



# Children, Young People and Families a **BRIGHTER** future



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make  
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count  
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**BARNSELY CYP TRUST**

**SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY  
SCHOOL PLACEMENT SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY  
2017-2020**

**Document revision control**

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**Linked Strategies / Plans:**

**Children and Young People Plan 2016-19**

**Barnsley SEND Strategy 2016**

**Review of Adolescent Pathways and Support (2017-20)**

**Children Missing Education (2017)**

# **Sufficiency of School Placements for Children with Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND)**

## **Introduction**

### **Background**

Barnsley faces considerable pressure in continuing to meet the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). There are increasing numbers of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (or its predecessor, the Statement of Special Educational Needs) and in-borough special school provision is currently over-subscribed. Our ambition should be that wherever possible children and young people have their needs met in their chosen mainstream setting, educated alongside their peers within their local community.

This SEND Sufficiency Strategy sets out how Barnsley will address pressures within the system, particularly by placing a renewed focus on developing capacity locally to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Review activity to date has highlighted some areas where significant improvement can be made locally, particularly to prevent pupils having to travel extensively out of borough. Development of this strategy has provided the opportunity to take stock of the range, diversity and impact of commissioned provision and to propose a series of actions to better develop the SEND local education offer.

The actions proposed will form the basis of consultation and engagement with parents / carers and children and young people, to ensure their influence over the development of local services.

### **The Need for a SEND Sufficiency Strategy in Barnsley**

Duties set out under the Children and Families Act (2014), state that local authorities must ensure that services work together where this promotes children and young people's wellbeing or improves the quality of special educational provision (s25).

Local authorities must work with one another to assess local need, and must have arrangements in place to plan and commission education, health and social care services jointly for children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities (s26).

Commissioning arrangements should be informed by a clear assessment of local needs and make best use of all the resources available in the area to improve outcomes for children and young people in the most efficient, effective, equitable and sustainable way.

In order to inform commissioning decisions, partners should draw on the wide range of local data sets as well as qualitative information about the likely education, health and social care needs of children and young people with SEN or disabilities.

Data sets reflecting demography, prevalence, numbers of children with special needs and primary need category, use of out-of-area placements for those with low incidence needs, analysis of the key performance indicators and information from the early years foundation stage profiles should all be used to reflect local levels of need and inform sufficiency.

The data pertaining to children placed out of Borough, in specialist provision and cost analysis must be taken into account when evidencing local need and how local resources can respond to that need. Thus, the correlation between sufficiency and future commissioning is clear.

Sufficiency planning also supports any requirements for resources to be re commissioned/de commissioned or developed as the base level of need is clearly evidenced with accurate forecast data supporting future service planning.

### **Aims of this Strategy:**

To maximise available resource to ensure children and young people have access to the right school provision to meet their needs, wherever possible within Borough.

To realise our ambition, as stated in the Barnsley SEND Strategy, that children and young people wherever possible are educated within their own community.

To ensure all commissioned provision delivers best outcomes within a value for money framework and works effectively with local mainstream and specialist settings to support children and young people within their family and community networks.

To develop a partnership approach to ensuring the appropriate range and capacity of provision is available locally to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.

### **Objectives:**

To deliver a system-wide approach that:

- places children, young people and families at the centre of planning, respecting their views and working with them as partners to deliver best possible outcomes;
- works together to prevent wherever possible children and young people from requiring non-mainstream and specialist education;
- promotes person-centred specialist support ,where required, with a view to building capacity in mainstream and inclusive provision wherever this can be said to be in the best interests of the educational and broader outcomes of the child and their family (graduated response);
- ensures that children and young people requiring ongoing specialist support are placed in the best possible provision to meet their needs and are supported to experience a stable and enjoyable school life.
- promotes support and provision to young people to allow them to develop their independence and to enjoy a successful transition to adulthood

## Assessment of Need

### Local and National Context

- In January 2016, Barnsley's SEN population was 14.9% compared with 14.4% nationally.
- The current school population in Barnsley is 33, 281 (January 2017), an increase from 32,761 in January 2016.
- The current (April 2017) SEN population (including post-16) is 8716 and is profiled across stages as follows:
  - Early Years 800 \*\*
  - Primary 2,972 - Reception to Year 6
  - Secondary 1,294 - Year 7 to Year 11
  - Post-16 3650

\*\* The Early years figure includes 2, 3, and 4 years olds; however, the Primary figures will also include some 4 years olds who have started in Reception.

For SEN support the proportion for All English authorities ranges from 6.5% to 19.4%. Barnsley has a value of 11.1%, compared to an average of 11.9% in All English authorities.

- Barnsley generally has higher numbers of children subject to a statement of SEN or an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) than is the case regionally and nationally.
- Statements / EHCPs as a % of school population (January 2016)\*:
  - England 2.8%
  - Yorkshire & Humber 2.4%
  - Barnsley 3.8% (excluding out of borough placements)

Across All English authorities, the proportion of pupils with statements or education, health and care (EHC) plans ranges from 0.3% to 4.5%. Barnsley has a value of 3.8%, compared to an average of 2.8% in All English authorities.

There were 1,726 children and young people in May 2017 with a statement of special needs or an EHCP.

