrated at the time that assessments and provision can take to put in place.

On average, more Richmond children and young people are educated in independent special school places (9.3% of total EHCP cohort) than our outer London neighbours (6.5%) and national counterparts (4.9%). Independent school placements account for 28% of spend from the high needs block. The large majority of independent and non-maintained special schools are located outside Richmond and are often some distance from the borough. The fees for these schools are on average higher than mainstream schools, specialist resource provisions, or local special schools. The average distance from the borough also means that travel times for children and young people are increased and additional financial pressures are placed on home to school transport which is funded by the local authority outside the DSG.

Families' preference for independent and non-maintained schools has also been the main factor in the increase in the number of appeals to the First-Tier SEND Tribunal since the introduction of the SEND reforms initiated by the Children and Families Act 2014. So we know that we need our local SEND offer to be better. Local parents have given a clear message that sometimes they feel that there has been too much delay in getting children and young people the support they need, that processes can be complicated, difficult to navigate and not collaborative with parents, that decision making is not always transparent, that when provision is agreed, it is not always delivered in full, or effective and that sometimes there is not sufficient provision for children and young people with autism or emotional and mental health needs in particular.

Throughout this plan, we reaffirm our commitment to listening to, understanding and responding to the experiences that children, young people and families have of the local system; and to working together to make progress.

This plan is, however, only the beginning; the real test is how we take this opportunity to build on our strengths as individual organisations and collaborate to transform the local system so that, together, we are able to achieve more for children and young people with SEND.

4. How we will work together

Transforming our local offer will require change in all parts of the SEND system in the borough. As service commissioners and providers, we need to change how we work as well as developing our offer. We must foster the active engagement of all stakeholders, including children and young people, families, voluntary sector organisations and service-providers, so that we are better able to work in a collaborative way. We all sign up to the following values to help us to maximise our chance of success, diagnose where problems are likely to occur, and identify those areas where we should share our learning, assets and resources to achieve the best possible outcome for children and young people.

Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will focus on the outcomes we need to achieve, rather than on the specific interests of our individual organisations. We will mobilise the whole of our organisations to deliver the changes needed to work collaboratively and transform services.
Align	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will prioritise the shared use of our financial resources so that we achieve the best deals and maximise value for money. We will align our processes to reduce duplication and create joined-up pathways that make sense to children and families.
Engage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will actively collaborate to plan, design and deliver services and will jointly own and apply the decisions we make. We will use our professional networks to ensure all stakeholders have an equal voice in the transformation of services.
Invest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will share the risks and benefits of transforming services, including investing resources now to secure longer-term rewards. We will invest in our workforce so that they have the capabilities needed to deliver quality and financially sustainable services.
Innovate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will support and constructively challenge each other to generate new ideas and creative solutions to the challenges we face. We will evaluate the impact of our transformation and proactively share our learning and the opportunities it provides.

5. Governance arrangements

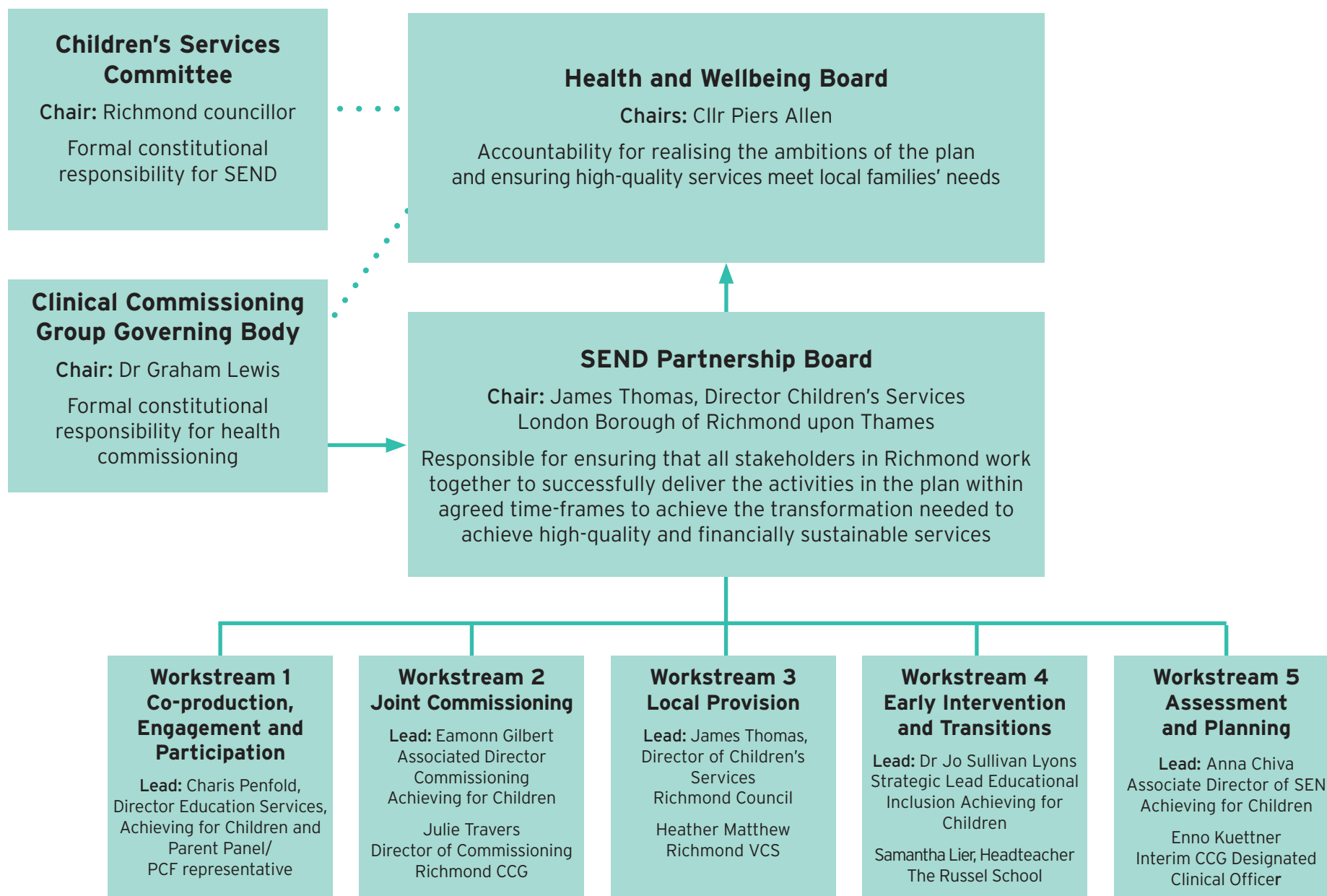
To deliver the outcomes required in the plan by April 2022, we will need robust governance arrangements that secure full engagement from all partner organisations and promote constructive debate, scrutiny and challenge. The Richmond Health and Wellbeing Board is ideally placed to strategically oversee the delivery of the plan as it is the forum where leaders from the local health and care system work together to improve the health and wellbeing of the local population.

