

Equity, Inclusion, Ambition.

My Life, My Rights

Essex Local Area
SEND Strategy 2022-2027



Delivered in partnership:

Essex County Council, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), Public Health, NHS England for specialist services, Early years settings, Schools and further education providers.

Contents

Welcome to the Essex Local Area SEND Strategy 2022-2027: My Life, My Rights.

Foreword	3
Introduction	4
‘My Life, My Rights’ is a joint strategy for the local area	6
How is ‘My Life, My Rights’ presented?	7

Part One: My Life, My Rights: A Strategy for the Local Area

Equity	10
Inclusion	11
Ambition	12
Test Questions	13
Working Together	15
The Local Area Pledge	16

Part Two: My Life, My Rights: The Five Strands

My Voice, My Choice	18
My Health and Wellbeing	19
My Education and Training	20
My Community	21
My Life, My Opportunities	22

Part Three: My Life, My Rights: The Reasons and Rationale

Developing the strategy	23
As a local area, what are our challenges?	26
As a local area, what are our strengths?	31
Health in Essex	36
As a local area, what are the potential barriers?	38

Further information 41

Welcome to the Essex Local Area SEND Strategy 2022-2027: My Life, My Rights.

Foreword

All children and young people in Essex deserve a high quality education, with the health, care and educational support that they need to flourish.

The Essex local area is a complex system, but our collective workforce and the partnerships we hold with our children, young people and parent representatives are our strengths.

We know that we are able to change and improve, as our recent Ofsted and CQC feedback confirmed, but we also know that we have much further to travel.

We remain committed to deliver our vision for children and young people with SEND in Essex; the pledge and plans set out within this strategy will enable us to do that.

We would like to offer particular recognition and a personal thank you to all the young people pictured and featured throughout this strategy. The photographs are not stock images. They are some of the young people from the MultiSchools Council who are working with huge energy and enthusiasm across the local area, demonstrating the same commitment to improve Essex for their friends, family and future young people.

The SEND Partnership Board will drive forward the delivery of this strategy and encourage parents, carers and young people across Essex to continue to share their views and experiences with us as we continue on our journey of improvement.

Clare Kershaw

Director of Education and Chair of the
Essex SEND Partnership Board



Introduction

Change is needed in Essex.

We have been listening to children, young people and their families and finding out what needs to change. Some parts of the system in Essex are working well and the experience of families is good. However, this is not the same for all children, young people and families, and we have too much variation across Essex.

In May 2022 Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) carried out a joint revisit to Essex. The purpose of the revisit was to evaluate how effectively the Essex local area has addressed the three areas of significant weakness identified during the initial SEND inspection in 2019.

The revisit concluded that Essex has made sufficient progress in addressing the areas of significant weakness that the revisit was focused on. You can read the full report from Ofsted and CQC [here](#).

It is important for us to reassure all children and young people with SEND in Essex and their families, that achieving 'sufficient progress' does not mean we stop or scale back our efforts to improve our SEND services; a commitment which has been recognised in the revisit and in the revisit outcome letter. We acknowledge that improvements take time to be realised and this may mean some families and young people do not yet feel the impact of the changes we have made. However, we hugely appreciate the feedback from those families who have experienced our new ways of working, which helps us to confirm that the changes we are making are the right ones and these positive experiences will soon be the norm for all families.

This five year Essex SEND Strategy, “My Life, My Rights”, will drive forward the improvements that have already started across the local area and help all services in education, health and social care to work together to make the required changes so that children and young people in Essex achieve the very best outcomes.

The local area is beginning to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic and focus on recovery. It is essential at this time that we come together, learn from the pandemic and prioritise the things that matter, so that the rate of change increases and children, young people and their families begin to feel a positive difference.



‘My Life, My Rights’ is a joint strategy for the local area

The local area is more than just Essex County Council.

It includes Essex County Council (ECC), Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), Public Health, NHS England for specialist services, early years settings, schools and further education providers. It includes all the teams, services and providers that work with, support and care for children and young people with SEND.

The Health and Wellbeing Board, Children and Young People’s Partnership Board and SEND Partnership Board, with representation across the SEND system, collectively endorse this SEND Strategy and will oversee its delivery.

The SEND and Alternative Provision Green Paper is the result of the DFE’s SEND Review. It sets out a series of proposed changes for the SEND system to improve the lives of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The review intends to set out new national standards and clarified roles and responsibilities across education, health and care to build a higher performing SEND system.

[i Read more](#)



The local area is more than just Essex County Council

How is 'My Life, My Rights' presented?

Part One: My Life, My Rights: A Strategy for the Local Area

This section contains the high-level strategy to change and improve the SEND system in Essex. It includes the vision, the way the local area will work together and the local area pledge to children and young people.

Part Two: My Life, My Rights: The Five Strands

This section sets out the local area's approach to achieving the very best outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

Part Three: My Life, My Rights: The Reasons and Rationale

This section explains the thinking behind the strategy. It includes how the strategy has been developed, the current challenges in Essex, the strengths and potential barriers.

Part Four: My Life, My Rights: The Delivery Plan for the Local Area

This section sets out the outcomes that will be achieved through the strategy and details all the different work plans and projects that are in place across the local area to make the changes happen. In production, will be available January 2023.



Where you see this icon, you can read more information.



TJ, winner of the 2021 Multi-Schools Council award for Kindness

“My name is TJ and I have ADHD, I love animals and visiting Colchester zoo - I’m a happy boy and have a heart of gold and I’m always creating new ideas with my toys and love being outside.

In the lockdown I was upset that the zoo didn’t have enough money so I wanted to help the animals especially the lions. I built a Lego zoo in my front garden and spent every weekend speaking to people about the zoo.

I then ran a marathon dressed as a lion and did some litter picking. I raised £12,000 to help all the animals at the zoo.

I want to be a zoo keeper when I grow up!”

Part One: My Life, My Rights: A Strategy for the Local Area



The local area vision is for a SEND system that centres on:





Equity

We know that children, young people and their families in Essex do not experience equal access to a consistent, high quality range of educational support, health services and specialist provision. Access varies too much depending on where families live and the schools children attend. Families tell us about the 'postcode lottery'.

We want to change this.

As a local area:

- We will ensure children and young people can access the high quality support, services and provision that they need to live a good life.
- We will raise the bar and raise standards so that everyone receives the very highest quality support and care.
- We will ensure there is good and outstanding provision for all children and young people, within or close to their local community.