In Barnsley, 40.0% of looked after children are on SEN support without a statement, compared to 37.5% in All English authorities. 35.8% of looked after children in Barnsley have a statement of SEN or EHCP, compared to 30.0% in All English authorities (2013/14 academic year).

In September 2017, there were 174 looked after children placed in Barnsley by other local authorities compared to 99 placed out of area by Barnsley. Of these 99, two thirds are placed within 20 miles of Barnsley and, for school age children, likely to maintain their local school placement.

32.5% of children in need in Barnsley are on SEN support and 19.8% of children in need have a statement of SEN or EHC plan. This compares in turn to all English authorities at 28.1% and 21.9%.

*\*all comparator data is drawn from January 2016 School Census Special needs and Disabilities in England SFR29/2016 which covers Nursery to Year 11.*

Attainment and progress at Key Stage 4 in Barnsley is 'significantly below' national averages for pupils with a statement of SEN / Education, Health & Care Plan or in receipt of SEN Support (2016 Attainment 8 and Progress 8 scores)

### Current Position in Barnsley

The local authority is responsible for 1726 Statements of Special Educational Need and Education Health and Care Plans, 36.3% are placed in specialist provision and 63.7% in mainstream.

PHASES	TYPE OF PROVISION																
	CM	FC & VOL	MA	MS	NMS	PRE	APA	EHE	IND	NP	OIN	OLA SP	RP	SA	EOTAS	MP16	ISP
EARLY YEARS	2	15	2	6	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PRIMARY	0	0	66	328	8	0	1	9	25	6	1	7	36	147	0	0	0
SECONDARY	0	0	76	240	7	0	12	7	43	9	2	21	26	194	2	3	0
POST 16	0	0	1	5	6	0	0	0	8	4	0	2	0	74	0	315	4
	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>4</b>
Total = 1726																	

CM – Child Minder

FC & VOL – Early Years Family Centres and Voluntary Nurseries

MA – Mainstream Academies

MS – Mainstream School (Maintained)

NMS – Non Maintained Special School

PRE – Pre School

APA – Alternative Provision Academy

EHE – Elective Home Education

IND – Independent Special School

NP – Not yet placed

OIN – Other Independent School

OLASP – Other Local Authority Special School

RP Resource Provision

SA – Special Academy

EOTAS – Educated Other Than At School

MP16 – Mainstream post 16 provision

ISP – Independent Specialist provider

Note: These figures do not include early years children or post-16 students placed in specialist provision.

Barnsley LA has the highest percentage of Statements and EHCP's compared to statistical neighbours.

The Local Authority is required to provide a statistical return to the Department for Education referred to as the SEN 2 return. This highlights trends in activity and requires explanations if significant variances are reported. From the SEN 2 return the table below highlights the increase in maintained statements and plans that the Local Authority is responsible for. This shows that over a 4 year period there has been an increase of approximately 500 cases being maintained by the LA. This in turn has a significant financial impact as well as a resource implication adding to the pressure within the High Needs Block.

	<u>S</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
SEN2 2013	1211	0	1211
SEN2 2014	1216	0	1216
SEN2 2015	1310	5	1315
SEN2 2016	1142	232	1374
SEN2 2017	848	757	1605
Current (May 17)	605	1121	1726

S – Statements

E – Education Health and Care plans

The profile of statements and plans has altered to reflect the transitional arrangements in accordance with the revised legislation in 2014. The statutory requirement is for all Statements to have been converted to Education Health and Care plans by March 2018. As of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017 the Local Authority has 575 statements to convert.

Requests for Statutory Assessments of Need has significantly increased over a 3 year Period which, in turn has placed a considerable pressure on resources and allocated funding:

Between 01.09.14 and 31.08.15 there were 248 requests for assessment, this was an average of **20.67** per month over a 12 month period.

Between 01.09.15 and 31.08.16 there were 255 requests for assessment, an average of **21.25** per month

01.09.16 to the 30.05.17 there were 228 requests which averages **25.33** per month

Of the requests for assessment the majority conclude with a plan being issued, based on thorough assessment of what is required to meet a child's needs. Completed assessments over the same period is shown as follows:

01.09.14 – 31.08.15 – 140 (**11.67 per month**)

01.09.15 – 31.08.16 – 166 (**13.83 per month**)

01.09.16 – 23.05.17 – 139 (**15.44 per month** over a 9 month period)

In summary there is an overall increase in all areas of activity for this cohort of pupils, including assessment of need, issuing and maintenance of plans, requests for increased funding and placements in specialist and out of Borough provision.

In June 2017 there were 105 pupils placed out of Borough in independent provision (approved placements for September 2017 increases this number to 136) and 90 pupils placed in other Local Authority mainstream and special schools.

Consultation with local provision is undertaken prior to placing pupils out of Borough in order to determine if the pupil need can be met locally and that a graduated response has been considered. Therefore pupils have been placed out of borough because efforts to place them locally have been exhausted.

The 'primary need' profile of these (out of borough) pupils in June 2017 was as follows:

<b>Primary Need</b>	<b>Pupil Numbers in Independent provision</b>
SEMH (Social, Emotional & Mental Health)	62
ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder)	24
HI (Hearing Impaired)	3
PD (Physical Disability)	1
PMLD (Profound & Multiple Learning Disability)	4
SLCN (Speech, Language & Communication Needs)	11

As noted the significant level of needs is attributable to SEMH and ASD. For some pupils there is a dual diagnosis of ASD and ADHD which at times can be problematic when determining the most appropriate provision if there are other associated difficulties.