To drive the progress of the plan, we will refresh the local SEND Partnership Board. It will be chaired by Richmond Council's Director of Children's Services, James Thomas, and the Managing Director of the Clinical Commissioning Group, Tonia Michaelides, will act as vice chair. The Partnership Board will bring together senior leaders from the services responsible for delivering the activities in the plan, parent-carer representatives, headteachers, health and social care provider representatives and voluntary sector organisations. Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities will contribute to the board's work supported by a participation officer from Achieving for Children. The SEND Partnership Board will be responsible for ensuring effective engagement from all stakeholders, including families, so that the detail of the plan is informed by their views and the likely impact of change.

The SEND Partnership Board will be accountable to the Health and Wellbeing Board for the successful coordination and delivery of the plan. Individual partner organisations will remain subject to their own governance arrangements in relation to the activities allocated to them in the plan, particularly where these require policy changes. For the council and Achieving for Children, this will be the council's Children's Services Committee, for the CCG, this will be the CCG governing body.

The activities in the plan are organised into five workstreams. Each workstream is jointly led by partners and will report to the SEND Partnership Board. Membership of each workstream will vary but should include those with a contribution to make from those across the partnership with responsibilities for, or interest in, delivering transformation across the local SEND system.

Governance diagram



6. Transforming SEND services

We propose five workstreams to lead the work we need to do as a partnership to deliver the plan. The following section of the plan explains the progress that we have already made within each area and what each workstream will do over the next three years to achieve the required improvements to the quality of services and operate within a sustainable budget.

Progress in delivering the transformation will be tracked and summarised in a highlight report to the SEND Partnership Board. Where issues cannot be resolved by the SEND Partnership Board they can be escalated, if necessary and ultimately, to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Engaging with children, young adults and their families will be essential in delivering the transformation. This engagement will include statutory consultation (where this is required), as well as co-production, the involvement of representative groups, and information sharing. Each workstream will be expected to develop an engagement plan showing how the impact of change on children, young people and families will be assessed, and seeking views to inform decision-making and prioritisation.

SEND Partnership Board

Partnership Board Chair: James Thomas, Director of Children's Service Richmond Council

Partnership Board Vice Chair: Tonia Michaelides, Managing Director Richmond Clinical Commissioning Group

Board objectives

The SEND Partnership Board will be responsible for ensuring that all stakeholders in Richmond work together to successfully deliver the activities in the plan within the agreed time-frames and achieve the transformation we need. This will include:

- securing the contributions of all local partners to the delivery of the transformation plan
- keeping track of progress and understanding the impact that we are having on outcomes for children and young people, including the impact of work to develop participation, engagement and co-production with children, young people and their parents and carers
- leading system-wide cultural change to upskill professionals, generate a genuine shared sense of purpose, and facilitate new ways of working within and across all partner organisations
- overseeing the joint development of partnership wide local strategies and policies to underpin the future system
- developing and maintaining an accurate and honest self-evaluation of our SEND system to describe what is working well and what needs to improve
- leading the development of shared local intelligence and insight to inform prioritisation, service planning and delivery across the partnership

Progress so far

The Partnership Board met for the first time in March and again in May. Membership spans a wide range of stakeholders, including family representatives, the voluntary sector, adult and children's social care, schools, public health. Terms of Reference have been finalised. Work remains to secure full partner engagement in the transformation plan and its delivery and agreeing the accountability and reporting mechanisms between the SEND Partnership Board and Health and Wellbeing Board.