Inclusion

Children, young people and their families have told us that they don't always feel included in their local communities and that they do not always have the same opportunities. This includes within the community, in some education establishments, for training and in the workplace.

We want to change this.

As a local area:

- We will challenge non-inclusive practice, policy or behaviour and remove barriers so that opportunities are equally accessible to all children, young people and their families.
- We will position SEND at the heart of leadership so that education, health and care meets the ever changing needs of local communities.
- We will improve the early help offer so that families have confidence in universal and targeted services and we reduce demand on statutory services.
- We will include children, young people and their families in decision making and future planning.



Ambition

We know that outcomes for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are not yet good enough. The percentage of 16 and 17 year olds who are NEET (not in employment, education or training) in Essex without SEND is 3.6%. For young people with an EHCP this rises to 8.4% and for young people who had SEN support the figure is 9.6%.

We want to change this.

(*Figures from December 2020 - February 2021)

As a local area:

- We will have high ambition for every child and young person to develop to the full, starting in the earliest years and continuing throughout their life.
- We will provide choice and opportunity throughout every stage of life, but most notably at the end of formal education so that there are meaningful choices for living and employment for every young person.
- As a local area, we will view education as an important pathway and part of a young person's journey, not the end destination in itself.
- We will include children, young people and their families in decision making and future planning.



Test Questions

When decisions are made, the local area will apply the following tests to ensure that we stay true to, and focused upon, our vision.



Ambition test question:
Is this the best we can do?

Equity test question:
Will this decision make things more equal?

Inclusion test question:
Will this decision help to make things more inclusive?

Justine

“I’m Justine, a visually impaired singer from Basildon and my life’s mission is to use the power of my singing and words, to comfort and inspire others, so that they may find their way out of the darkness and towards the light.

I know from my own life’s experiences that it can be tough to keep going when life and society itself puts barriers in your way, one after another, but I am driven, motivated, creative and have a passion and dedication for helping others, regardless of what challenges they may be facing. This is why I have a high level of faith that allowed me to start seeing my abilities, instead of my disability, because I believe that it is only when we begin to see our lives and abilities from this perspective, that we can really begin to make change in our own lives, as well as in the world itself. All we need is to have enough faith and courage to do so.



Our differences and disabilities do not have to become us. Our abilities and what we choose to do with them, does.”

Successful change requires a strong commitment to work in close partnership



Working Together

Working together is at the heart of this strategy.

As a local area, we recognise that the task of delivery is not just about the practicalities of plans and processes, but also about how the local area works together. The Local Area Joint Inspection (2019) noted a shared commitment from senior leaders to making sustainable change. Leaders across education, health and social care continue to be committed to strengthen the ways of working together to achieve the vision set out in this strategy. This will be driven and monitored by the SEND Partnership Board, with representatives from across the SEND system.

Successful delivery and sustainable change will never be achieved by organisations and services alone. What will make the difference is how well the local area works with children, young people and their families.

In Essex, there are strong networks to hear the experiences and views of children, young people and their families. The Essex Family Forum and the Multi-Schools Council are growing in size and strength and work tenaciously with the local area to ensure the views of young people and their families are heard. Both are central to the improvement journey ahead.

Successful change requires a strong commitment to work in close partnership with families and ensure that children, young people and their families are fully included in all matters that affect them. To this end, the local area is making a pledge.

i [Read more](#)

The Local Area Pledge

Every person, every team, every service in the local area has a role to play in the delivery of this strategy.

The United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) explains what governments must do at national and local level to make sure that children's rights are promoted, respected, protected and realised. Governments have the lead responsibility for the realisation of children's rights and all adults – including teachers, social workers, doctors and parents – have a responsibility to uphold and help children enjoy their rights.

As people who teach, support, care and plan for children and young people we pledge to respect and fulfil the rights of all children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Essex.



Our pledge to children, young people and families.

We will listen to the views, feelings and wishes of children, young people and their families in all matters affecting them and take their views seriously.

The best interest of the child or young person will always be our top priority in decisions and actions.

We will step in and take positive action to protect these rights. We will look at where things have gone wrong and make sure this doesn't happen again. We will share where things have gone right so others can learn from success.

We will value every individual for the unique contribution that they make to our community.

We will support children and young people to learn about and understand their rights, as well as know who is responsible for making rights a reality.

In this pledge, there are no “ifs and buts” and you will not find the words “wherever possible”.

Part Two: My Life, My Rights: The Five Strands

The strategy uses the language
of the articles in the UNCRC



Read more

The strategy is based on the fundamental rights of all children and young people as defined in the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#).



My Voice, My Choice

Every child and young person's views, feelings and wishes are always considered and taken seriously in all matters that affect them.



My Health and Wellbeing

Every child and young person has the best possible health and wellbeing.



My Education & Training

Every child and young person develops their personality, talents and abilities to the full, through their education and training.



My Community

Every child and young person is connected to, and plays an active part, in their local community.



My Life, My Opportunities

Every child and young person has the education, care and support they need to lead a full and purposeful life with dignity and independence.



My Voice, My Choice

For each strand, the local area has made a commitment to achieving a number of aims. The first column states the aim. The second column describes what success might look like when these aims are achieved.

My Voice, My Choice

Every child and young person's views, feelings and wishes are always considered and taken seriously in all matters that affect them.

As a local area, we are committed to ensuring...

When this aim is achieved, what will we see happening in the local area?

All planning is person-centred.

Support is planned and delivered in a way that works for the child or young person. It is balanced to include what is important to the individual, as well as what is important for the individual. Children, young people and their families are involved in decision making in all matters that concern them and have greater choice and control over their support.

Information is available and accessible.

Children, young people and their families can find the information they need, are able to make informed choices and navigate the system easily from the earliest years to early adulthood.

Coproduction with children, young people and families.

A wider and greater representation of children, young people and families are involved in strategic decision making and the coproduction of services, so that there is better fit between what children, young people and their families need and what is available.



My Health and Wellbeing

For each strand, the local area has made a commitment to achieving a number of aims. The first column states the aim. The second column describes what success might look like when these aims are achieved.

My Health and Wellbeing

Every child and young person has the best possible health and wellbeing.