The numbers of pupils placed in independent and non-maintained/state-funded special schools has increased significantly:

From 01.09.14 – 31.08.15 there were **19** pupils placed ( an average of 1.5 per month).

From 01.09.15 – 31.08.16 there were **30** placements (average of 2.5 per month).

From 01.09.16 – 30.05.17 there were **31** places (average of 3.44 per month over a **9** month period).

This increase in placement activity has significantly contributed to the financial pressure highlighted within the High Needs Block.

The table below sets out the number of pupils placed in other Local Authority mainstream and special schools. Barnsley LA still retains financial responsibility for all of these pupils. Funding this provision can at times include both 'top up' and 'place-led' funding.

<b>Type of Need</b>	<b>Pupil Numbers by other Mainstream schools</b>	<b>Pupil Numbers by other LA Special Schools</b>
ASD	17	9
SEMH	4	4
MLD	6	12
PD	1	1
PMLD	0	2
SLCN	12	11
SLD	1	4
SPLD	2	0
Not Confirmed	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>£161,406</b>	<b>£442,323</b>

Parental preference for the Local Authority to consult with specific provision must be pursued in accordance with section 33 and 39 of the Children and Families Act. The child’s parent or the young person has the right to request a particular school, college or other institution to be named in their plan. The Local Authority **must** comply with that preference and name the provision unless:

- It would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person, or
- The attendance of the child or young person there would be incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources.

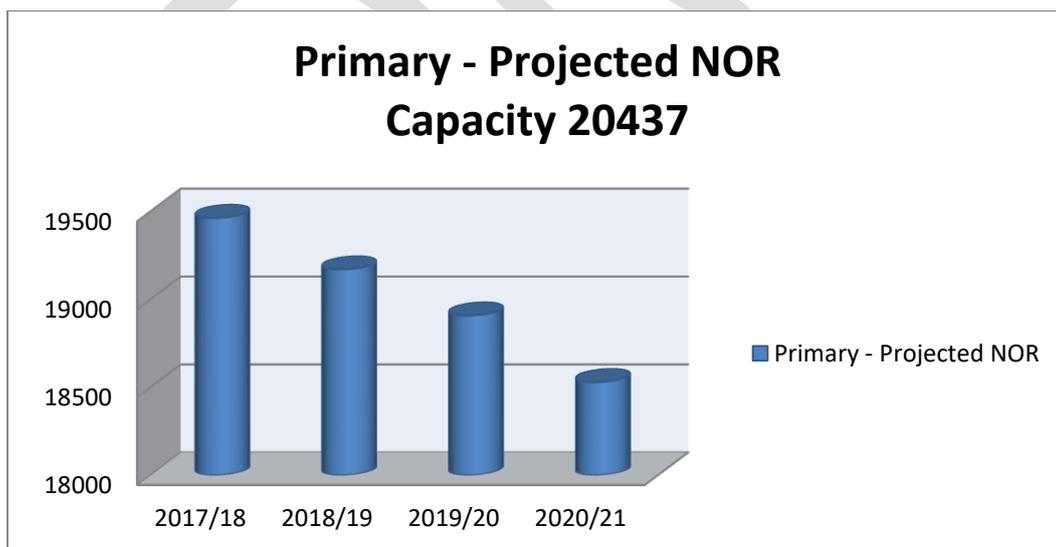
Therefore all of the pupils placed out of Borough have been duly placed as a result of local provision indicating that they cannot meet need, have no available provision or where parental preference is for alternative provision, and the authority cannot reasonably defend a decision not to place out of borough.

### **Projecting Need at Population Level**

There is an anticipated increase in the year 7 school population projected to peak in 2022/23. At the same time, the data demonstrate that numbers in primary peaked in 2017/18 and should start to fall slightly and plateau in subsequent years.

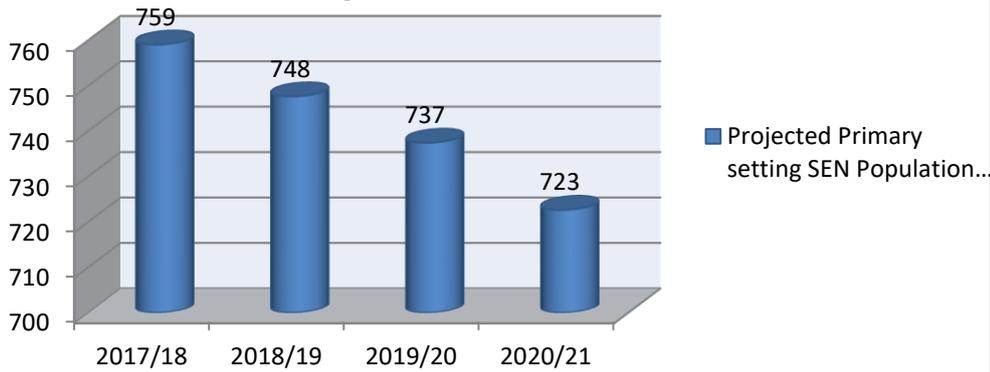
When this is extrapolated for SEND pupils, using a 3.9% EHCP measure, the expectation is that numbers of pupils with an EHCP should remain relatively stable in Primary but continue to increase in Secondary.

