

**EVERY  
CHANGE  
for EVERY  
CHILD**

**NHS**  
**Tower Hamlets**  
Clinical Commissioning Group



# Summary of our SEND self-evaluation October 2019

## Introduction

In 2014 the government introduced major reforms to support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) enshrined in the Children and Families Act, and accompanied by a new SEND Code of Practice. Key to the reforms was a more integrated approach across local areas and this included the replacement of statutory statements of SEND with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) were commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) in 2016 to inspect local areas and review how effectively they are fulfilling their statutory responsibilities to children and young people (from birth to age 25) with SEND.

The 'Local Area' covers all services provided by the local authority (across both Children and Culture and Health Adults and Communities) and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) for children and young people with SEND. It also includes parent and young people groups, the voluntary sector and educational provisions which both deliver and commission services for children and young people.

Accountability for the local area SEND systems sits with the Health and Wellbeing Board, a statutory partnership, established by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. It is the forum where leaders from the health and care system work together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population and reduce health inequalities.

This document summarises the local area's self-evaluation (SEF) and is designed to provide readers with an overview of the key activities and strategic initiatives that are being undertaken in the local area to support and improve the lives of children and young people with SEND.

## Our Vision

Our vision, outlined in the *Tower Hamlets SEND Strategy 2018-23*, is for all Tower Hamlets' children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to lead fulfilling lives, to be as independent as possible, and supported to learn, thrive and achieve by their families, services and local communities.

Tower Hamlets is committed to continue embedding the 2014 SEND reforms within the local area by working with children and young people, their families and partners across the borough in support of this agenda.

We want a flexible and responsive SEND system that strives for continuous improvement, as evidenced through joint reviews held in October 2018 and May 2019. Such a system will provide support to all of the 9000 children and young people throughout Tower Hamlets who have special educational needs. Leaders are working together to establish visible, strategic leadership, accountability, improved communication improve and transparency of systems.

## Overview of services and resources

The following is not a comprehensive list but gives an overview of the breadth of the local area services and resources:

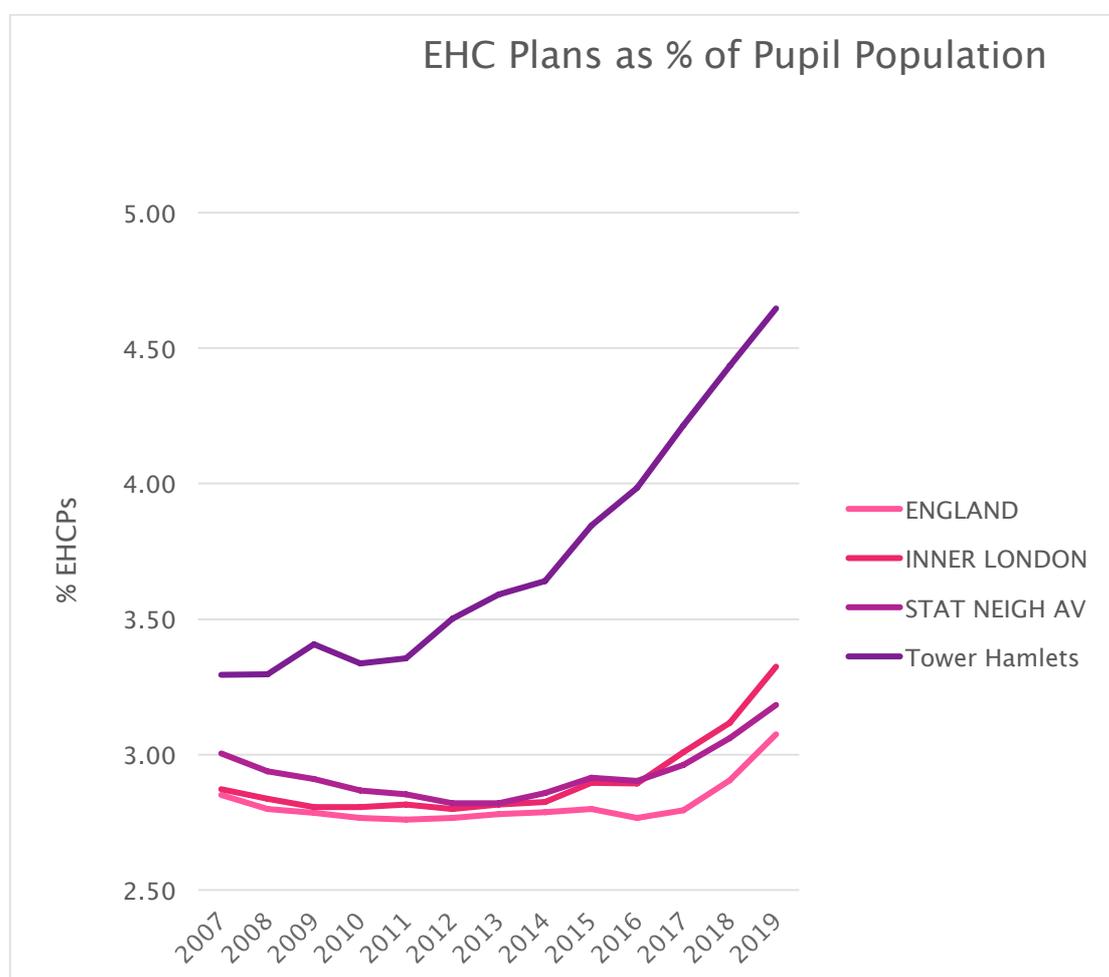
Education	Health	Social Care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special Educational Needs (SEN) Section</li> <li>• Educational Psychology Service (EPS)</li> <li>• Support for Learning Service (SLS)</li> <li>• Behaviour and Attendance Support Service (BASS)</li> <li>• Virtual School for Looked After Children</li> <li>• Integrated Early Years' Service (IEYS)</li> <li>• Parent and Family Support Service</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TH maintained schools</li> <li>• TH academies</li> <li>• TH free schools</li> <li>• TH nursery schools</li> <li>• Day nurseries, private nurseries and child minders</li> <li>• Tower Hamlets Education Partnership (THEP)</li> <li>• Alternative provision providers</li> <li>• Further Education (FE) Colleges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paediatric services</li> <li>• Neuro-developmental team</li> <li>• Speech and Language Therapists</li> <li>• Physiotherapists</li> <li>• Occupational Therapists (OTs)</li> <li>• Continuing care nursing</li> <li>• Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)</li> <li>• School nursing</li> <li>• Clinical specialists across Barts, GOSH etc</li> <li>• Hackney Ark</li> <li>• Public Health</li> <li>• Maternity services</li> <li>• Health Visitors</li> <li>• Clinical psychologists</li> <li>• Private therapists</li> <li>• The Coborn centre</li> <li>• Disabled Children's Outreach Service (DCOS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioning (including joint commissioning)</li> <li>• Early Help Service</li> <li>• Children with Disabilities (CWD)</li> <li>• Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)</li> <li>• Looked after Children</li> <li>• Educational Safeguarding</li> <li>• Community Learning Disabilities Service (CLDS)</li> </ul>
<p>Voluntary and private sector organisations providing education and support for children and young people with apprenticeships, employment etc.</p>	<p>Voluntary and private sector organisations supporting children and young people across a full range of health and mental health services</p>	<p>Voluntary and private sector organisations offering residential care and respite services</p>

## Prevalence of SEND in Tower Hamlets and trends over time

There are approximately 9,000 children and young people with SEND resident in Tower Hamlets. The majority of these are supported by schools using their own budgets. Approximately 3,000 are given additional support (and resource) via an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan).

Within schools the percentage of children and young people receiving SEN Support is 12.4%. This is higher than the average for England (11.9%) and in line with London averages. For children and young people with EHCPs the figure is 4.6%. This is significantly higher than in both London (3.3%) and England (3.1%) Tower Hamlets has a high demand for provision for children with SEND in our state funded schools.