As a local area, we are committed to ensuring...	When this aim is achieved, what will we see happening in the local area?
Early identification and early support.	Children and young people's health needs, and importantly their mental health, are identified early and support is put in place at the earliest opportunity. Children and young people do not need to be in crisis before support is offered.
Clear pathways to access support and services.	Children, young people and their families understand how to access support, receive good communication and have a positive experience from all services.
The right support, from the right people, at the right time.	Children and young people get the support that makes a difference and helps them make progress towards the outcomes that matter to them. There is good support available from universal, targeted and specialist services that meet the needs of families at the right time.
Support for wellbeing in all Essex educational settings.	The emotional wellbeing of children and young people is part of the life and work of schools and colleges and there is mental health expertise in every school and setting.



My Education and Training

For each strand, the local area has made a commitment to achieving a number of aims. The first column states the aim. The second column describes what success might look like when these aims are achieved.

My Education and Training

Every child and young person's education and training will develop their personality, talents and abilities to the full.

As a local area, we are committed to ensuring...	When this aim is achieved, what will we see happening in the local area?
Inclusive education.	All children have access to quality inclusive childcare to make an excellent start to their early education, development and learning. All Essex education settings have an inclusive culture and children and young people receive the same high quality of offer, regardless of which school, college or setting they attend, regardless of where they live.
Accurate identification of needs and intervention in schools, colleges and Early Years settings.	Children and young people's needs are identified accurately and there is early, evidence-based intervention to support them. Children, young people and their families can access support and intervention without the need to wait for a formal diagnosis and without unnecessary, bureaucratic delay.
Effective SEN support (One Planning).	SEN support (One Planning) is of an equal high standard across all education settings. Children and young people can attend their local education setting and feel confident that they will be fully included and have their needs met effectively. Children and young people's talents and strengths are at the forefront of all discussions. All planning and support thinks about the future of the whole person, and positively builds upon the unique strengths, talents and personality of the individual.
Joined up planning and support across education, health and social care.	Every service plays their part and children young people and their families experience high quality planning and provision from the most appropriate teams and services.



My Community

For each strand, the local area has made a commitment to achieving a number of aims. The first column states the aim. The second column describes what success might look like when these aims are achieved.

My Community

Every child and young person is connected to, and plays an active part, in their local community.

As a local area, we are committed to ensuring...

When this aim is achieved, what will we see happening in the local area?

Inclusive communities.

Children, young people and their families can access the places they want to go and the things they want to do, alongside their friends and families in their local community. Children and young people will be made welcome, staff will be able to meet their needs and physical accessibility improves.

Excellent universal and targeted services.

Children, young people and their families can find and access support that meets their individual needs without needing a referral or diagnosis and without being dependent on others.

Specialist excellence in Essex.

The needs of all children and young people, including the most complex, can be met close to home from the earliest years, throughout the whole of their education and into employment. The local area will be able to offer sufficient school places for every Essex child.



My Life, My Opportunities

For each strand, the local area has made a commitment to achieving a number of aims. The first column states the aim. The second column describes what success might look like when these aims are achieved.

My Life, My Opportunities

Every child and young person has the education, care and support they need to lead a full and purposeful life with dignity and independence.

As a local area, we are committed to ensuring...

When this aim is achieved, what will we see happening in the local area?

Preparing for adulthood from the earliest years.

Children and young people are supported and encouraged to build on their strengths and be ambitious for their next steps and their future. Those who support, teach and care for children and young people maintain focus on life skills, experience and independence so that children and young people have a direction and purpose beyond formal education.

High quality transitions.

There are high quality, planned transitions between services, settings and phases. Children and young people continue to progress at every move and are supported seamlessly by well thought out transitions, whether this is between services, settings or phases.

Preparation for employment.

Young people are well prepared for their next steps and education, training and opportunities leads to employability for more young people with SEND.

Meaningful opportunities beyond age 16.

Education settings, training providers, and employers demonstrate their commitment to equality and inclusion and offer positive opportunities to more young people, valuing and appreciating individual's differences and contributions. This means there are more (both amount and variation) of opportunities available to young people and there is something purposeful for everyone. For many this will mean employment; but for others this will look different. The aim must remain that there is a meaningful option for everyone.

Part Three: My Life, My Rights: The Reasons and Rationale

Developing the strategy

In chronological order:

We asked everyone who is part of the SEND system in Essex for their views (SEND Public Engagement Survey, 2019; The Personal Outcomes Evaluation Tool (the POET survey) 2019).

[Read more](#)

We held a series of engagement sessions in schools and with families to better understand the views that had been expressed in the SEND Public Engagement survey (Autumn Term, 2019).

[Read more](#)

Young people told us what matters to them (National POET survey, 2019; Children and Young People's POET challenge, March 2020; Multi-Schools Council minutes, 2019-2021).

[Read more](#)

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission inspected the local area services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and highlighted three areas of significant weakness. These are addressed through the Joint Written Statement of Action and informed this strategy.

[Read more](#)

Workshops were held throughout 2020 and 2021 with representatives across education, health, care and the Essex Family Forum to develop the vision and principles for the future SEND Strategy.

Leaders from education, health and care came together weekly with the Essex Family Forum throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to understand the new pressures and emerging challenges that children, young people and families were facing (from April 2020 and throughout the national lockdowns).

Practitioners from across the local area, alongside the Essex Family Forum, hosted weekly drop-ins for all parent support groups to share the issues that families were raising with their teams (from June 2020 - ongoing, now as monthly drop-ins).

The Essex Family Forum asked families about their lived experiences of the education, health and care system and identified eleven key challenges (Family Impact Survey November, 2020, and repeated in February 2022).

i [Read more](#)

The Essex Headteacher Inclusion Roundtable continue to work in partnership with ECC to help us fully understand the strengths and challenges encountered by schools, colleges and Early Years settings.

The parent carer network for Essex, the Essex Family Forum share termly feedback of lived experience of the education, health and care systems through their virtual Graffiti Wall.

i [Read more](#)





Reece, from the Multi-Schools Council

“I’m Reece, I’m 15, I have Autism, ADHD, a learning disability and hypermobility. This is me helping to record an album for the Multi-Schools Council. The song that I recorded was called Bad Days, which explained that having a bad day happens and that’s OK.

You can listen to the songs [here](#).

My conditions can make some days difficult but I know every day is a new day. I love music, singing and writing songs. I’m an ambassador for the Multi-Schools Council and want to raise awareness about special educational needs and that being different is ok.

We all have differences and I want everyone to be treated and accepted the same regardless of any barriers or challenges we face.”

As a local area, what are our challenges?