The table below details projected numbers on roll for primary phase. These numbers should be treated with caution however as there were around 250 more applications for primary places for 2017/18 than anticipated. The reasons for this are being investigated and projected NOR may need to be further adjusted by this number in due course.



Allowing for a small increase in the rate of pupils with an EHCP, numbers in primary settings is shown below.

### Projected Primary setting SEN Population (3.9%)

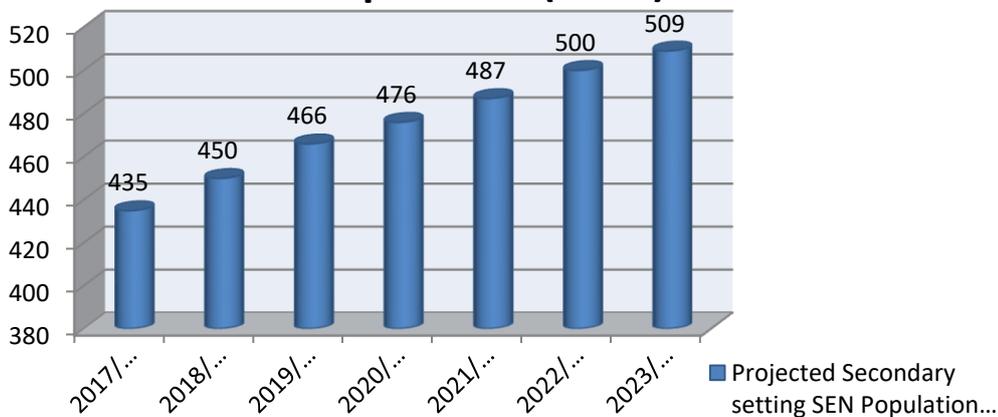


The tables below demonstrate how this looks for secondary phase.

### Secondary Y7 - Y11 - Projected NOR



### Projected Secondary setting SEN Population (3.9%)



The needs of SEND children are very specific to each individual and can be difficult to predict in terms of prevalence and trends. It is difficult therefore, to anticipate need developing only in line with demographic changes. As the data above suggest, the increase in requests for assessment and the numbers of plans issued, doesn't necessarily correlate with straightforward population growth.

When the Children and Families Act (2014) reforms were first introduced, the expectation was that EHCPs would only be required to support the 2% of pupils with the most complex needs. Anecdotally, authorities around the region and nationally are experiencing growth in demand for assessment and the issuing of plans. The demand for specialist placements appears to be increasing across the region, with the Department for Education recently inviting bids to establish a specialist free school for autism in Doncaster.

The increasing numbers of specialist, out of borough placements are an indication that Barnsley is currently unable to meet the needs of an increasing proportion of SEND pupils within local provision. **This represents the most significant challenge to SEND Sufficiency planning for the coming period.**

In particular, there is a challenge in meeting the needs of children whose primary need is:

- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Speech, Language and Communication (SLCN)

Of these groups, SEMH and ASD account for the overwhelming majority of out of borough placements.

### **Sufficiency planning and making the best use of resources**

In addition to special school places, Barnsley is required to develop a 'graduated response' to meeting the needs of SEND pupils. Support should be arranged as a continuum, with children helped to remain in their own school wherever possible.

Through the reforms to SEND planning and delivery introduced through the Children and Families Act (2014), local authorities and CCGs have a duty to consider the extent to which children and young people's needs could be met more effectively through integrated planning and commissioning and aligning or pooling budgets in order to offer greater value for money, improve outcomes and/or better integrate services for children and young people.

Partners should consider how best to ensure the resilience of families and local services to enable children and young people with more complex needs to participate actively in their local community, have better access to local services, and the development of universal support to ensure effective use of specialist services.

In order to ensure best use of local resources, sufficiency planning must take into account how accessible and equitable current provision is, including health and social care support. We must also ensure that access and decision making for specialist provision is transparent, with a clear pathway to support the principle that specialist school places and resources are used by children with the greatest level of need.

Sufficiency planning must also ensure that there is adequate provision of the correct type and that it is located within accessible range to the community. This requires us to consult with key stakeholders, partners, children and families to ensure if provision is re/de-commissioned and that any future changes or

relocation of services can be evidenced. Changes to services for children with special educational needs should also be subject to the 'SEN Improvement Test' and duties under the Equalities Act. We need to be confident that we have the right type of provision, of the right volume and in the right place. Provision should be able to meet local need, and thus reduce the number of children being placed out of borough.

The voice of the child, young person and family is central to meeting special educational needs, and consideration must be afforded to parental preference. If we are to develop resilience in mainstream provision and gain greater parental confidence within this sector, this strategy must also take into account place elements and support provision within universal and mainstream services and to reduce the reliance on the limited capacity of our special schools.

The vast majority of children with SEN are supported and educated within mainstream services. We therefore need to reinforce support at key points of transition and in particular at secondary transfer.

The mainstream sector therefore has a crucial role to play when considering SEN support and sufficiency within the Borough.

### **Use of Resources & Forecast Financial Position**

Financial allocations within special needs are often volatile in nature, as it is difficult to project or forecast requests in year, and determine how need may change or alter.

