

Annex A: SEND Sufficiency Strategy

School place planning: sufficiency of specialist places to meet the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND)

July 2022

1. Ambitions and aims

- 1.1. Barnsley Council has agreed and adopted the revised Borough School Placement and Sufficiency Strategy for children with SEND, including those with complex needs. This includes those with comorbidity, i.e. combination of multiple needs such as social, emotional and mental health and autism that combine to create complexities).
- 1.2. The Strategy details how the Local Authority and its statutory partners will address the fundamental challenges being faced in meeting increasing demand for school places for children and young people with SEND within the available resource envelope.

2. Rationale and Evidence of Demand

- 2.1. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of children and young people diagnosed and/or presenting with autism, both nationally and in Barnsley.
- 2.2. Latest data published in May 2022 by the DfE identified the most prevalent type of primary need identified among all pupils with SEN in state funded schools in England was 'Speech, language and communication needs', with 23.1% of pupils having this recorded as their primary need.
- 2.3. However, for pupils with EHC plans, autism was the most common primary type of need, with 31.3% of children and young people with an EHCP having this primary type of need.
- 2.4. The latest forecast data for Barnsley children with an EHCP and primary needs is set out in the tables in appendix II. Population adjustments have not been included at this stage as new data is due to be published shortly.
- 2.5. The data sets used incorporate SEN2 Data and population data which projects from January census of each new academic year. Age ranges are based on age as at 31st August each year.
- 2.6. The most common primary need for pupils with an EHCP in Barnsley state funded schools as at January 2022 was Autism with 30.04% of pupils. The second highest need of Barnsley pupils with an EHCP was SLCN 21.5% followed by SEMH 18.7% and then MLD 8.9% .
- 2.7. With continuing growth forecast in these areas, this impacts on the availability of appropriate education settings in borough. There is a clear indication of additional spaces required across settings including special school settings in borough and an indication of the increased use of Out of Borough (OOB) school settings if options are not considered in terms of capacity development and additional support identified and implemented locally.

- 2.8. Forecast of EHCP's and the use of OOB settings from 2022 up to 2025 expect to see increase in need and potential places required across all settings as follows:
- 2.8.1. Autism: 174 more EHCP's including a potential additional requirement of 41 OOB places
 - 2.8.2. SEMH: 30 more EHCP's including a potential additional requirement of 16 OOB places
- 2.9. Whilst much of the capacity development is providing short and medium cost avoidance, the growing need for capacity of in-borough provision set against the rise in EHCP's is a multi-faceted approach. Utilising early identification and support, graduated response as well as the development of in borough provision.

3. The pressure on high needs funding

- 3.1. An overview of the use of Out of Borough placements for Barnsley children and young people still indicates an element of growing dependence on the use of high cost OOB schools includes:

Financial year	New placements	Cost	Placements	Total costs
2018/2019	46	1,417,285	164	6,743,706
2019/2020	59	2,004,692	207	9,134,443
2020/2021	34	1,69,773	220	11,233,061
2021/2022	46	2,773,420	241	14,771,102

1. Costs are based on full academic year OOB costs
2. Latest OOB information as of January 1st, 2022

- 3.2. Cost per primary need:

Primary need	OOB number	Cost
Autism	98	6,526,902
SEMH	92	5,719,854

- 3.3. The OOB data full year forecast figures for 2021/22 indicate 98 children and young people were/are placed in OOB settings with a primary need of autism at a cost of £6.3 million.
- 3.4. The OOB data full year forecast figures for 2021/22 indicate 92 children and young people were/are placed in OOB settings with a primary need of SEMH at a cost of £6.15 million.
- 3.5. Previous reports have demonstrated that the continual long-term dependence on out of borough and independent non-maintained special schools (OOB) is not favourable

as a long-term sustainable option when viewed against steadily rising increase in needs for these cohorts of children and young people.