Variability in quality and availability of services across Essex

The size and scale of Essex is both a strength and a challenge. The size offers great opportunities and expertise; the challenge is ensuring equity across every district. There is too much variability in the quality and availability of services, particularly health and education, which inevitably leads to mixed parental satisfaction.

[Read more](#)

The ever-changing profile of SEND

The profile of SEND in Essex has changed considerably over the last ten years. Schools, colleges and Early Years settings are being asked to meet the needs of an ever-changing and ever-growing population.

[Read more](#)

Inclusion and equal opportunities

The Essex Headteacher Roundtable for Inclusion work in partnership with ECC and are a key driver in improving inclusion across the county. There is a belief among many in the system that not all schools, colleges and settings are equally inclusive, but to date much of the evidence has been anecdotal.

[Read more](#)



Increasing demand for specialist provision

There are a growing number of requests for Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment each year.

98.8% of the total available places at Essex special schools are filled at any one time. Half of the special schools in Essex are regularly full or over their commissioned number and the alternative provision places at the Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) are close to capacity (January 2022).

The local area is seeing a significant growth in the number of commissioned therapy hours since the commencement of the contract with Provide in 2017. The figure currently stands at a 40% increase.



[Read more](#)



Gaps in specialist education provision

The SEN capital programme (begun in 2015) is nearing completion. There has been a significant and incremental growth in Essex's special schools over the last seven years. The Chatten School (the first new special school in Essex since 2015) opened in September 2021; Chatten is the first Essex special school designed specifically for children and young people with autism. Three more new schools will follow in the next two years (Hawthorns and Sir Geoff Hurst schools in Chelmsford and Greenwell in Harlow).

Despite this investment, there are still gaps in specialist education provision in Essex. Coupled with the number of schools at capacity, and those that have significantly more children and young people than their buildings can adequately accommodate, school places remains a challenge. ECC are working on a SEND sufficiency strategy to inform our future planning both in special schools and via specialist provision in mainstream schools.



[Read more](#)

Waiting times and support for families

The local area recognises that children and young people who may have a Neurodevelopmental diagnosis or are waiting for a diagnosis may still not get the support that they need to thrive, so an inclusive, integrated approach is needed to address this. The Joint Commissioning approach brings together resources across the local area to address five key areas, of which ASD/ADHD is included. Using the findings from the NHSE Autism Best Practice Deep Dive Report 2020, this work aims to deliver integrated and early support pathways of care, adopting a standardised approach that meets the needs of children, young people and families across Essex and at any point of their journey.

The impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has put significant pressure on individuals, families, teams, communities and organisations and full recovery will take time.

Throughout the pandemic, local area leaders continued to work in partnership to provide clear and consistent guidance and support for schools, settings and operational staff, to maintain high quality and safe education, whilst still progressing our SEND improvement programme. Elements of the wider workforce were refocused to respond to the impact on schools, settings and families of the national lockdowns and local tier 4 restrictions, the need to facilitate children and young people's safe access to education, vaccination roll-out and other key initiatives. This along with suspension of certain face to face services, has resulted in backlogs of appointments, consultations and in some cases access to support and/or diagnosis.





An under-developed post 16 and 19-25 offer across the local area

There is a lack of information about the aspirations and opportunities for young people when they leave education. This means it is difficult to shape a post 16 and 19-25 educational offer with appropriate employment pathways into work that are aligned to young people's aspirations, talents and skills and that are realistically matched to real jobs within local labour markets.

Essex County Council are currently reviewing the Short Breaks offer as families have shared that there is a lack of clubs and activities for the 19-25 age group.

Relationships, communication and working together

Young people and families have mixed experiences of teams and services across the local area. Some services are in high demand and are in a position of reacting, rather than planning ahead and providing what is needed to children, young people and their families in a timely and well-considered way.

Information and communication is described by some as sparse, by others as 'overwhelming' and 'not knowing where to start'. Some parents feel well-supported, others describe their experience as a 'fight'. Some children and young people do not feel that their views, feelings and wishes are always included in decisions about their care and support.

Alfie, who climbed Snowdon to raise money for the Multi-Schools Council in 2021.

“My name is Alfie.

At 3 years old I was diagnosed with autism and dyspraxia.

In this picture I was climbing mount Snowdon to raise awareness and money for the Multi-Schools Council who help children with special needs, like myself. You can hear the podcast [here](#).

I am passionate about proving that although I have different needs to other children, I can still achieve anything I set my mind to - as I proved in climbing Mount Snowdon (even with an injured foot LOL).



Hopefully I can make more people aware that although I might have slightly different needs I am equal to anyone else. Thank you, Alfie”

As a local area, what are our strengths?

The people

The people in the system remain our greatest strength. The last eighteen months have been an unprecedented and challenging time, yet everyone across the system has worked tirelessly to support children and young people.

Health practitioners should be recognised for their dedication and high-quality care during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many were redeployed to work on the front line, stepping up and providing the chance of life and recovery to so many patients and their families.

Headteachers, leaders and staff in all education settings were - and many continue to be - faced with unprecedented circumstances, keeping schools, colleges and Early Years settings open for months on end, whilst developing and implementing new remote learning programmes and providing that vital continuity to children and young people throughout incredibly challenging times.

Social Workers provided a lifeline to families who suddenly found themselves isolated and without access to their usual sources of support. Social Workers worked tirelessly to provide emotional support, promoting resilience whilst also maintaining a focus on safeguarding during this time of escalating anxiety for everyone.

For some families, their child's Social Worker was their only visitor. Whilst these visits were not without challenge, Social Workers created a number of ways to engage young people in the virtual and the real world including Treasure Hunts, Door Step Visits and many walks in the park.

There has always been a strong and hugely valued offer from voluntary and support groups across the local area, and the difference these support groups make shone through even more brightly during the pandemic. The support offered to parents, carers and families of children with SEND, from voluntary groups and charities, such as Families in Focus, MAZE, SNAP and PACT is invaluable.



**The people in
the system remain
our greatest strength**



Partnership working between leaders from Early Years, primary, secondary, special schools and ECC is strong and the Essex Headteacher Inclusion Roundtable continues to be an important mechanism for driving forward changes.

The local area benefits from a team of specialist teachers who give good support to meet the needs children and young people with visual impairment, hearing impairment, and physical and neurological impairment.

A growing network of Lead SENCOs is in place to support new SENCOs and help embed new developments and training across groups of schools.