In addition, Barnsley is a net importer from out of Borough, and therefore has to assume responsibility for children moving into the authority from outside Barnsley. Of children that have a statement or EHC plan, the local authority is required to assume legal and financial responsibility for these children. (If a child or young person is also looked after, the 'Belonging Regulations' apply.)

The financial allocation for 2016/17 for Independent and non-maintained provision was £2,145,628. The out turn for 16/17 was £3,899,692, a variance of -£1,754,064.

The financial allocation for other Local Authority Schools (mainstream and special schools out of Borough but not independent) was £551,000. The out turn was £538,197, variance of +£12,803.

The Early Years financial allocation for private and voluntary sector, and family centres was £55,000. The outturn was £50,414. The variance was +£4,586.

The overall variance for expenditure was -£1,722,341.

**The overspend position will continue to compound in 2017/18 and subsequent years, pending the implementation of mitigating actions, per attached action plan, commissioning intentions and financial modelling schedules.**

The current specialist provision within the Borough is as follows:-

- Greenacre has 320 places (including satellite provision)
- Springwell Special Academy has 96 places (not including alternative provision academy)

- There are 91 places in Resource Provisions across the Borough  
In the 2015/2016 academic year, 31.4% of school pupils with statement or EHC plans were placed in these provisions by Barnsley MBC.

The following shows the overall number of high needs places commissioned for 2017/18 AY compared to 2016/17 as notified and confirmed by the EFA under the notification process:

Institution Name	2016/17 Allocated EFA funded places	2017/18 Planned places	Change
Barnsley college	354	334	-20
Greenacre school	323	331	8
Barnsley MBC	0	15	15
Independent Training Services	10	15	5
Royston Meadstead Academy	10	10	-
Hoyland springwood Academy	10	10	-
Carlton Outwood Academy	25	25	-
Springwell Alternative Academy	99	99	-
Springwell Special School	96	96	-
	<b>927</b>	<b>935</b>	<b>8</b>

High needs places	Allocated places 2016-17	Planned Places 2017-18	Change
Horizon	12	12	-
Joseph Locke primary	10	10	-
Worsborough Common primary	10	10	-
Oakhill	8	8	-
	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	-

All of the above placements are allocated for September 2017. Two of the resource provisions are over the commissioned numbers by 4 places – these are being funded through exception. Greenacre and Springwell Special schools have all of the places allocated for September 2017.

In addition to the 99 alternative academy (Pupil Referral Unit) places at Springwell, we currently commission 21 places over and above the published admission number (PAN).

The Local Authority commenced the allocation of places for special schools in September 2016 for placement September 2017. Greenacre continues to be oversubscribed as in previous years. For this period of allocations there were 27 available places for Sept 2017. However, due to issues with lack of assurance around continuity of one of the satellite provision and the pupil movement between primary and secondary phases in real terms this has reduced the potential places to 21. There were 59 applications for these 21 places. All places have therefore been allocated and there are still a number of requests that remain outstanding requesting a placement for September.

Springwell Special Academy continues to be oversubscribed. The placement arrangements for pupils within SEMH provision does differ as the placement requests continue throughout the academic year at a greater rate and due to the complexity of need it is a difficult cohort to forecast future provision for.

### **Review of Current Provision**

A review of all our Resourced Provisions and independent-sector out of borough placements concluded in July 2017. The key messages to arise from this review are summarised below.

#### **General Feedback**

In general, the range of provision reviewed and the individual cases considered suggest that pupils are placed within provision appropriate to their needs.

There was evidence that parent's / carers' views indicated good levels of satisfaction with provision.

There was also evidence of settings addressing complaints and concerns appropriately and that actions had been taken .

#### **Main findings in relation to Resourced Provisions**

A Resourced Provision is a specific arrangement whereby the local authority commissions a designated number of places for specialist provision within mainstream schools and settings. Pupils allocated places in the RP are added to the roll of the school to allow them to be educated and supported within a mainstream while also receiving access to specific expertise to meet their needs.

All but one of our RPs are within local schools that are rated 'good' or better by OfSTED.

The majority of pupils placed in Barnsley RPs are progressing at 'expected' or 'above expected' levels.

There is a particular issue relating to ASD provision at key stages 3 and 4 where pupils are largely progressing at 'below expected' levels.

There is insufficient clarity around appropriate pathways and decision-making as it relates to pupils being allocated placements in our Resourced Provisions.

The provision of some support services to RPs is inequitable (eg SALT) and although it is recognised by reviewers that this may be rooted in historical commissioning arrangements, it potentially impacts on the range of placements offered by individual RPs and on parental choice.

There is a particular issue in relation to the proportion of time a child spends accessing specialist provision as distinct from accessing the mainstream provision available to every other child.

Due to the varying level of complexity of pupil need RPs are required to operate a flexible model and therefore utilise resources differently.

## **Out of Borough Provision (including Independent School provision within Barnsley)**

The first key message to arise from the information available to reviewers is that there is little evidence to suggest that what has been observed in out of borough settings could not be replicated much closer to home and, in most cases, within Barnsley. Some excellent practice has been observed which Barnsley should learn from in order to develop local models of support for SEND children, even those experiencing multiple and complex barriers to learning.