Across the country the rate of EHCPs has increased since the introduction of the 2014 reforms. Historically Tower Hamlets has always had a higher proportion of children and young people with statutory support, but the increase in Tower Hamlets since 2014 has been higher than national levels:



## Special educational needs by primary area of need

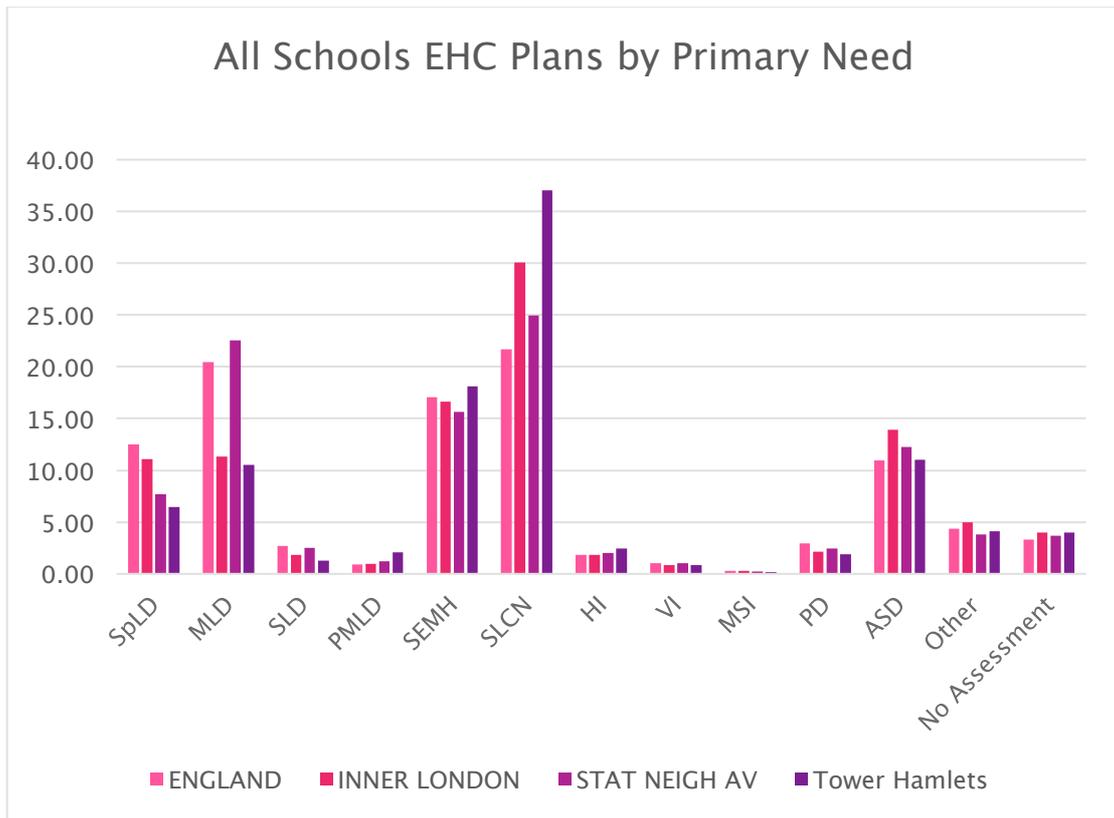
Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) are the most prevalent needs for pupils in Tower Hamlets.

The four areas of need covered in the Code of Practice are:

- Communication and interaction – including SLCN and ASD.

- Cognition and learning – includes moderate learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- Social emotional and mental health
- Sensory and/or physical needs – includes, hearing and visual impairment and physical disabilities

Within Tower Hamlets the highest need is SLCN. The prevalence of this need is significantly higher than national and inner London figures. Tower Hamlets also has a higher proportion of children and young people with social, emotional and mental health needs.



## Identified Strengths and Areas in Development

The SEF has taken 3 key points of evaluation:

- Timely identification of need
- Assessing and meeting need
- Improving outcomes

### Strengths

- The local area has effective oversight of the opportunities for the early identification of need in the early years and takes advantage of these.
- These processes ensure that vulnerable children with additional needs, including those where there are safeguarding concerns, are kept in view by services.
- Increasing numbers of two year olds in Tower Hamlets are accessing outstanding free early learning places.
- The majority of children and young people with sensory impairments remain in Tower Hamlets schools and are well supported in mainstream settings or resource base provision.
- Senior leaders recognise the importance of continued investment at SEN support.
- Amendments to Education, Health and Care Plans are made in a timely way at key transition points, such as entry to school, secondary transfer and post-16, ensuring appropriate provision is in place.
- The local area recognised the need for improved uptake of the annual health check for young people with a learning disability. The CCG have worked with General Practitioners to increase the number of 14-17 year olds on the register.
- The rate of improvement in the timeliness of issuing Education, Health and Care Plans is continuing to increase and plans put in place to rectify previous weaknesses have been yielding tangible results.
- The council has commissioned Mastodon C since 2017 to model future projections for school places. This information has been used to inform school expansion plans in the local area.
- Early years childcare provision meets the needs of young children who have SEND well
- Across Tower Hamlets there is a mixed economy of educational provision for SEND, with high quality mainstream settings, resource bases and satellite provision in mainstream settings; through to high quality special schools and alternative provision to ensure all children can have their needs met locally.