Activities

Activity	Lead	Start date	End date
Cultural change			
Develop and deliver a strategy to equip colleagues across the partnership to contribute to the transformation of our local SEND system. This will include identifying the systems leadership, cultural change, behaviours and skills required and how these can be established	Co-Chairs SEND Partnership Board	Mar-19	Apr-21
Hold a follow-up to the SEND Futures Conference to hear the views of stakeholders and partners on progress towards transforming our SEND system, understand the challenges, and identify how to support partners to drive improvements in their own areas of responsibility	SEND Programme Director, Achieving for Children	Jan-19	Jul-19
Self-evaluation and progress of transformation			
Develop an accurate and honest self-evaluation of our SEND system to describe what is working well and what needs to improve	James Thomas, Director Children's Services	Apr-19	Jul-19
Partnership-wide strategies and policies			
Identify opportunities to drive transformation of the SEND system through the wider work of the partnership, ensuring new strategies and policies reflect our ambitions for the community and services in respect of children and young people with disabilities	Chair, SEND Partnership Board	Apr-19	Jul-19
Intelligence and insight			
Establish processes to develop a shared local understanding of trends and predict future needs that is used to forecast and inform integrated service planning and delivery, including analysing gaps in the local SEND offer	Acting Director Public Health, LBR	May-19	Jul-19

Workstream 1: Co-production, engagement and participation

Workstream Leads: Charis Penfold, Achieving for Children and parent panel/parent-carer forum representative

Workstream objectives

The co-production and engagement workstream will bring together system leaders, family representatives and input from children and young people. The workstream will lead work to empower the partnership and the community to listen and respond to children, young people and families' views and wishes and work better together to support the best possible outcomes for all children and young people with SEND. The workstream will lead work on engagement and participation of children and young people with all levels of need and their families. This includes:

- fostering productive and positive relationships between parents and carers and service commissioners and providers, including with the new parent-carer forum, to enable co-production and to understand and evaluate the impact of our transformation activities
- reviewing and developing our local approach to enabling and empowering children and young people to have their say in decisions about them and to shape services and strategies that impact on them
- developing a local approach to provide more opportunities for all children, young people and families to participate in co-production and engagement activities, including families from minority ethnic communities and families where parents have special needs and learning disabilities themselves
- developing local mechanisms for all partners and providers, including early years settings, schools and college to feedback on the effectiveness of provision, progress towards outcomes and their experience of the process
- supporting the community to meet the needs of all children and young people by embracing diversity and inclusion, so that all children and young people with SEND have the same opportunity as their peers to play, learn and grow-up all together in their local community

Progress so far

Children, young people, parents, carers and professionals have provided feedback on local provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, the vision for future services, and priorities for transformation through a series of consultation events and activities between 2016 and 2019. Parents have given a clear message that more should be done to support them to understand the process and the system. Working with families, we have identified the following five priority areas for co-production in the next year: therapies, autism strategy, new free schools, 16-25 pathways and the annual review process.

We have begun to develop a local strategy to ensure we can listen and respond to the views, experience and input of children, families and young people across the SEND system.

- We are supporting the national charity Contact, working on behalf of the Department for Education, to set up a new Parent Carer Forum under provisions in the Children and Families Act 2014.
- In the interim, we are also developing a parent panel to help guide and support communication and consultation with parents and carers, and to help the Council, CCG and Achieving for Children better understand the needs of the wider SEND community. The panel will comprise of up to 25 parents and carers of children and young people with SEND aged 0 to 25 and resident in Richmond upon Thames. Membership is designed to be representative of the needs of all children and young people in the borough.
- We are developing a young people's group to provide direct feedback and input from children and young people.
- We are developing mechanisms to enable us to hear from children, young people, parents and carers about the impact of their SEN provision, their EHCP and whether it is making a positive difference, for example feedback will be captured after all new assessments have been completed and through the annual review process. This will be developed to hear the views of providers to assess the impact of EHCPs and more widely to hear the voices of parents and carers whose children and young people are at SEN support.
- We are developing our events programme, including information sharing events for parents and carers aim to support the transition process at primary and secondary school and into post-16 provision and coffee mornings to develop relationships between the SEN team and parents and carers are held twice termly, well attended and enable SEN to receive helpful feedback.
- SENDIASS is working closely with the SEN service manager to share themes from their interaction with parents and carers which identify where things are working well and where improvement is needed.

Activities

Activity	Lead	Start date	End date
Develop template for workstream engagement plans so each workstream can demonstrate how they will understand the impact of change on children, young people and families and seek views to inform decision-making and prioritisation	Associate Director Business Development & Communication	May-19	Jun-19
Support Contact (national charity) with the development of a new local parent-carer forum fulfilling the requirements of the children and Families Act 2014 and leading to an effective working relationship that promotes meaningful engagement, parental buy-in and co-production of sustainable solutions	Director Education Services and Associate Director Business Development & Communications AfC	Oct-18	Sept-19
Work with children and young people to audit how they have their say and are involved in decisions about their own support and the information available to them about processes, and agree action plan	Participation Officer for Children and Young People with SEND, AfC	May-19	Dec-19
Work with families to audit engagement, participation and feedback mechanisms in place across the partnership to understand what is working well, what we are concerned about and identify gaps, and agree action plan	Director Education Services and Parent Panel/PCF representative	May-19	Dec-19
Establish a shared understanding of co-production and levels of participation and develop a local model that enables the engagement of as many families as possible in co-production and service planning, prioritising: therapies, ASD strategy, new free schools, 16-25 pathways annual review process	Director Education Services and Associate Director Business Development & Communications AfC	Jan-19	Sept-19

Activity	Lead	Start date	End date
Establish local expectations on the type and quality of communications with children, young people and their families, and between partners, and practical support (eg toolkit) to support engagement, participation and engagement activities	Associate Director Business Development & Communications AfC	May-19	Dec-19
Develop, improve and promote the Local Offer website so that more children, young people, parents, carers and professionals are aware of its value as a one-stop shop for local services	Associate Director Business Development & Communications AfC	Jan-19	Jul-19 Ongoing