- 3.6. Continual monitoring of the use of OOB placements and the tracking of year groups as part of the ongoing DSG Management action plan actions, provides information that supports the development of in borough provision allowing us to review the use of OOB whilst also monitoring the local increases identified in the data around needs and EHCP's.
- 3.7. This OOB monitoring provides up to child level data to understand the SEND needs required to both develop provision that children in OOB settings could transition back and therefore provide appropriate local provision, as well as understand the needs of the population forecast to allow a focussed approach in capacity development for specific identified needs, namely autism and SEMH needs

4. Post 16

- 4.1. Over several years Barnsley Local Authority have increased their reliance on Out of Borough (OOB) settings for their Children/Young People with High Needs. As with pre-16, there have been a number of actions taken to redress this. For example, the commissioning of a new specialist Post-16 Provider in Borough catering for predominantly SEMH and ASC and working with mainstream to develop and adapt to meet even more varying needs of Young People (YP) with High Needs. These actions had a positive impact for Academic Year 2020/21, with a 26% reduction in the number of YP with High Needs accessing their Post-16 Education & Training (E&T) in out of Borough settings in the Charitable/Commercial/Independent sector.
- 4.2. The Challenge going forward is to continue this trajectory, but with the inclusion of Independent/Non-Maintained Special Schools (any school, special school with sixth form provision) and against a backdrop of significant numbers of those accessing out of Borough provision in years 9, 10 and 11.
- 4.3. Mitigating the reliance on out of Borough provision will result in more young people accessing provision locally, reducing travel times and disruption. This can have a positive impact on progress and outcomes. It will also enable the Local Authority to manage the resources allocated to it for High Needs Children/YP by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), via the Designated Schools Grant (DSG), more efficiently/effectively.
- 4.4. There is clear evidence that we have many young people accessing Specialist provision who could have their needs met in Local Mainstream provision Post-16, alongside peers with and without SEND. It is important in ensuring the best Preparation for Adulthood for young people with High Needs, that they access mainstream E&T provision Post-16 wherever this is possible. Whilst this is judged to be the most appropriate Preparation for Adulthood for the vast majority of young people, it is also the most efficient use of resources
- 4.5. Historically there have been many Post-16 High Needs YP receiving a 4 or 5-day Education offer. Full-time Education Post-16 (540-600 Guided Learning Hours (GLH) per Aca. Year / equivalent of 3 days per week) is less than pre-16 to allow all YP with and without SEND more opportunities to develop their independence and transitions towards being an adult. For example, being able to undertake part-time jobs, socialising and accessing the community. It is appreciated that due to the

complexity of needs for a small number of YP with High Needs, they may require support with such non-education activity and where this is the case, they may be eligible for services via Social and/or Health Care. Post-16, YP with High Needs should receive a full-time E&T offer of 16 hours per week/3 days/600 GLH, with Social and/or Health Care services complementing this where required for those with most complexity of need.

- 4.6. In line with the SEND Code of Practice, the Local Authority should be ensuring Post-16 YP with High Needs are on Pathways towards Employment and/or HE. For a small number of YP with High Needs where Employment and/or HE is not a realistic outcome, it is appropriate to be on alternative pathways that best support Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) outcomes. However, once past Raising Participation age (16-18), consideration and scrutiny as to whether it is appropriate to continue in Education must take place. Other services and non-education provision may be better placed to support preparation for adulthood, where employment or Higher Education is unrealistic.
- 4.7. There are several cases of YP with High Needs not on clear Pathways towards Employment and/or HE from Y12, unnecessarily elongating the amount of time they spend in Post-16 E&T. This needs to be redressed going forward to ensure we achieve the best outcomes for our YP with HN (clear Pathways to Employment and/or HE or alternatively transitioning out of Education from Y14 to focus on other relevant PfA outcomes).
- 4.8. **Post 16 key objectives**
- 4.9. Transition ALL our YP with High Needs placed in out of Borough Specialist settings to in Borough settings from Year 12, over a 3-to-4-year period
- 4.10. Where appropriate, review arrangements to transition as many of our in Borough young people with High Needs in Specialist settings (Greenacre, Springwell) to suitable in borough mainstream provision from Year 12, over a 2-to-3-year period, reviewing capacity and capability to meet the post 16 needs.
- 4.11. Review the offer for young people and identify appropriate pathways to employment and/or higher education from year 14 onwards. For those Y12-Y13 who are not, due to employment and/or HE not being an appropriate pathway and goal, ensure they are on Pathways that best support PfA outcomes and are engaged with services to support appropriate transitions out of Education from Year 14. This to be achieved over a 2-year period
- 4.12. Review the offer for all young people, to align where appropriate, to the guidance for post-16 full-time employment and training offer of 16 Hours per week/540-600 annual guided learning hours, equivalent of 3 days per week over 38 weeks