- Schools are well supported by the local area in assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans and at SEN Support.
- The recent Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services inspection praised the work of the work to support children with disabilities, those electively home educated and children looked after.
- Barts Health have introduced a multi-disciplinary, early intervention therapies model for children with a developmental delay and requiring multiple therapies.
- The Neurodevelopmental Team in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services provides a range of one-to-one and group interventions which we can evidence are meeting needs effectively.
- Outside of co-production meetings with parents, Tower Hamlets receives few formal mediation requests and the number of tribunals is low.
- There is strong engagement with local children, young people, parents and carers through the jointly commissioned Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service.
- Parents, carers and young people are playing a growing role in the local area's governance for SEND.
- Following recent updates and improvements, leaders are confident that the Local Offer is becoming a central feature of effective communication with parents and carers across Tower Hamlets
- Tower Hamlets Together has developed an outcomes framework which includes outcomes for children and the council are beginning to develop and embed a commitment to outcomes-based accountability from its latest strategic plan.
- We are proud of the attainment and achievement of children and young people with SEN at schools and in early years' settings across Tower Hamlets, and consider this an area of strength.
- In the main, pupils with SEN in Tower Hamlets are well engaged with their education and school attendance and exclusion figures are better than national averages.
- Outcomes for children and young people who are looked after, supported by the Virtual School, are good.

- Effective programmes and initiatives are in place to support young people who have SEN to progress into employment.
- The Community Learning Disabilities Service works closely with joint commissioners for health and social care and other key stakeholders and partners to deliver good outcomes for young people aged 19-25 with a learning disability.
- The new Children and Families' Strategy, Every Chance for Every Child, recognises the need for services to work together to enable all children and young people to participate fully in their families, communities and societies.

### Areas in development

- School leaders have raised concerns about a cohort of children entering statutory education provision in reception with a range of previously unidentified needs.
- There is also a need to access data on children from 1-5 years that have never accessed early years' services so that they can be targeted by children's centres for support.
- Processes around Education, Health and Care needs assessment, including further improvements on timeliness, requests for advice, co-production and the quality of plans remains a key area for development.
- Young peoples' annual reviews at Year 9 do not routinely make adequate plans for transition to adult services.
- Work to improve how we record information about children and young people's SEND status within services, such as Children's Social Care and Youth Offending, to enable better reporting is ongoing.
- Joint commissioning continues to be a priority area for development.
- A review of provision for children and young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs has identified a number of gaps in provision across the local area.
- The quality of Education, Health and Care needs assessments continues to improve but further work is needed.
- Work is underway to deal delays in autism diagnosis; however parents report dissatisfaction with waiting times.
- Transition into adult social care has been identified as presenting a challenge for young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder as they do not meet thresholds for the Community Learning Disabilities Service.
- The Tower Hamlets Independent SEND Parents' Forum is newly established and therefore is not yet fully aware of, or integrated with, the SEND strategic system, so the impact of the independent voice of parents and carers is unclear.
- Support for Speech, Language and Communication Needs in the early years is a priority for the local area.
- Leaders have identified that a variety of feedback mechanisms for the Local Offer are needed.
- Integral to achieving better outcomes for children and young people with SEND is ensuring children, young people, parents and carers are engaged and heard at each stage of the commissioning cycle.
- We are aware that we need to improve how we capture information relating to outcomes for children and young people with SEND within our management information systems so that we can more easily monitor the impact we are making at a strategic level.

- The process of monitoring and tracking outcomes information supplied as part of the annual review process is inconsistent.
- As a local area, we recognise the need to enhance, and build on good practice to better join up healthcare support for young people transitioning from children's to adults health services.