Workstream 2: Joint commissioning

Workstream Leads: Eamonn Gilbert Associate Director Commissioning, Achieving for Children
Julia Travers Director of Commissioning, Richmond CCG

Workstream objectives

The joint commissioning workstream will focus on developing the partnership's approach to commissioning together to ensure that our local services are able to meet the needs of children and young people with special educational needs. The workstream will lead work to leverage improvements in service quality and maximise value for money from our shared resources through commissioning. We know that to do this, we must design and commission together with children and young people and their families. We must also draw on shared local intelligence, most importantly the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis, to inform our commissioning priorities and activities. This workstream will:

- develop principles and processes that enable commissioning activities to better respond to local need and be strongly focussed on outcomes for children and young people, including developing our local intelligence and considering how different funding models may offer incentives to drive improvements in the quality and efficiency of provision
- work together and with children, young people and their parents to understand the performance of commissioned services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and the outcomes that they support and identify priorities to transform services
- review resourcing allocations across the partnership to understand the contributions required of each partner to meet the needs of children and young people with education, health and care plans, particularly the joint funding of:
 - provision and placements for children with complex needs
 - out of borough and residential placements, including transition to local services when young people are at home, or return home after their placement ends
- work with children, young people and their families to develop a high quality local therapy offer that supports children and young people to make good progress towards their goals; maximises their opportunities for inclusion and independence; reduces waiting times for assessment and intervention; and increases children, young people and parents' satisfaction with therapy services
- identify opportunities to work in commissioning consortiums or other partnership arrangements with other areas to leverage cost savings and achieve better value for money from the larger scale purchase of placements and other services

Support Achieving for Children to improve commissioning in its placement brokerage service, including building quality assurance mechanisms into its contract management so that it secures good value for money, and reduces spending on its independent school placements and the costs of top-up funding to mainstream and special schools.

Progress so far

Achieving for Children and the CCG share a commitment to developing our approach to joint commissioning so that our work is more structured, rooted in an understanding of need and performance and focused on outcomes. This commitment has an initial focus upon a review of therapies provision, including both a focus upon the service model that will be most effective and the level of funding that can be committed to ensure that it is sufficient to meet local needs.

Price negotiations have also been held with independent and non-maintained special schools and local academy trusts. New contracts were issued to these schools in 2017/18 which delivered some cost reductions. Achieving for Children has a placement commissioning and brokerage service primarily focused on its care placements and supported accommodation for care leavers. The service was extended in September 2018 to include a full-time brokerage specialist for SEND placements.

In our recent public consultations on reducing the over spend in the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block, respondents were split in their views on the proposal to transfer funds from the schools block to the High Needs Block. Respondents raised concerns that the proposed block transfer would impact negatively on teaching and learning for all children and be difficult for schools to absorb due to existing funding pressures. For 2019/20 the Department for Education has agreed with the council's case for a modest transfer at a level of 0.5% which balances the protection of core school budgets with the need to provide additional resources for SEND.

Activities

Activity	Lead	Start date	End date
Contribute to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment so that the needs of children and young people with special educational needs are robustly included and understood across the partnership	Interim Director Public Health	Jul-19	Dec-19
Work with children, young people and their families to complete a stocktake of commissioned services to understand their performance and the outcomes that they support	Associate Director Commissioning, AfC and Lead Commissioner Children's Services, CCG	Jun-19	Apr-20
Review resourcing allocations across the partnership for provision to support children and young people with EHCPs and work together to develop funding arrangements to secure financially sustainable services, for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provision and placements for children with complex needs; out of borough and residential placements, including transition to local services when young people are at home, or return home after their placement ends 	Director Children's Services, LBR Managing Director CCG	Apr-19	Jul-19
Develop and establish shared principles and priorities for joint commissioning across the SEND partnership	Director Children's Services, LBR and Managing Director CCG	May-19	Jul-19
Develop and commission in consultation with children, young people, parents, carers and professionals, a new therapies offer based on the findings of the needs assessment and gap analysis, including a strategy to provide therapeutic support beyond statutory model	Head of Health Services, AfC and Lead Commissioner Children's Services, CCG	Oct-18	Apr-20

Activity	Lead	Start date	End date
Scope opportunities, develop business cases and implement plans to work with other areas to commission on a larger scale, driving service improvements and leverage maximum cost savings in SEND services	Associate Director Commissioning, AfC	May-19	Sep-19
Review contract management processes to ensure that they provide effective quality assurance of SEND placements and derive maximum value for money for all funding organisations in the SEND partnership	Associate Director Commissioning, AfC	May-19	Dec-19
Complete contract reviews with all current independent and non-maintained special school providers, mainstream and special schools in receipt of top-up funding, to achieve cost reductions	Associate Director Commissioning, AfC	Jan-19	Apr-22

Workstream 3: Local provision

Workstream Lead: James Thomas, Director of Children's Services, Richmond Council and Heather Matthews, Richmond VCS

Workstream objectives

The objectives of the local provision workstream are to develop capacity and quality in our local community and local education, health and social care services for children with SEND so that children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities have the same opportunity as their peers to play, learn and grow-up all together. This includes:

- identifying how local community assets such as parks, play spaces and universal services can be inclusive
- reviewing and developing our support for families post-diagnosis
- increasing opportunities for children and young people with send by supporting voluntary organisations to develop to provide the widest possible range of inclusive opportunities
- developing specialist education places in Richmond that are the first choice of children, young people and families, including expanding local specialist resource provisions and establishing new special schools to meet identified needs
- reviewing the quality of local provision for young people aged 16 to 25 and developing new high quality and meaningful post-16 education, training and employment pathways, including consideration of the local adult learning offer
- reviewing local alternative education provision to determine the most effective and sustainable model for the future
- developing the delivery model for home to school travel of children and young people with SEND ensuring that it actively supports opportunities to promote and achieve independence and is financially sustainable

Progress so far

In our recent consultation activity, proposals to establish more local specialist places were welcomed. A number of respondents remarked that well-funded, sufficient and consistent therapy provision is crucial to meet need and gain parents' confidence in the local offer. An inclusive ethos is needed across the borough so that all schools are contributing to supporting local children and young people with special educational needs. Respondents also broadly agreed that a better post-16 offer is needed. Parents and carers responded that support during transitions is crucial, including better joined up working between children and adults' services and ensuring a well-planned transition to adulthood and greater independence.

Young people told us that that school should teach them more practical skills that will be useful in their adult lives. Young people also told us that school should talk to them more about jobs and what they want to be when they are adults, and offer a week work experience for all pupils in years 10 and 11. For the first time this year, we published an Opportunities Pack for young people setting out local options for 14 to 19 year olds.

In March 2018, we consulted on plans to increase the number of school places for children with SEND at specialist resource provisions in local mainstream schools and at special schools. One hundred and forty six places have been, or will be, created as a result. The consultation resulted in a change to the funding and contracting of specialist resource provisions so that there is a clear expectation to deliver outreach support for the inclusion of pupils in neighbouring schools. Our joint applications with Kingston Council to the Department of Education to run a local competition to establish and run two new special schools as part of the Special Free School Presumptive Route has been approved: one school is for children and young people with autistic spectrum disorders situated in Kingston, the other school is for children and young people with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs situated in Richmond. Pathways and support to prepare young people with SEND for adulthood have also been strengthened through the development of employment-based routes and vocational training programmes.

Activities

Activity	Lead	Start date	End date
Our community			
Work with children, young people and families to understand how inclusive our community assets and universal services, such as our libraries and parks and play spaces, are and what our ambitions for this should be	Director Children's Services, LBR	May-19	Oct-19
Agree an approach to developing voluntary sector capacity to help build inclusion and provide a wider range of opportunities for children and young people with SEND	Heather Matthew, RVCS	Apr-19	Sept-19
Supporting families			
Develop and establish shared principles and priorities for joint commissioning across the SEND partnership	Heather Matthew, RVCS	Apr-19	Sept-19
Specialist school places			
Produce a 10 year SEND places plan that identifies the numbers and types of early years, school and post-16 places needed and makes recommendations for how and where these should be provided.	Associate Director, School Place Planning	Jan-19	Jun-19
Raise awareness of the quality and range of local education, health and care provision for children and young people with SEND in mainstream schools, specialist resource provisions and special schools	Associate Director Business Development & Communications, AfC	Jan-19	Jul-19
Increase the number of specialist resource provision places to reflect the needs identified in the ten-year SEND provision plan, and develop the multi-agency offer such as therapies, in line with the increase	Associate Director: School Place Planning	Jan-19	Apr-22

Pathways for young people aged 16 to 25			
Develop a local post-16 learning offer for specific groups most likely to use residential provision maximising the use of the adult education curriculum and community assets such as libraries	Associate Director Commissioning, AfC and Assistant Director Adult Social Services, LBR	Apr-19	Jul-19
Alternative education provision			
Review the funding and delivery model for alternative education provision to ensure it provides good value for money and whether it could be better targeted for children and young people with SEND, including investigating mechanisms for recharging schools for the costs of permanent exclusion	Strategic Lead Educational Inclusion, AfC	Feb-19	Apr-19
Home to school transport			
Implement new delivery model for home to school travel that consider new funding models, such as dynamic purchasing systems and payment by results solutions for independent travel training	Associate Director Commissioning, AfC	Apr-19	Sept-19

Workstream 4: Early intervention and transition

Workstream Lead: Jo Sullivan-Lyons, Strategic Lead: Educational Inclusion, Achieving for Children
Samantha Leir, Headteacher The Russell School

Workstream objectives

The objective of the early intervention and transition workstream is to support education providers, families and other professionals to be competent and confident in supporting children and young people with SEND across all education phases, from the early years to post-16, so that they have the best possible educational experiences and their needs are met early without the need for an EHCP. This includes:

- upskilling the workforce to better understand the needs of children and young people with SEND and the strategies they can use to provide support at the earliest stage so that their needs are met within mainstream settings wherever possible
- providing advice and support to parents, carers, teachers and other professionals to promote inclusion and support resilience and independence to achieve positive transitions between school key stages and phases, and into post-16 education or training, and to adulthood
- developing effective links and working relationships with targeted and universal services so that families have access to support that builds on their strengths and promotes resilience and independence
- develop our understanding of need and services to improve the emotional and mental wellbeing and resilience of children and young people
- supporting young adults to have a smooth and well-planned transition from children's services to adult social care and health services

Progress so far

In our public consultation on the future funding options for the high needs block of the DSG which was completed in October and November 2018, the majority of respondents agreed with our proposals on early intervention. Respondents gave a clear message that early intervention cannot take the place of statutory provision and to be successful, early intervention initiatives must be resourced. We agree. Many also feel that more evidence of the impact of early intervention must be developed before further investment of scarce resources can be made. Early intervention initiatives should build on local expertise and include developing strong partnerships with the community and voluntary sector.