[Read more](#)

There is a strong parent carer network with a growing number of family champions, representing far more parents than before. The commitment and dedication of the Essex Family Forum continues to be an essential part of the local area's improvement journey.



[Read more](#)

The voice of children and young people in Essex

The local area is proud to have the Multi-Schools Council (MSC) in Essex.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child highlights how children should be active participants in the lives of their communities. The MSC is one of the ways that the local area creates opportunities for children and young people with SEND to realise these rights and to make their priorities, wishes and feelings known to the local area.

The MSC began in 2012 and is still growing in size and influence. Ambassadors for the MSC are supporting schools to improve their inclusive practice through SEND assemblies, parental workshops, awareness sessions for teachers and visits from the Good Practice Seekers (#betterthanOfsted!).

The impact of the MSC is evidenced throughout this strategy and the voice of the young people will remain central to decision making and evaluation of the progress throughout the five years of this strategy.



‘Local area leaders are keen to listen to what this group of children and young people have to say about what is important to them.’

(Local Area Joint Inspection, 2019)

i [Read more](#)





Every social care team has a SEND Champion who is supported by a quadrant SEND link worker

Social Care in Essex

The Children and Young People with Disabilities Service (CYPWD) supports children and young people aged 0 to 25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The service enables a smooth transition from childhood into adulthood and comprises of a number of teams which work together to support the children, families and young people who are eligible for support – Children with Disabilities; Young People with Disabilities; Children and Young People Support Services; Preparing for Adulthood Service; Occupational Therapy (OT) and Rehabilitation.

The CYPWD Teams, Family Solutions and the Team Around the Family Support Officers (TAFSOs) have joined together to increase confidence in working with Children with SEND.

Every social care team has a SEND Champion who is supported by a quadrant SEND link worker.

We have a dedicated SEND Development Officer who provides advice and support to the link workers and directly to the teams. We have recently recruited a SEND worker at the Children and Families hub to ensure SEN is identified and appropriate support and guidance is offered at the earliest possible opportunity.

 [Read more](#)

Education system

The education system in Essex is largely inclusive; around nine of every ten Essex children and young people with SEND (89.0%) are educated in mainstream settings.

There are 19 special schools in Essex. Of the 18 that have been inspected by Ofsted, 15 of these (83.3%) were graded good (10) or outstanding (5). 91.6% of special school pupils attend good or outstanding provision.

Over the last seven years Essex has used a SEN capital programme to grow capacity in Essex special schools. The programme has delivered expansions at eight Essex special schools and created new facilities for residential provision at three schools. As well as investment from ECC and the Essex Schools Forum, the County Council was able to successfully develop plans for four new special schools via the free school route. One, Chatten, has already opened with a further three to follow. There are a thousand more children attending an Essex special school in 2022 than in 2015.



The education system in Essex is largely inclusive

Health in Essex

Opportunities of the ICSs

Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) are part of a fundamental shift in the way the health and care system is organised. The central aim is to integrate care across different organisations and settings, joining up hospital and community-based services, physical and mental health, and health and social care.

All parts of England are now covered by one of 42 ICSs. In Essex there are three ICS structures supporting children and young people. Within the ICS footprints there are partnerships formed around smaller geographical areas called Alliances. There is a clear opportunity for Essex, through the 5 Alliance Partnerships of North East Essex, West Essex, Basildon & Brentwood, Mid Essex and Castle Point and Rochford to better meet the distinctive needs and characteristics of our local populations, with a continued focus on equity, ambition and inclusion.

Essex will be supported by three ICSs:

Hertfordshire and West Essex: Hertfordshire and West Essex ICS, known as 'A Healthier Future', will be responsible for setting the strategy and goals for improving health and care in our area, to create a health and care system fit for the future, with transformed services that join up around the people who use them.

Mid and South Essex Health and Care Partnership:

Organisations responsible for providing health and care services in mid and south Essex have teamed up to meet the increasing needs of local communities whilst ensuring the services provide the best possible care in the right place when needed.

Suffolk and North East Essex: The vision is for people across Suffolk and North East Essex ICS to live healthier, happier lives by moving beyond individual health and care organisations working alone, to working together in an integrated way because that is the best route to helping people to thrive.

There is a commitment from the ICSs to support the SEND Strategy and work in partnership across Essex to ensure we support the best outcomes for children and young people. This will be supported by having nominated Executive Leads for children and Young people. Each ICS will also be supported by the Designated Medical/Clinical Officer roles (DMO/DCO).



There is a commitment from the ICSs to support the SEND Strategy and work in partnership across Essex to ensure we support the best outcomes for children and young people.



Sam, winner of the 2021 Multi-Schools Council award for Promoting School Sport

“I’m Sam. My family call me Samells. I’m autistic. Autism is sometimes a pain, sometimes it’s fine, other times it’s a hassle. My pets are really important to me.

I love all the animals in the world and finding out all the info about them. I got a sport award in the summer of 2021. This photo is when I was showing it to my mummy.

I was really proud of my award and my achievements.”

As a local area, what are the potential barriers?

There are several potential barriers to implementation of the strategy.

Parental confidence in inclusion

Some parents hold the belief that some schools are better equipped than others to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND and this drives their choice of preferred school. There is a lack of confidence among some parents that mainstream schools can meet their child's needs and this is evidenced by increasing requests for an EHCP and a place at a special school.

It will take time to change the confidence of parents. The Ordinarily Available Offer will be a step forward in having an agreed offer for all children and young people, no matter which school they attend, no matter where they live.

Changing the narrative around SEND

The rhetoric around SEND is often fed by social media and the narrative on social media is often more negative than positive. This is in many cases in direct contrast to the experience and academic outcomes achieved by children and young people with SEND in Essex.

The local area will need to have an increased focus on capturing and sharing the positive experiences of children, young people and families in Essex to improve the culture and perception of the SEND system in our local area.



Physical capacity of special schools

New places can be created but this takes time and can contribute in itself to increasing demand.

The SEND Sufficiency strategy will be crucial in looking at current and forecasted demand and along with the SEND Capital Programme, to ensure the best use of existing estates and new opportunities.

School funding

Mainstream schools who have a higher proportion of children and young people with SEND within their school population have to make finances 'stretch' further. This can hamper their ability to participate in new ways of working.

The review of SEND funding in Essex will deliver a new approach to effective funding arrangements for SEND. Through the Inclusion Framework there are some new and creative approaches to effective early intervention and invest-to-save opportunities.

