
Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) and Inclusion Strategy for West Berkshire

Committee considering report:	Executive
Date of Committee:	25 July 2024
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Heather Codling
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	12 June 2024
Report Author:	Susan Tanner Service Director, DBV
Forward Plan Ref:	EX4565

1 Purpose of the Report

This report presents the revised SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024-29. It is accompanied by a detailed Delivery plan addressing the priorities contained in the strategy.

2 Recommendation

That Executive Board consider and approve the SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024-29.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	Delivery of the priorities, set out in the Strategy, will be within existing resources. Elements of the work will be supported by the one-off Delivering Better Value (DBV) programme grant.
Human Resource:	The strategy will be delivered by officers across West Berkshire Council as well as the wider SEND system including education, health and voluntary sector partners.
Legal:	The primary legislation governing this strategy is Children and Families Act (2014).

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	<p>The Equalities Act 2010 provides the legal framework to protect the rights of individuals ensuring reasonable adjustment and preventing disadvantage.</p> <p>The Care Act 2014 overlaps with SEND legislation particularly for young people transitioning to adult social care services.</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>If West Berkshire Council do not have a SEND and Inclusion Strategy, there are risks that may include the following.</p> <p>Legal and Regulatory non-compliance with the SEND code of practice and the Children and Families Act 2014.</p> <p>Inadequate support for children and young people through inappropriate, inconsistent, or insufficient support leading to unmet needs.</p> <p>Increased complaints, Appeals and Tribunals.</p> <p>Poor educational outcomes through a lack of strategic planning.</p> <p>Financial inefficiencies because of misallocated or inefficiently used resources including high expenditure on out-of-area or crisis intervention.</p> <p>Negative impact on inclusion caused by increased segregation or lack of mainstream integration leading to social isolation and reduced opportunities.</p> <p>Reputational risk through poor inspection outcomes as a result a lack of coherence.</p> <p>Inequitable service provision resulting in disparities in care and educational outcomes.</p> <p>Community disengagement because of loss of trust and confidence in the council's ability to deliver SEND services.</p>
<p>Property:</p>	<p>None identified at this time.</p>
<p>Policy:</p>	<p>The statutory guidance outlining the duties of the Local authority and partners is the SEND Code of Practice (2015).</p> <p>The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.</p>

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	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	X			The strategy will deliver improved services leading to improved outcomes for children and young people with special education needs and/ or disabilities.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	X			The purpose of the strategy is to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND by improving access to services, and delivery of interventions at the right time.
Environmental Impact:		X		None identified.
Health Impact:	X			The Strategy aims to secure better access to a wide range of services (including health related services, for example access to therapies) used by children and young people with special education needs and/ or disabilities.
ICT Impact:		X		None identified.
Digital Services Impact:	X			The Strategy aims to improve the SEND Local Offer by including better signposting and information resources for children, young people, families, and practitioners.

Council Strategy Priorities:	X			<p>The Strategy aligns with the following Council priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services we are proud of • A fairer West Berkshire with opportunities for all • A prosperous and resilient West Berkshire • Thriving communities with a strong local voice
Core Business:				<p>Delivery of the strategy is business as usual, with some elements of transformation through the Delivering Better Value Programme providing a platform for continual improvement.</p>
Data Impact:		X		None identified
Consultation and Engagement:	<p>There has been extensive engagement and consultation with families, educators, health care practitioners, and community organisations in the development of this strategy further supplemented through the Delivering Better Value programme.</p>			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 A SEND and Inclusion strategy is a requirement for local authorities to set out how they will discharge their legal responsibilities in relation to the provision of care and support for children and young people with SEND and their families.
- 4.2 This strategy has been coproduced in line with SEND Code of Practice and is ambitious for children and young people in West Berkshire.
- 4.3 The strategy is accompanied by a Delivery Plan that incorporates all elements of innovation in SEND for West Berkshire's children incorporating the transformation activity required through the Delivering Better Value in SEND programme.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

- 5.1 The timing of this revised strategy incorporates the schedule of work agreed with the DfE as part of the Delivering Better Value (DBV) programme. (This programme was

agreed with the DfE (March 2024) after the first draft version of the strategy was presented.)

Background

- 5.2 There is a strong and clear vision for SEND services in West Berkshire: *Children with SEND receive the right support, adjustments, and interventions, at the right time, to thrive in childhood and to prepare for adulthood.*
- 5.3 It is a requirement for local authorities to set out how they will discharge their legal responsibilities in relation to the provision of care and support for children and young people with SEND and their families.

Proposals

- 5.4 The Strategy (Appendix A) sets out six (6) key priorities.
- Early Years
 - Early Intervention
 - Inclusion
 - Developing local specialist provision and support
 - Strengthening Alternative Provision
 - Preparation for Adulthood
- 5.5 Each priority has between four (4) and five (5) goals.
- 5.6 There is a clear delivery plan (Appendix B) which contains the details of the arrangements. This plan will be regularly monitored and formally reviewed and updated annually to ensure that the strategy remains agile and is able to reflect changing needs and demands in a fluctuating area of service delivery.

6 Other options considered.

- 6.1 Doing nothing (i.e. not having a strategy) was rejected as it is a statutory requirement.

7 Conclusion

Approval of the SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024-29 will ensure the local authority discharges its statutory responsibilities. It will provide a strategic framework for the delivery and continued improvement of services to children and young people with SEND and their families.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A - SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024-29
- 8.2 Appendix B - DRAFT Delivery Plan – please note that this is an iterative document, and will be regularly updated.

Subject to Call-In: Yes: No:

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval.

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council.

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position.

Considered or reviewed by Scrutiny Commission or associated Committees, Task Groups within preceding six months.

Item is Urgent Key Decision

Report is to note only

Wards affected: All wards

Officer details:

Name: Susan Tanner
Job Title: Service Director, Delivering Better Value
Tel No: 07981488842
E-mail: susan.tanner1@westberks.gov.uk

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