The quality of provision observed has been generally good with some examples of outstanding practice. There are however, a small number of settings where progress isn't felt to be in line with expectations and where a more structured approach to learning would benefit individual pupils. Use of provision mapping was not evident in all settings.

The quality of learning environments varies considerably. Some settings are clearly established to provide a calm and nurturing environment in order to address particular learning and behavioural needs. There were a small number of settings visited however, where the facilities were not felt by reviewers to be of an acceptable standard for the care of our pupils.

The reviewers were not aware of, nor did they find evidence of any immediate concerns regarding individual pupils that would give rise to the need to urgently review a placement. There was one case however, where the placement was not felt to be meeting need which has been dealt with outside of this review.

Progress of pupils varies. There is good evidence in some settings of pupils with previously very challenging needs having progressed in line with or above expectations. However, there were also a small number of cases where the reviewers felt pupils had not progressed as had been hoped.

Overall attendance in general is satisfactory but with some exceptions. One out of borough provider felt that relationships with local services needed to be strengthened in order to improve the effectiveness of the partnership around pupils and their families.

In terms of value for money there are some concerns regarding evidence of best use of resource, for example numbers of staff deployed for activities and numbers of children evident within the setting.

There are issues identified regarding contractual compliance – for example, one setting couldn't evidence individual files having been kept up to date. In addition, there were a number of settings identified where practice around notifications to LA regarding attendance and incident reporting needs to improve.

There is a concern arising from the review regarding the amount of time some pupils have to spend travelling to and from school. Although most of the settings furthest from Barnsley are within recommended maximum travel time, when busy roads and multiple pick-ups are factored in it is clear that more needs to be done to develop provision locally to avoid pupils having to spend such a lot of time travelling.

## **Areas of Strength in the Local System and Emerging Practice**

Special school and alternative provision provided locally through Greenacre and Springwell is highly regarded by parents and professionals and rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by OfSTED.

There are some excellent examples of good practice both in local provision and in out of borough, independent schools.

Joint commissioning arrangements, particularly for more complex cases, are well established and enjoy strong partnership support. Commissioning with NHS Barnsley CCG is supported through a s75 NHS Act (2006) agreement.

There is a process underway to 'convert' statements of special educational needs to Education Health and Care plans – the current rate stands at c.80% with a robust plan to have completed conversions within the 2017/18 financial year.

In addition to the transfer / conversion process, the Assessment and Review Team (SEN) are also processing the majority of new requests for assessment within the timeframes established under the new legislation.

Placement planning for children with complex needs is improving with 15 places at Greenacre School able to be offered to pupils by the statutory offer deadline of 15<sup>th</sup> February 2017. This is a positive achievement that, for the first time in Barnsley, affords families of children with very specialist SEND the same opportunities to plan for their new school life within a similar timeframe as their non-SEND peers.

Of the children for whom a special school place is not suitable or appropriate, consideration is also given to resourced provision, satellite provision, additional support within mainstream school settings or out of borough placements.

A multi-agency SEND Strategy Group has been established to drive forward the aims of the Barnsley SEND Strategy and is making good progress in identifying and addressing system-wide issues for children and families.

## **Why the Increasing Demand for Out of Borough Placements?**

In 2014 the SEND reforms and the revised SEND code of practice became statutory as part of the Children and Families Act. The period leading up to this, which was critical for schools and local authorities in terms of planning and preparation for implementation of the anticipated SEND reforms, was also a period of other significant change in education. As a consequence of DfE policy on underperforming schools, there was an acceleration in the academies conversion programme. In Barnsley, for example 22 schools converted in the academic years 2012- 2014, more than half of the total number of conversions to date in the authority. There were also changes to school funding arrangements which resulted in a shift of resources from central support services, such as behaviour support, to individual school budgets. These changes will have had an impact on the demands being made of schools and local authorities in terms of SEN arrangements, but also more broadly on capacity to respond coherently and strategically to an early emerging trend of increased demand for specialist provision.

The period since the introduction of the Children and Families Act (2014) has seen a fundamental change in the way the needs of children with SEND are presumed to be met with the first £6k of potential funding for

SEND pupils now allocated directly to schools and deployed at their discretion to meet the needs of individuals.

The assumptions of the SEND reforms introduced through the new legislation were that only the 2% of children with the most complex needs would need an Education, Health & Care Plan and that of these, the majority could be supported in mainstream schools.

The low level of funding available to Barnsley schools through the national formula may go some way to explaining how some schools feel unable to meet needs within existing resources. Furthermore, there is a contextual link between some aspects of SEND (particularly Social Emotional and Mental Health needs) and levels of poverty and deprivation.

The process for issuing an EHCP is a complex one with criteria to be fulfilled by schools and others before it can be agreed. However, if a mainstream school is struggling to meet the needs of a child within existing resources, it is reasonable to assume that both professionals and parents are more likely to view the need for an EHCP as a necessity. Feedback from parents suggests there is little confidence in the current system and its ability to meet needs at the earliest stage possible, particularly within mainstream provision. *'They (mainstream schools) don't want our children in their school'* was the comment from one parent of a child with SEMH needs.