Recovery and return from the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has put significant pressure on individuals, families, teams, communities and organisations and full recovery will take time.

The evidence from both national surveys and from local feedback is that the pandemic has had a negative impact on the emotional wellbeing and mental health of young people. Children and young people missed school because of everything it brings into their lives including structure, routine, friendships and other essential basic needs such as food.

The long term impact of the disruption to education over the last three academic years is as yet unknown and although mitigation and recovery plans are in place, the local area must remain mindful of this.

Plans are in place across the SEND system to 'recover' and address backlogs but the delay is still being felt by schools, children and young people and their families. The Education Task Force established in 2021 will drive the educational recovery post COVID-19 with school partnerships across Essex prioritising SEND and Inclusion.



A vehicle for achieving greater integration, improving population health and reducing health inequalities

Changing health landscape

It is anticipated that in the near future the NHS will bring about a major change in how health and care services are planned, paid for and delivered with the introduction of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs).

It is hoped this ambition in the NHS Long Term Plan will be a vehicle for achieving greater integration, improving population health and reducing health inequalities, supporting the productivity and sustainability of services and helping the NHS to support social and economic development.

Each ICS footprint has identified smaller partnerships known as Alliances which connect Primary Care, Local Councils/Districts, hospitals, community providers and voluntary organisations. In Essex there are 5 Alliances

- North East Essex Alliance
- West Essex Alliance
- Mid Essex Alliance
- Basildon and Brentwood Alliance
- Castle Point and Rochford Alliance.

These changes will undoubtedly support the Children and Families Act 2014 and brings significant opportunities to strengthen the voice of children and families within new ways of working.

**Further
information**

More about Essex County Council

ECC is responsible for all the public services and facilities in a particular area. These include social care and education.

There are more than 200 statutory duties in relation to education, including securing sufficient school places, overseeing a fair admissions process, and ensuring that children with SEND have access to appropriate quality provision.

Social Care offer care and support for children and young people with SEND, including accessible transport, home adaptations and technology for independent living.

Role of Health in SEND

More about Health across Essex

Clinicians and therapists provide health services for children and young people with SEND, from early identification and throughout their school and college years and into adulthood.

Much of the health care for children and young people will be delivered through universal, preventative services such as the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service.

Universal health services support early identification of young children who may have SEN often through screening programmes such as the Healthy Child Programme and neonatal screening care with the support of specialist health visiting roles.

Children and young people sometimes require specialist and targeted health provision for a period of time. This is delivered as a multidisciplinary team including paediatricians, physiotherapists, specialist nurses, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, dieticians and mental health practitioners. Therapists have an important and specific role to support children and young people with a range of health needs and disabilities often working directly with children and young people, advising and training education staff on programmes for implementation at home and in school. This can include the use of specialist equipment, orthosis (splints) and aids to support a child and young person to be comfortable and independent.

Community paediatricians as part of the multidisciplinary teams are often the first people to notify young children with SEND to local authorities, but any other health professional can do this, so a family gets the right support as soon as possible. This is required under section 23 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

NHS health services will provide diagnostic services and intervention for all children where there is an identified health need. This can include advising schools on medical care including those with complex medical needs and conditions such as diabetes and epilepsy or referring a family to another service once their need, medical or otherwise, has been identified.

The multidisciplinary team will also contribute to the development of Education, Health and Care plans and support the review process.

Health services will also manage the transition from children's health services to adult services to enable a smooth transfer of care. This will often begin at the age of 14 with some children

supported with an annual health check by their GP but we also aim to start discussions about transition once the family and child are ready.

NHS and public health services are all committed to meeting the needs of all children and addressing health inequalities identified for people with SEND, so they get the best start in life and continue to thrive in school and at home.

There are a variety of different health providers in Essex and further information can be found on the Local Offer web site: [Health - Essex Local Offer](#).

Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)

There are five clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) that cover Essex and they are responsible for purchasing secondary and community care services for their local populations. This includes working in partnership with ECC to ensure services to support people with SEND are available as identified in the Childrens and Families Act 2014.

These are :

- NHS Basildon and Brentwood Clinical Commissioning Group.
- NHS Castle Point and Rochford Clinical Commissioning Group.
- NHS Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group.
- NHS West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group.
- NHS North East Essex Commissioning Group.

Integrated Care Systems (ICSs)

Legislative change is currently being considered by parliament to support further integrated care for families and communities by establishing Integrated Care Systems across England.

Integrated care is about giving families the support they need, joined up across local councils, the NHS, and other partners. It removes traditional divisions between hospitals and family doctors, between physical and mental health, and between NHS and council services. In the past, these divisions have meant that too many families experienced disjointed care.

One of the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic is families need support which is joined up across local councils, the NHS and voluntary and community organisations. Integrated care systems (ICSs) will improve partnerships between the organisations that meet health and care needs across an area, coordinate services and plan in a way that improves population health and reduces inequalities between different groups.

A video explaining ICSs can be found on the NHS website: www.england.nhs.uk/integratedcare.

Integrated Care in Essex

This change from CCGs to ICSs will happen during the lifespan of the SEND Strategy. You can read more about the plans for Essex [here](#).

Essex will be supported by three ICSs and all have committed to supporting delivery of the SEND Strategy in Essex.

The ICS areas in Essex include:

[Hertfordshire and West Essex:](#) Hertfordshire and West Essex ICS, known as ‘A Healthier Future’, will be responsible for setting the strategy and goals for improving health and care in our area, to create a health and care system fit for the future, with transformed services that join up around the people who use them.

[Mid and South Essex Health and Care Partnership:](#)

Organisations responsible for providing health and care services in mid and south Essex have teamed up to meet the increasing needs of local communities whilst ensuring the services provide the best possible care in the right place when you need it.

[Suffolk and North East Essex:](#) The vision is for people across Suffolk and North East Essex ICS to live healthier, happier lives by moving beyond individual health and care organisations working alone, to working together in an integrated way because that is the best route to helping people to thrive.

[◀ Return to page 6](#)

More about working with families

The way parent carers work with professionals is by forming groups called parent carer forums. A parent carer forum is a group of parents and carers of children with SEND. Their aim is to make sure the services in their area meet the needs of disabled children and their families.

They do this by gathering the views of local families and then working in partnership with County Councils, education settings, health and other providers to highlight where local services,

processes and commissioners are working well, or challenge when changes or improvements need to be made.