5. SEND sufficiency projects 2022-24/25

- 5.1. The ability to positively impact the reduction in use of existing and forecast high cost OOB places through these developments requires extensive partnership work with education providers, schools, parents, carers and stakeholders across the sector.
- 5.2. Demand for specialist places continues to rise and the council's ability to create more places locally within acceptable timescales is dependent on a number of external factors particularly around schools funded as part of the BSF/PFI, in addition, the complexity of some children and young people's needs, combined with the lack of specialist places, has meant that the council has been required to continue to use OOB in order to deliver provision but it is envisaged at a reducing rate from September 2022
- 5.3. As noted previously in this report, the ability and pace at which the LA can meet the increasing needs is a challenge and has been influenced by the limited use of capital funding. The previously allocated special provision funding was utilised to support earlier projects that provided the basis on which to build the ideas for future sufficiency.
- 5.4. Development discussions have continued as part of the SEND Sufficiency Strategy work, assessing the available data to target provision against the needs of children and young people.
- 5.5. This highlights further the need for increased provision for autism and needs related to communication and interaction (autism and speech, language and communication needs) as well as SEMH needs.
- 5.6. Further sites have been identified and feasibility work is ongoing regarding the viability of developments with some options at a more advanced stage.
- 5.7. Discussions continue with education providers to support the LA in its aims of the send sufficiency plan and its drive to significantly reduce the impact on the high needs budget by ensuring children and young people remain in local provision with a reduction in the use of OOB.
- 5.8. Those SEND projects requiring capital investment are being supported through the Special Provision Capital and the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation Grants.
- 5.9. The current sufficiency plan and model is based on developments in the short and medium term with the satellite and resource provision developments, but with the recent allocation of additional funding through the High Needs Capital Allocation Grant this could allow for additional capacity to meet the needs sooner.
- 5.10. Barnsley have been awarded a further £7.1m, for 2022-23 and 2023-24, from the DfE's high needs provision capital allocation grant (this is in addition to £1.4m allocated in 2021-22):

High needs block capital funding grant	
2021-22	£1,460,729.06
2022-23	£3,825,538.12
2023-24	£3,278,146.69

- 5.11. This funding is to support the development of additional capacity and enhancing school/setting environments to support children/young people with SEND. This is great news for Barnsley as it will enable more sufficiency projects to proceed, thereby enhancing the specialist places available within the borough. This will be managed through the council wide School Place Planning Capital Programme Board which reports into the Capital Oversight Board. This ability to adopt a measured but ambitious pro-active approach in terms of developing provision that meets the education needs of children and young people in Barnsley; and the partnership approach with schools and providers should see an accelerated program of development that provides value for money whilst ensuring access to additional education capacity.
- 5.12. These proposed developments from 2021 through to 2025 would see an increase in provision of at least 268 specialist places across a range of key stages with up to 150 additional places for children with Autism C&I needs and up to 66 places for children with SEMH needs which have been identified.
- 5.13. The potential capacity expansion programme based on the forecast data for Children and Young People with EHCP's, as well as recognition of those currently in OOB and their respective year groups would look to provide the following additional capacity over the 4-year period from 2021 to 2024/25 (appendix I).
- 5.14. Ongoing early discussions have also identified several additional opportunities not set out in appendix I, but nevertheless will be further explored as these could lead to the use of sites within primary and secondary mainstream provision. This would likely include the use of modern modular classrooms to provide increased capacity for children and young people with autism and/or speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).
- 5.15. Further areas of consideration with local schools and education providers have identified the potential to develop a 'turnaround' provision that will support the early identification and intervention required to support children at the EYFS and Key Stage 1 locally.
- 5.16. This will provide targeted support to primary schools where the needs of children and young people can be appropriately managed and supported in their mainstream setting with additional outreach support, as required. This will contribute to developing a more inclusive approach and reduce the need for inappropriate specialist settings when needs could be met in mainstream schools with the right level of support to maintain them.
- 5.17. Additionally, consideration will be given to the addition of resource provisions with any new mainstream provision developments as part of the local plan.

6. Free SEND Special School

- 6.1. LAs are responsible for ensuring that there are sufficient school places for children in the local area, they do not necessarily have the corresponding authority to take some key decisions that directly affect sufficiency. The expansion of academies and free schools has expanded the scale of decisions about place-planning and admissions over which LAs do not have decision-making authority.
- 6.2. The task of high needs place-planning is particularly complex, having a range of variables that need to be considered further than a mainstream provision. Specifically, those additional variables included changes in needs, variable joint working between education and health services, and the impact of decisions by parents/carers, schools and trusts, and first-tier Tribunal (SEND).