We have increased the support available to all education providers to improve inclusion. This includes introducing a one-stop-shop service to provide information, advice and guidance and to signpost providers to specialist support services. We have also established a secondary phase educational inclusion support service and are offering SEMH networks free to all primary and secondary schools. Revised threshold guidance has been co-produced specifying the evidence-based interventions available to schools and post-16 providers. This has been supported by holding specialist inclusion and intervention training for mainstream schools. An early intervention panel was established in September 2018 aimed at providing early support to schools, so that children's and young people's educational needs can continue to be met within their existing mainstream setting. A transitions protocol is in place to support early and joint planning for young adults who meet the eligibility criteria for adult social care services.

An example of early intervention in action

Social communication intensive packages (SCIPs) are inclusive and preventative packages of support provided to pupils in their local mainstream school. The package consists of allocated additional adult (teaching assistant (TA)) time, outreach advice, support from a member of the outreach team (consisting of professionals with experience in working with children who have social communication needs, ASD) and termly training or networking sessions for the allocated TA and class teacher.

Last year (2017/18) Achieving for Children piloted SCIPs in Richmond with four children. These children were identified in the nursery year as having social communication needs or ASD. Following three terms of input or monitoring three of the four pupils are now having their needs met at school support. A review of the pilot showed that:

- parents noted increased confidence, improved social or communication skills and that their children were calmer or having less 'meltdowns' - therefore accessing the teaching or learning in the classroom environment
- schools commented on how helpful outreach advice was to ensure support or strategies were successful, improving confidence of staff to meet the children's needs and the progress made by the pupils. Feedback from training sessions was very positive
- a key part of the package is in upskilling school staff to meet the needs of these pupils through ongoing support and training and providing this early so that the 'right' things are in place from the start

Following the successful outcomes and feedback from the pilot, this year, Achieving for Children are delivering 10 SCIPs in Richmond and supporting some schools with outreach advice.

Activities

Activity	Lead	Start date	End date
Early intervention			
Establish and facilitate a local system of peer-to-peer inclusion audits that support inclusive practice in mainstream settings	Strategic Lead Educational Inclusion, AfC	Jan-19	Jul-19
Complete an assessment of the mental health needs of the under-5 population of Richmond, to inform the development of emotional wellbeing services	Lead Commissioner Children's Services, CCG	Sept-19	Apr-20
Establish an emotional wellbeing programme in all of our schools, including wellbeing support, training and information to students, parents and staff	Lead Commissioner Children's Services, CCG	Sept-19	Apr-21
Establish a digital youth project steering group to review and expand the range of resources and tools to support emotional wellbeing and strengthen resilience	Lead Commissioner Children's Services, CCG	Sept-19	Jan-20
Complete a review of the current neurodevelopment and assessment offer for 0-5 year olds by April 2020, ensuring that by 2021 the recommendations of the review are being implemented	Lead Commissioner Children's Services, CCG	Sept-19	Jan-21
Establish the skills and capacity in special schools and specialist resource provisions to provide expert outreach support to education providers	Lead School Improvement Adviser SEND, AfC	Mar-19	Jun-19
Develop a learning and development programme to upskill professionals supporting children and young people with SEND, based on the intelligence gathered from the Educational Inclusion Support Service and feedback from children and young people	Associate Director Workforce, AfC and tbc reps from CCG and LBR	Apr-19	Jun-19
Review and plan the support needed by families to build their resilience so that more children and young people with SEND at risk of requiring residential school placements are supported to remain at home	Strategic Lead Educational Inclusion, AfC	Jan-19	Apr-20

Evaluate the impact of early intervention initiatives to inform the design and development of future service provision, including monitoring the direct impact of the early intervention panel	Strategic Lead Educational Inclusion, AfC	Apr-19	Apr-20
Transition			
Build on the existing transitions protocol between children's services and adult services to develop a preparing for adulthood strategy that promotes independence from the earliest stage and informs the design and delivery of services by all organisations in the SEND partnership	Associate Director Commissioning, AfC and Assistant Director Adult Social Care, LBR	Jan-19	Sept-19
Establish and implement a process, as part of the preparing for adulthood strategy, to review all EHCPs at Year 11, to determine whether a young person's needs would be better supported post-18 by a managed case transfer to adult social care services and to ensure that young people experience a planned and smooth transition between children's and adult mental health services	Associate Director Commissioning, AfC and Assistant Director Adult Social Care, LBR; Lead Commissioner Children's Services, CCG	Apr-19	Apr-22
Increase the numbers of young people with post-16 EHCPs on vocational pathways, including apprenticeships, traineeships and supported internships to support them in their transition into employment	Associate Director Commissioning	Oct-18	Sept-19

Workstream 5: Assessment and planning

Workstream Leads: Anna Chiva, Associate Director Special Educational Needs, Achieving for Children
Enno Kuettner, Interim Designated Clinical Officer, Clinical Commissioning Group

Workstream objectives

The objective of the assessment and planning workstream is to drive improvements in the timeliness and overall quality of EHCPs so that they are specific about the educational provision, support and outcomes to be achieved for each child or young person, with equal emphasis given to their health and social care needs. This includes:

- streamlining the process for the development of EHCPs, ensuring that plans are completed within statutory timescales to a consistently high standard, promote resilience and independence and are based on detailed and well-evidenced assessments by all professionals
- establishing effective quality assurance mechanisms for EHCPs that are inclusive of all organisations and professionals contributing to the EHCP in line with the SEND Code of Practice (2014)
- establishing a robust framework for the annual review of EHCPs so that: statutory expectations are met, children and young people are fully engaged and the process is inclusive of all stakeholders, there is a thorough review of the outcomes and continuing needs of each child or young person and the provision supports children and young people to make good educational progress and promotes resilience and independence

Progress so far

A review of the EHCP assessment and planning process has been completed using feedback from parents and carers to better understand the customer journey and experience of local services. Feedback in consultation activity has been clear that local families feel EHCP coordinators and SEN caseworkers need more training and support to produce quality documentation and support parents to navigate and engage with the process. We have designed and completed a skills audit for the team that has informed the design of a workforce development programme for EHCP coordinators and case workers within the SEND service. This includes a focus on effective communication and managing difficult conversations sensitively. SENDIASS is working closely with the SEND service manager to share themes from their interaction with parents and carers which identify where things are working well and where improvement is needed

We are developing a new multi-disciplinary quality assurance process for education, health and care plans. The designated clinical officer and the designated medical officer will be responsible for the central coordination and quality assurance of health elements of education, health and care plans. We have convened a multi-disciplinary quality assurance team which will undertake the first 'deep dive' in May and June.

New systems and resource have been established to better meet statutory obligations on annual reviews. In feedback to our consultation activity, local families and professionals agreed that annual reviews are important. A clear message was given that annual reviews must be focussed on young people's needs, not driven by a target to reduce provision. We agree. We are developing our approach to annual reviews so that they serve a number of purposes - to assess the impact of provision on children's progress, to assess whether there should be any change in provision - this could be an increase in the level of support or a decrease - and highlight any possible challenges in the placement, to ensure accountability for providers who are overseeing the provision in the EHCP and to help plan transitions. A specialist officer has been recruited to lead on a programme of annual reviews. There are plans to expand this team to include an annual review coordinator to support the process. The initial focus for annual reviews has been on independent school placements and EHCPs at key stage and phase transition points at Year 5, Year 9 and in post-16

Activities

Activity	Lead	Start date	End date
EHCP quality			
Develop quality assurance processes for EHCPs across all partner organisations involved in assessment and planning, ensuring there is regular feedback to professionals to promote continual improvement	Director Education Services and Lead Commissioner Children's Services, CCG	Jan-19	Jul-19
Review all EHCPs to identify any specific weaknesses or lack of specificity in the quality of assessments and/or plans, develop a programme to improve the quality of plans where this is required	Associate Director SEND and Designated Clinical Officer CCG	Nov-18	Nov-19
Develop and deliver a multi-module training programme to drive up the quality and consistency of EHCPs, ensuring this reflects the expectations in Children and Families Act 2014, including the need for plans to work towards the independence of all children and young people	Associate Director Workforce	Dec-18	Mar-19
Annual reviews			
Support all partner organisations to fully engage with annual EHCP reviews through attendance at mandatory training, so that the process is meaningful and leads to the robust re-assessment and review of children's and young people's needs and provision	Associate Director SEND	Jan-19	Jun-21
Establish a priority programme for annual reviews focused on independent school placements and key stage and phase transition points, develop good practice guidelines and processes for annual reviews to assess whether plans are achieving the agreed outcomes, promoting resilience and independence, and provide good value for money	Associate Director SEND	Nov-18	Apr-21
Upgrade the SEND electronic case management system so that it better supports the EHCP assessment, planning and annual review process	Head of Business Systems	Apr-19	Jul-19

7. Achieving value for money

There is significant and escalating financial pressure in relation to the provision of high needs education services at both a local and national level. At 31 March 2019, the council is carrying forward a cumulative debt of nearly £11m in relation to education services. If we do nothing this debt will continue to escalate to unaffordable levels and put at risk the council's ability to deliver the local services that Richmond residents deserve. Locally we plan to tackle this funding gap in three ways.

- The council is committed to continuing to provide cash flow to protect high needs services but will also be proactive in campaigning for a more equitable level of funding.
- We will invest in local services to ensure that they are both high quality and cost efficient.
- We will challenge ourselves to ensure that our systems are as efficient and effective as they can be.

Increasing the level of funding

The council recognises that the financial pressure being experienced on high needs education is principally due to an underfunding of these services at a national level. It is in this context that the council continues to be proactive in lobbying government for fairer grant levels and a funding system that adequately reflects the level of need and local statutory duty.

The council will consider the budget for all education services alongside partners each year. It is important that in considering the annual budget that partners explore options to re-prioritise money between local priorities (both SEND and non-SEND) and increase the budget available for SEND in the context of a rising level of need that is not matched by equivalent funding increases.

The council is committed to continuing to deliver the education services that Richmond pupils need despite the underfunding by government and will continue to provide cash flow for these services whilst the cost of services and level of funding are brought more in to line.

Investment in our local services

As part of this plan, local partners intend to invest locally to ensure that we have sufficiently skilled local staff and a good local infrastructure to support pupils achieve their potential. This should in turn make the funding we have go further through improving the efficiency of our local processes, improving how we use our local resources and reducing dependence on the independent sector. Partners are committed to ensuring that as much money as possible is spent locally by our partners. The level of investment will be reviewed periodically and is planned as follows.