The period leading up to the introduction of the reforms coincided with Government policy for all schools to eventually become academies by 2020. Although the central policy position has since shifted, planning within BMBC at the time anticipated a much reduced role for the local authority in schools and accordingly, reduced resource for central support and some services moving to a partially traded model. In addition, Resourced Provisions in mainstream schools were handed over from BMBC direct management to the control of individual schools. Although the quality of provision is generally good in RPs, the absence of robust service specifications and contract management may have contributed to confusion around decision-making for which children are placed in RPs and has restricted the scope for strategic oversight of this aspect of provision.

In addition to these broader factors, there is clear evidence that Barnsley's experience is far from unique. The proportion of SEND children in England educated in specialist school settings increased from 5.6 per cent in 2012 to 8.5 per cent in 2016. The proportion in independent schools increased from 4.5 per cent to 6.3 per cent over the same period (DfE). The latest data from DfE demonstrates a trend toward more specialist provision with almost half of children with EHCPs now educated in specialist settings.

Work with partners in Yorkshire and Humber has also highlighted increasing demand across the Region, particularly for special school places. DfE expect local authorities to publish commissioning plans and to increase collaborative working in order to meet demand together.

The table below illustrates the increase in numbers of Barnsley pupils placed out of borough for specialist provision since 2013/14. Numbers for 2017/18 include those placements already agreed and due to commence in September 2017.

2013/14	48
2014/15	58
2015/16	73
2016/17	94
2017/18	136

Currently, Springwell Special Academy is commissioned to provide 96 SEMH places locally. Levels of local authority top-up funding to Springwell in particular present a challenge in the school's ability to meet the needs of some children who present with SEMH disorders. Partly, this is a school organisation issue as although there may be a small amount of capacity within the school as a whole, particular year groups are over-subscribed. Negotiations with Springwell to date have been predicated on a fixed top-up agreed annually and lack the flexibility which may have allowed the school to consider on a case-by-case basis what would be needed in order to support a child locally and prevent the need for more expensive, out of borough provision.

During the 2016/17 academic year, there were 62 pupils placed as a result of SEMH as primary need. Although there will always be a small cohort of pupils whose needs are severe and profound and will require the support of very specialist providers, this illustrates a clear gap in local provision.

In addition, 24 pupils were placed with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) as primary need. There are a number of possible explanations for the increase in this number, including:

- Improvements to the process for assessment and diagnosis of ASD in children and young people locally has led to an increase in the numbers of pupils with a positive diagnosis;
- Children with ASD can be very vulnerable and often are not best supported in large, busy environments where social interaction is more challenging. Some parents express real anxiety about the ability of some mainstream schools to meet their child's needs.

In addition, there is a small cohort of pupils with profound Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) that can't currently be met locally. These pupils access specialist provision which is based near Mansfield in Nottinghamshire. Rated 'outstanding' by OfSTED in 2014, this provision supports those with a severe or complex communication need. The curriculum on offer and in particular the type of support available from speech and language therapy is not something that can be found locally.

### **Key Challenges for the 2017-20 Period**

As the data and evidence summarised in this strategy suggest, Barnsley faces considerable pressure in meeting the needs of SEND children. A robust and urgent partnership action plan is required to address system-wide issues, which if not tackled, could lead to Barnsley being unable to meet the needs of more SEND pupils locally and growing numbers of children having to be placed at a distance from their home.

The Children and Families Act (2014) reforms have gathered pace in Barnsley and it is a real strength locally that a very significant proportion of former Statements of Special Educational Need have now been converted to Education, Health and Care Plans. There does however remain a very challenging programme of reforms which need to be better embedded to the way all partners do their business in Barnsley, in accordance with the Barnsley SEND Strategy. These include:

- Ensuring the voice of parents/ carers and children / young people is central to the development of plans at strategic, operational and individual level.

- Health and Social Care agencies (including those responsible for transition / adult services) playing their full role in embedding the reforms and supporting, developing and leading where necessary the planning for individual children.
- Improving the Local Offer and awareness of it (particularly among parents and carers).
- Improving personalisation and promoting the possibility of personalised resource for families (including personal budgets).

While there have been significant improvements in attainment levels over recent years, the gap in attainment for SEN / non-SEN pupils is a continuing challenge in Barnsley.

Statistical and practice-based evidence appear to suggest that more pupils can be supported in mainstream settings in Barnsley than is currently the case. There is a clear need therefore to establish a more **graduated response** to improve and embed support at all levels in schools and supporting services in order to build capacity and expertise across the system.

Reducing demand for specialist and out of borough placements is unlikely to be achieved without a significant investment of resources.

Special schools (Greenacre and Springwell) remain fully-subscribed either as a whole school or in particular year groups, limiting the amount of capacity available locally to assist in preventing out of borough placements; at the point of reporting to Schools' Forum in June 2017, there were 29 formal consultation requests for out of borough provision. This was primarily for Social and Emotional Needs and Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

Levels of funding to Barnsley Schools are among the lowest in England. This has a knock-on effect on the allocations made through the High Needs Block. Wellspring Trust (providers of Greenacre and Springwell Special Schools) have highlighted through contract management routes how low rates of discretionary funding (local authority top-up) inhibit their ability to deliver services and support over and above strict placement costs that might allow for pupils with more complex needs to be educated locally.

The numbers of children currently placed out of borough is unacceptably high and seemingly rising. In addition to being educated away from their peers and local communities, children placed at a distance from home experience longer journeys and more costly transport arrangements.