- 6.3. Demand for high needs places was outstripping available resources, with LAs having limited ability to manage demand or increase available resources, both revenue and capital. In terms of SEND, the number of EHCPs (previously statements of special educational needs, or SEN) 'rose by 82% between January 2014 and January 2021.' 'The number of new EHCPs made each year increased by 121% in the same time period.' While many children with new EHCPs are placed in mainstream schools, between '40% and 50% of school-age pupils with EHCPs are placed in special schools'. Any increase in the number of school-age children with EHCPs is going to create an increase in demand for special school places. **(Information from .gov statistics. 'Education, health and care plans: England, 2021',)**
- 6.4. In the recent report into research on ensuring sufficient places and supporting vulnerable children published by the Department For Education March 2022, it highlighted
- 6.5. ***'there was currently a lack of certainty about when future central route special/AP free school application waves would be held, and that the presumption free school route was not fast or responsive enough to offer LAs a reliable way to meet demand for high needs places. LA leaders also identified the lack of access to additional capital and revenue funding for new special/AP free schools as a barrier to relying on this as a means of creating new high needs places'***
- 6.6. The recent announcement in June 2022, of the governments ambition to build up to 60 new special and AP free schools as part of a £2.6 billion capital investment in high needs provision provides the opportunity for local authorities as part of their sufficiency strategy, to consider the submission of an expression of interest for a special free school.
- 6.7. This possible option and investment in new special free schools aims to provide children and young people with good quality provision in their local area, which in turn will reduce the time and money spent on transport. Investing in new special free schools will reduce the use of more expensive provision, with a view to delivering a local system which both meets local authority needs and is financially sustainable.
- 6.8. To ensure new special free schools are opened as soon as possible, this wave will be running to a strict timeline based on opening the new provision within a period of 3- to 4 years. If an application for a special free school in Barnsley was to be successful, this would ensure a further sufficiency of places beyond 2025 would be available. This would meet the continuing need and forecast increasing demand across the borough for children and young people with EHCPs with communication and Interaction needs.
- 6.9. This opportunity for the development of a free special school could provide Barnsley with a longer-term sustainable option that is further supported by the developments of hubs and resource provisions with existing schools in borough. As a result, pre-registration of interest has taken place with the development of an options appraisal and consultation with neighbouring LA's continues.

7. Key challenges for the coming period

- 7.1. Demand for specialist places continues to rise and the council's ability to create more places locally within acceptable timescales is compromised, in addition, the complexity of some children and young people's needs, combined with the lack of specialist places, has meant that the council has been required to make greater use of OOB to deliver provision.
- 7.2. There is potential to impact on the use of OOB places currently however this would require several dependencies not least parental consent, appropriate key phase transitions of children in a particular year group.
- 7.3. There is a real concern on the long-term ability to impact on the use of OOB places without having the ability to develop provision within the local area at the pace and scale needed to affect this.
- 7.4. High-cost placements have long been part of the landscape in Barnsley and, along with high needs budget deficits being commonplace, the financial sustainability of local authorities is paramount.
- 7.5. Further challenges include:
 - 7.5.1. Unknown cohort 'in-year' identification of SEND needs add to a number of additional EHCP's that prove difficult to forecast e.g families moving into the area, other local authorities placing in Barnsley schools.
 - 7.5.2. Securing appropriate joint funding from Health and Social Care colleagues
 - 7.5.3. Appropriate support from DfE.
 - 7.5.4. Developing the market to encourage more school settings/academies to develop/expand provision in LA in short and medium term
 - 7.5.5. Development of forecast data for Post 16 and review of statutory post 16 ESFA requirements
 - 7.5.6. Success of all identified projects with various approvals required from, capital, planning, providers, possible BSF/PFI.
- 7.6. The continuing development discussions with schools regarding additional capacity at mainstream school sites has the potential to align itself to a positive inclusive model. This supports the aims of providing local education places for children and young people with SEND in Barnsley and may be more practical in effectively supporting the educational needs and demands of all children in Barnsley long term, and successfully impacting, to the extent needed, to reduce the High Needs block in the long term that will be sustainable.

8. Meeting need into the future

- 8.1. This document sets out the analysis of current and projected need up to 2024/25.
- 8.2. The population of Barnsley is expected to grow as new major developments and housing schemes emerge. We will continue to review the effectiveness of the sufficiency strategy against the continuing growth and ensure that the long term considerations provide a sustainable model of ensuring education places are available in Barnsley that can support children with additional needs.