Investment	Summary of investment proposal	One off investment	Ongoing investment		
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
SEND schools outreach and early intervention team	To provide a model of school based resource and support which gives mainstream school staff the skills, confidence and competence to support children and young people at SEN Support, those in the process of EHC assessment and those with an EHCP. This will particularly help groups of children and young people whose needs present most significant challenges to mainstream schools	n/a	£187,833	£322,000	£322,000
SEN Transport investment in independent travel training	Annual investment in a voluntary sector contract to facilitate the support and training of young people to develop the skills and confidence to travel as independently as they are able	n/a	£35,000	£35,000	£35,000
Therapies	Investment in a strengthened therapies offer to ensure that young people have the therapy support they need in Richmond borough schools. A detailed review is underway and the recommendations of this review will inform the value of therapy investment required from both health and local authority partners	n/a	tbc	tbc	tbc
Improving SEND parent engagement	A key priority is to improve engagement with parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. Learning from recent experience, and from speaking to local authorities with a strong track record in this area, has highlighted that building capacity is critical: genuine engagement and co-production is time-consuming, and progress will be limited if there is not enough capacity. In addition, having a single point of contact for parents and carers helps to build greater clarity, trust and accountability	n/a	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000

SEND marketing campaign	Develop a marketing campaign for the local SEND offer (0 to 25) to promote the high quality of local SEND provision in mainstream schools, specialist resource provisions and special schools as well as apprenticeships and colleges. Hosting of local SEND Futures Conference to improve partner engagement and consistency of local vision	£30,000	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000
Communications and engagement	Pan system communications and engagement programme, to be shared across statutory agencies of Council and CCG 50:50. All stakeholders aware of and engaged in the delivery of the transformation programme				
SEND Placement Commissioner	Dedicated Richmond SEND commissioner to undertake negotiations regarding cost of placements and monitor placement contracts to ensure that providers are delivering what they have been commissioned to deliver	n/a	£45,000	£45,000	£45,000
SEND Data Analyst	Dedicated SEND data analyst who would develop the existing data sets, support the SEND team to improve the quality of data recording and develop SEND business intelligence to inform planning and service delivery	n/a	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000
Systems	Upgrade the SEND electronic case management system so that it better supports the EHCP assessment, planning and annual review process and improves business intelligence to support commissioning and decision making	£15,000	£-	£-	£-
	Total investment required	£45,000	£347,833	£482,000	£482,000

Improving efficiency

Whilst it is important that the council continues to challenge the national funding system, it is also important that steps are taken locally to ensure that the funding we do have is aligned to need and that we are achieving maximum value for every penny that is spent. This plan recognises that there are different ways of delivering services and that broadly speaking through having a high quality local offer that is aligned to need, we can support more pupils with the level of funding that is available. To enable partners to measure progress towards improved value for money and efficiency we have projected forward over the plan timescale to estimate what the funding gap would be if we remained at the existing ratio of cost to need. The projections assume an escalating level of need in line with learning from recent trends.

Year	Estimated spend at existing need to spend ratio	Estimated number of EHCPs	Average high needs spend relative to number of EHCPs	Estimated Funding Gap (before action)	Estimated Cumulative Funding Gap (before action)
	£m	Pupils	£	£m	£m
2018/19	29.800	1,376	21,657	4.194	10.955
2019/20	31.966	1,476	21,657	6.195	17.150
2020/21	33.915	1,566	21,657	7.944	25.094
2021/22	35.647	1,646	21,657	9.476	34.570

The progress against achieving improved value for money will be monitored alongside the service performance indicators as improvements in both will all indicate that the system value and efficiency is moving in a positive direction. The indicators will need to be viewed as a collective to form a well-rounded assessment of direction of travel and will be an important factor in determining whether the elements of this plan that focus on improved efficiency are being achieved.

The assessment of success against the indicators will be measured relative to statistical neighbours and historic trends to ensure that the plan does not encourage unrealistic target setting or an undue focus on cost reduction versus system improvement. A benchmark in terms of where we are currently relative to statistical neighbours will help inform areas for improvement.

The indicators that we will use to measure improved achievement of value for money will be:

Indicator	How it indicates efficiency	Benchmark	Richmond
Average high needs spend relative to number of EHCPs (£)	High level value for money indicator	Richmond 2018/19 baseline and stat neighbour average	£21,657
Funding gap (£) As a % of government funding	Indicator of whether local and national expectations are aligned to inform lobbying	Richmond 2018/19 baseline and stat neighbour average	£4,194,000 17%
% of budget spent in borough	Indicator of whether the local offer is meeting pupils needs or level of placement sufficiency	Richmond 2018/19 baseline	37%
Average cost of an in-borough placement: special	Indicates whether cost of local school placements are in line with comparators	Richmond 2018/19 baseline	£29,151
% of budget spent on state funded establishments	Indicates reduced reliance on the more expensive independent sector other than where it is not practical to meet need	Richmond 2018/19 baseline	52%
% of pupils with EHCPs supported in mainstream schools	Indicates how successful we are in supporting schools to support pupils relative to comparators	Richmond 2018/19 baseline and stat neighbour average	45%
% of EHC assessments completed in 20 days	Indicates how effectively the team and partners are working together to develop plans	Richmond 2018/19 baseline and stat neighbour average	74.8%
Average cost of an independent placement	Indicates ability of commissioning function to negotiate favourable rates relative to comparators	Richmond 2018/19 baseline	£46,567
% of EHCPs per 0 to 25 population	Assessment threshold indicator	Richmond Jan 2018 (to be updated once 2019 census available) baseline and stat neighbour average	2.1%
% of SEN support per 0 to 25 population (borough based)	Assessment threshold indicator	Richmond Jan 2018 (to be updated once 2019 census available) baseline and stat neighbour average	6%