You can learn more by watching the [video](#) by Contact ‘What is a parent carer forum and what they do?’

In Essex we have a strong parent carer network called the [Essex Family Forum](#).

More about working with children and young people in Essex

Essex is very fortunate to have [The Multi-Schools Council](#). Just under four hundred schools and colleges are part of the Multi-Schools Council. At the heart of the council are the voices of our children and young people.

The children and young people meet termly to tackle issues that they tell us are important to them. Some children and young people want to be more active and volunteer to be a young [MSC ambassador](#) and pursue their own interest or project.

[◀ Return to page 15](#)

More about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

All children have the same rights. The rights for children set out in the United Nations Convention have been agreed by almost every country in the world.

[You can read the convention here.](#)

Why this approach?

This decision was taken following a period of engagement with children, young people and families who were strongly in favour of this approach.



The strategy uses the language of the articles in the UNCRC

My voice, my choice

- Article 12 (respect for the views of the child): Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life.
- Article 17 (access to information from the media): Every child has the right to reliable information from a variety of sources, and governments should encourage the media to provide information that children can understand.

My health and wellbeing

- Article 24 (health and health services): Every child has the right to the best possible health.

My education and training

- Article 28 (right to education): Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights.

- Article 29 (goals of education): Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment. It should help prepare the child to live in and contribute to a free society.

My community

- Article 15 (freedom of association): Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations.
- Article 23 (children with a disability): A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community.

My opportunities

- Article 23 (children with a disability): A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community.
- Article 29 (goals of education): Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment. It should help prepare the child to live in and contribute to a free society.
- Article 2 (non-discrimination): The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.

◀ [Return to page 17](#)

SEND Public Engagement 2019

Between March and May 2019, Essex County Council held a SEND public engagement asking parents, carers, young people and education settings to complete a survey to develop the SEND Strategy in Essex. There were 1027 responses to the survey, including 511 parents and carers, 358 from an education setting, 104 who work for Essex County Council across Education and Social Care and 4 young people with SEND.

National POET Survey 2019

394 children and young people participated in the POET survey in 2019 and gave their views of what is working and what needs to be improved. 1844 parents and carers gave their views.

A group of those young people met with the SEND Strategy and Innovation Team to look at the survey feedback. The young people decided what was most important to improve and set a challenge to the adults in the local area.

[Watch the young people here.](#)

◀ [Return to page 23](#)

Engagement Sessions

The Essex Family Forum held eight engagement sessions with families across the county to explore the key challenges faced by children, young people and their parents.

ECC held 25 school engagement sessions across Essex in the autumn term with an additional Early Years setting specific webinar and a Further Education specific engagement session.

◀ [Return to page 23](#)

SEND Inspection Findings

Between 30 September 2019 and 4 October 2019, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) carried out an inspection of the local area's effectiveness in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector determined that a Written Statement of Action was required to address three key areas of weakness in the local area's practice

1. The reasons for, and accuracy of, the high proportions of children and young people identified with moderate learning difficulties (MLD) are yet to be resolved.
2. The joint commissioning arrangements between the County Council and the CCGs do not work well enough to provide children and young people with the services that they need.
3. Too many EHC plans do not include the information needed to secure high-quality outcomes for children and young people.

◀ [Return to page 23](#)

Family Impact Survey 2022

As a local area we very much need family feedback in order to plan and make changes, and we were delighted that 655 parent carers took part in the first Essex Family Forum ‘Family Impact Survey’ (November 2020). The survey highlighted 11 challenges:

- Challenge 1: Children and Young People’s voice
- Challenge 2: Navigation of the SEND system
- Challenge 3: SEN support
- Challenge 4: One Planning
- Challenge 5: The Essex Local Offer
- Challenge 6: EHC Needs Assessments and EHC Plans
- Challenge 7: Annual Reviews
- Challenge 8: Provision in Education, Health and Care plans
- Challenge 9: Communication
- Challenge 10: Home Education
- Challenge 11: Appeals

The local area and the Essex Family Forum are continuing to monitor progress in these challenges and are feeding back regularly to families.

◀ [Return to page 24](#)

Graffiti Wall – Essex Family Forum

[The Graffiti Wall](#) was set up by the Essex Family Forum to provide parents with a continuous opportunity to tell their experiences on SEND.

◀ [Return to page 24](#)

Variability in quality and availability of services across Essex

This variation in experience is common across surveys, conversations and was also a finding of the local area Joint Inspection in 2019.

‘Parental satisfaction is mixed across the local area, often linked to two particular things: first, there is too much variability in the quality and availability of services between the four quadrants within Essex and the CCGs; second, the experiences of children and young people are often dependent on individual professionals rather than on consistently high-quality services and robust systems for sharing information.’ (Local Area Joint Inspection, 2019)

Families have raised the quality of SEN Support (or One Planning as it is often called in Essex) as a particular concern. Parents recognise the effort that schools and education settings make but feel that the amount and quality of support is inconsistent from school to school and setting to

setting. Parents feel that not all teachers and settings are well equipped to meet their children's needs and feel some schools and settings need more support. This was one of the challenges raised in the Family Impact Survey 2020.

◀ [Return to page 26](#)

The ever-changing profile of SEND

Over the last five years, both the volume and profile of SEN pupils in Essex schools has changed.

Whilst the all-pupil school population has increased by 6.7% (2015/16 to 2020/21), the number of pupils in receipt of SEN Support has risen by 14.8% and those with an EHCP by 15.7%.

The nature of needs among these pupils has also shifted. There have been significant increases in pupils with Autism (+81.8%), Social, Emotional & Mental Health needs (+39.3%) and Speech, Language & Communication Needs (+29.7%).

The age profile has also changed. This is most pronounced among 16-19 year olds where nearly one in five of all EHCPs are held by young people in this age group. In addition, around one in twenty EHCPs are held by young people aged 20-25. Collectively, 22.8% of the EHCP population was above the age of 16 in 2021.

◀ [Return to page 26](#)

Inclusion and equal opportunities

Historically Essex has always had a higher proportion of pupils with an EHCP placed in a mainstream school than other areas (in 2019 this was 49.7%; in 2021 this was 44.9%). This remains higher than the national average of 39.9% but the proportion of pupils with an EHCP placed in a mainstream school is anticipated to decrease further over coming years to be more in line with the national average.