Parents and carers need to have confidence that our local system can meet the needs of their child. Support must be accessible and available when children need it. Parents and carers in Barnsley have fed back that they have to 'fight' at every stage to get their children's needs identified, assessed and met which contributes to the erosion of confidence in the system. Though SEND feedback events (Talkabouts) have been well attended, parental engagement at a strategic planning level is currently under-developed, a problem exacerbated by the absence of a recognised parent /carer forum.

### **How effectively can we address these issues and what are the likely timescales?**

It is clear from the issues presented in this strategy document that no one agency working in isolation can resolve the current and projected pressures in meeting the needs of SEND pupils in Barnsley.

The resource across the whole system in Barnsley needs to function more effectively for SEND children. Investment is only one part of the answer to the complex range of issues presented. In addition to the local authority SEND team, schools, health and care partners in particular have a key role to play in

improving the system to deliver better outcomes for some of our most vulnerable children and young people.

The table below summarises a programme of activity designed to significantly improve the education offer to SEND children and their families in Barnsley. The actions respond to the needs identified in this document which together with our commissioning intentions highlighted in the table on page 22, will be shared with parents and carers, children and young people and other stakeholders to allow for full partnership engagement in meeting the current and future challenges to placement sufficiency.

<b><u>Short to Medium Term</u></b>	<b><u>Action Complete By</u></b>
<b><u>Ensure best value is delivered from existing specialist resources</u></b>	
Review governance of placement decisions / review membership of decision making panels to include schools/settings	December 2017
Review operating models for RPs and consider range and volume of RP places	April 2018
Review SALT support to RPs – establish consistent model	April 2018
Ensure RPs are focussed on right range of need (establishing where primary ASD provision is etc.) - RP provision developed in line with current demand – particularly SEMH and ASD to enhance the graduated offer and reduce demand for specialist places	April 2018
Service specifications and monitoring arrangements for RPs need to be developed	June 2018
Enhance governance & monitoring of providers	December 2017
Review SEN funding direct to schools and settings	Tbc – pending implementation of revised national funding formula
<b><u>Engagement of children, young people &amp; families in the development of commissioning strategies</u></b>	
Develop & implement revised mechanisms for parent engagement	January 2018
Work in partnership with schools settings and Barnsley Youth Council to organise a children/young people’s SEND forum	January 2018
<b><u>Develop Sufficient Specialist Placements to Meet Need</u></b>	
Commission 50 additional SEMH places	September 2018 September 2019
Review current placements and establish those cases where local provision child and family needs and preference	September 2018
Investigate potential link to secondary school place planning to include additional ASD / SEMH provision	July 2018 – implementation in line with secondary school place planning (Central area)
Consider use of exceptional funding arrangements to secure local placements — develop discretionary fund to enhance local provision for individuals	December 2017
Work with academies / maintained schools in neighbouring LAs to access specialist placements	Ongoing

<b><u>Short to Medium Term</u></b> <b><u>Ensure best value is delivered from existing specialist resources</u></b>	<b><u>Action Complete By</u></b>
Develop local SLCN provision to reduce reliance on very specialist OOB (10 places)	Sept 2018
Work with regional partners to develop collaborative commissioning for specialist provision: scoping plan to be published	April 2018
<b><u>Medium to Long term</u></b> <b><u>Enhance the 'graduated response' to develop capacity to meet needs in mainstream settings</u></b>	
Implement local moderation model for sector led support/challenge (Barnsley Alliance)	Sept 2018
Develop and implement a My Support Plan – for pupils with identified needs that do not require an EHCP	Sept 2019
Develop, devise and implement revised guidance to schools / expectations of mainstream – review thresholds, build evidence-based practice, workforce development & CPD	January 2019
Develop access to appropriate advice, services and support to enable schools to deliver a graduated offer	Sept 2018 onwards
Introduce assessment places	Sept 2019
Review delivery of special school provision in mainstream settings for pupils with moderate learning difficulties (MLD)	Sept 2018

## SEND Sufficiency Strategy 2017 – 20

### Table of Commissioning Intentions

	<u>Identified Need</u>	<u>Proposed Solution</u>	<u>Timescales</u>
1.	Insufficient local capacity to meet the needs of CYP with complex Social, Emotional & Mental Health Needs (SEMH)	Commission additional 50 complex SEMH places Phase one : 25  Phase two : 25	September 2018 September 2019
2.	Insufficient local capacity to meet the needs of CYP with complex Speech, Language & Communication Needs (SLCN)	Commissioning additional 10 complex SLCN places	September 2018
3.	Insufficient local capacity to meet the needs of CYP with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD)	Review commissioning of Resourced Provisions – cross-phase (ASD & C&I) Explore collaborative commissioning for specialist places with neighbouring LAs Develop options appraisal in conjunction with secondary school place planning (Town Centre proposals)	Sept 2018 Ongoing  July 2018
4.	Improve capacity for parents to influence planning and decision-making at individual, operational and strategic level	Work with parents to commission third party support to develop mechanisms for engagement / deliver co-produced solutions to allow ongoing engagement	January 2018
5.	Insufficient local capacity to meet the needs of CYP with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) and additional, complex needs	Commission further 10 places with Nexus Multi Academy Trust (Abbey School) Rotherham	September 2017