Looking at newly issued EHCPs since 2018 shows that Essex is placing fewer pupils in mainstream settings than across England. Of all newly issued EHCPs during the 2020 calendar year, 32.2% of those in Essex were placed in mainstream compared to 37.0% nationally.

Feedback from young people and their families supports the view that not all places in communities (education and leisure) are equally inclusive.

A young ambassador for the Multi-Schools council shared her experience: "Being part of the community is really important because people with disabilities are isolated and when they do go out, they are not always treated with the same respect and acceptance as non-disabled people. I can't stand but my mind works." Young person, Essex POET team, 2020.

◀ [Return to page 26](#)

Increasing demand for specialist provision

The number of requests for Education, Health and Care Needs assessments has increased by 66% from 2015/16 to 2020/21, which equates to an additional 1084 requests a year.

Over the past 5 years, exclusions and suspensions for children displaying persistent disruptive behaviour have been steadily increasing. The number and percentage of children and young people permanently excluded from school for persistent disruptive behaviour has risen from 14 pupils (26.92% of exclusions) in the academic year 2014/15 to 29 (39.19% of exclusions) in 2019/20. Suspensions (fixed term exclusions) have risen across the same period from 1438 to 2469.

Referral rates to the Education Access Team for children and young people at risk of exclusions are currently 50% higher than the equivalent period last academic year and referral rates for children unable to attend school for medical reasons are currently 30% higher than the equivalent period last academic year.

◀ [Return to page 27](#)

Gaps in specialist education provision

Essex is very similar to other Local Authorities in our use of the independent non-maintained special school (INMSS) sector. However, there has been an increase over the last five years in the number of children and young people requiring an INMSS place as there are not sufficient school places in Essex to offer. If trends continue, more children will be placed outside Essex in special and INMSS schools.

◀ [Return to page 27](#)

The people

The pandemic created a raft of different experiences for families in Essex.

The parent of a child with complex additional needs described a situation where the local SEND support group (SNAP, Brentwood) responded so positively and creatively to the national lockdowns that she and her daughter, felt “fully included for the first time ever”. Services moved online, theatres, zoos and other entertainment moved online and she was able to access things that had never previously been available to children and families with the most complex needs.

However, for others the pandemic created deeper feelings of isolation and exclusion when normal support channels and options were not available for considerable periods of time, creating unprecedented levels of stress for many families.

◀ [Return to page 31](#)

What did the inspection say about the Physical and Sensory Impairment Specialist Teaching Service?

‘Specialist teachers give good support to school staff in assessing and meeting the ongoing needs of children and young people with visual impairment, hearing impairment, and physical and neurological impairment. The collaboration between professionals ensures that there is effective planning for children and young people’s needs, including planning for children and young people as they get older, or as their needs change. This joined-up approach also helps professionals to respond quickly when the unexpected happens and children and young people are in urgent need of support.’ (Local Area Joint Inspection, 2019)

◀ [Return to page 32](#)

What did the inspection say about the Essex Family Forum?

‘The Essex Family Forum (the parent carer forum) communicates with a far greater number of parents and carers than before. The forum has recently established family champions, whose role is to gather the views of those groups of parents and carers who are not part of the forum.’ (Local Area Joint Inspection, 2019)

Read more about the [Essex Family Forum](#).

◀ [Return to page 32](#)

What did the inspection say about the Multi-Schools Council?

‘The Multi-School Council is well established and growing in size and influence. The council meets termly and involves 138 schools. The council is a group of children and young people with SEND from across the local area. They provide opportunities to raise awareness within schools and with leaders about the needs and views of children and young people with SEND, particularly those with social, emotional and mental health needs. Local area leaders are keen to listen to what this group of children and young people have to say about what is important to them.’ (Local Area Joint Inspection, 2019)

◀ [Return to page 33](#)

Read more about the Social Care Teams in Essex

Children with Disabilities (CWD)

The CWD social work team works with children from 0 to 16/18 years old.

Young People with Disabilities (YPWD)

At around their 16th birthday, a child will transfer from a CWD social worker to a YPWD social worker. The YPWD team works with the young person and their family to prepare them for adult life, before transferring them to an adult social work team. A young person will transfer to an adult team once they have completed their education. The transfer of case responsibility can be any time up to 25 years old.

Children and Young People Support Service (CAYPS)

The CAYPS team supports the social work remit by delivering outcome focused interventions which supports the child/ young person and the parents/family.

Preparing for Adulthood (PfA)

PfA advisors work with young people from Year 9 and above who have an EHCP. They offer support and guidance to help the young person progress in education and prepare for adult life.

Occupational Therapy (OT) and Rehabilitation

The Occupational Therapy service provides advice and information, loans specialist equipment and supports with adaptations, to children and young people aged 0 to 25 with physical disabilities. The Rehabilitation Officer works with children with visual impairments, providing advice, support and training to help minimise the impact of visual loss.

◀ [Return to page 34](#)



Role of DCO/DMO

The Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) and/or Designated Medical Officer (DMO) for SEND provides the main point of contact for partners in relation to health matters and supports the CCGs and NHS in assuring delivery of their statutory responsibilities. These roles play a key part in implementing and embedding improved SEND practice throughout the health system and in supporting joined up working across the local area.

Key Responsibilities for the CCGs/ICSs include:

1. The CCG must work with the County Council to develop the Local Offer with joint arrangements in place to ensure health information is comprehensive and up-to-date and keeping it under review.
2. Joint Commissioning arrangements must be in place with the County Council to enable a collective understanding of the needs of children and young people, enable joint planning and to use the available resources effectively.
3. The CCG should work with the authority to develop EHC plans for those eligible and have resources in place to support the process. This should include promoting personalisation and the offer of personal health budgets in accordance with local policies.
4. Provision of specialist and targeted health services to ensure early identification, diagnosis and intervention as clinically indicated. Interventions will be delivered in collaboration with families and professionals involved in the child's care and often involves advice, guidance and training to enable the child or young person to thrive in every environment.

◀ [Return to page 36](#)



Essex County Council
Special Educational Needs
and Disabilities (SEND)

DS22_7585

This information is issued by:
Essex County Council

SEND Strategy and Innovation
Team Essex County
Council County Hall,
Chelmsford
Essex, CM1 1QH



[Essex_CC](#)



[facebook.com/essexcountycouncil](https://www.facebook.com/essexcountycouncil)

The information contained in this document can be translated, and/or made available in alternative formats, on request.

Published October 2022