Annex A: Local SEND Reform Plan

Developing a Local SEND Reform Plan is an important first step for local areas to set out how they will lay the foundation for reform, and design an approach tailored to their local context. A shared plan which focuses on co-designing the local approach as system partners and with children, young people and families will help foster collective responsibility for delivering the reforms.

It is critical that all system partners, including health, education and childcare settings, work together to design and deliver the Local SEND Reform Plan, under the local authority's leadership. It is also crucial that representative family carers e.g. the local Parent Carer Forum, are involved in the development of the plan.

The expectation is that this plan is discussed, agreed, and signed off at your relevant SEND Governance Board. As a minimum, the plan must be formally signed off by the Local Authority Chief Executive (CEO), the Integrated Care Board (ICB) Chief Executive, the Local Authority Director of Children's Service (DCS), the Integrated Care Board NHS Place Director, and the Local Authority Chief Financial Officer (CFO/Section 151 Officer). We encourage other colleagues and partners who have contributed to also review and sign-off the plan, particularly early years, school, college and trust leaders.

Name of Local Authority: Cheshire East

Name of Integrated Care Board: NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board

Local SEND Reform Plan SRO:

Signatories

Role	Name	Signature	Email contact	Date
Acting Local Authority Chief Executive (CEO)	Helen Charelesworth-May		helen.charlesworth-may@cheshireeast.gov.uk	29 June 2026
Local Authority Director of Children's Service (DCS)	Dawn Godfrey		Dawn.godfrey@cheshireeast.gov.uk	29 June 2026
Local Authority Chief Financial Officer (CFO/Section 151 Officer)	Chris Benham (Deputy S151 Officer and Director of Finance) with delegated approval through Ashley Hughes (S151 Officer)		Chris.benham@cheshireeast.gov.uk	29 June 2026
Integrated Care Board (ICB) Chief Executive	Liz Bishop		Liz.Bishop@cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk	26 June 2026
Integrated Care Board NHS Place Director	Richard Burgess		richard.burgess@cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk	29 June 2026

Executive Summary

A brief summary of your local system ‘change story’ – your local context, where you are now, where you want to get to in the next 3 years, how you know you are succeeding and how you will know you have achieved your vision for the next 3 years. Please include a brief qualitative summary. This summary should also include your assessment of current and forecast performance against the headline metrics.

Please structure your ‘change story’ using the following aims:

- *Build a 0-25 system where children and young people receive support to achieve and thrive through (a) more inclusive settings and (b) stronger local partnerships*
- *Improve capacity and capability of the mainstream and specialist workforce to identify and meet need*
- *Improve confidence of children, families, and stakeholders in reform and readiness of the system*
- *Stabilise finances and improve value for money*

Cheshire East is reforming its SEND system to move away from a reactive model towards a joined-up, inclusive and financially sustainable 0–25 system. Our aim is that young people receive the right support, in the right place, at the right time, so they can thrive in their local communities and prepare well for adulthood.

Where we are now

Demand and cost are rising too quickly. The number of Education, Health and Care Plans grew by 12% in calendar year 2025, and there is too much reliance on costly independent / non-maintained placements (NMSS) which contributes to an unsustainable Dedicated Schools Grant deficit. Access to specialist services is not consistent or timely, and this limits early intervention. There is also too much variation in how well mainstream settings meet need, meaning too many children have statutory plans. Families report that services can feel inconsistent and difficult to navigate. Whilst there are strong foundations, including committed partners, co-production and a strengthening inclusion strategy, the system is not consistently inclusive or sustainable.

Where we will be by 2029

By 2029, Cheshire East will have a more inclusive, mainstream-first system where most needs are identified early. More children will be supported at SEN Support, and the growth in EHCPs will slow significantly. There will be fewer NMSS placements, with more children educated locally in settings that can meet needs. Outcomes for young people will improve, including attendance, attainment, wellbeing and preparation for adulthood. Families will experience a simpler and more consistent system across education, health and social care, leading to increased confidence, greater trust and fewer complaints. The system will become financially more stable, with spending linked to need and fewer high cost placements.

How we will get there

We will deliver this through a clear and consistent Inclusion Support Offer, supported by the Experts at Hand model. This will strengthen inclusion across all education settings whilst building stronger partnerships between education, health and social care. We will strengthen workforce capacity and capability by our specialist services working in multi-agency teams and undertaking more consultation, coaching and training. This will enable the system to identify and meet needs earlier and more consistently. At the same time, we will improve confidence by embedding co-production and improve communication, so families and professionals understand what support is available and trust that it will be delivered consistently. Delivery will be overseen by the SEND Improvement and Assurance Board, with multi-agency workstreams responsible for co-production, implementation and continuous improvement. This approach will improve financial sustainability by investing in early intervention, inclusion and local provision, reducing demand for NMSS and improving value for money.

How we will measure success

We will track progress through SEND “Vital Signs” indicators, including increased SEN Support, reduced EHCP growth and fewer NMSS placements. We will measure improvements in confidence through survey feedback and reduced complaints.

Overall, these changes will deliver a system that is more consistent, inclusive and sustainable, with better outcomes and experiences for children, young people and their families.

Section 1 – Vision and Goals

1. **What the local area partnership is trying to achieve?**

   Please set out your goals for your local system. These should be clear, aligned to the vision set out in the Schools White Paper, small in number and measurable. These goals should include clear reference to:

   - Outcomes for children
   - Confidence of parents, carers and young people in the system
   - Management of finances to secure value for money

Cheshire East SEND Partnership will create an inclusive, financially sustainable system that secures value for money whilst enabling children and young people with SEND to fulfil their potential in their local communities. We will stabilise our high-needs system and deliver deficit reduction through a shift towards early help and intervention, reducing reliance on high-cost specialist provision. Our approach will expand mainstream capacity and capability, ensuring needs are met at the point of first identification. We will achieve timely access to education, health and care support, through a strong multidisciplinary approach.

Goals

Enhance outcomes for children and young people
By 2028, more children will have needs met through high-quality universal and targeted provision, reducing unnecessary EHCPs. We will improve SEND progress and attainment (EYFS GLD, KS2 combined, KS4 Attainment 8), strengthen wellbeing and belonging, and significantly reduce dependence on independent and specialist placements through increased local mainstream capacity.

Build confidence among parents, carers and young people
Through transparent, co-produced services shaped by TOGETHER principles, families will experience earlier support, clearer pathways, and increased trust. By 2028, this will be evidenced through higher satisfaction, improved outcomes, fewer tribunals, and meaningful engagement with lived experience.

Achieve financial sustainability and value for money
We will move at pace to invest in early intervention and inclusive mainstream provision, stabilise spend and reduce the high-needs deficit. By 2028, we will reduce reliance on costly external placements by 157 places, strengthen commissioning, and by 2029/30 deliver a financially sustainable system that consistently achieves value for money.

Section 2 – Strategy

2. **Where the local area partnership expects to be in the next 3 years**

A description of what your local system would look like in the next 3 years in line with the national vision set out in the Schools White Paper and set within the context of where you are starting from as a local system.

In particular, as commissioning system partners, you should reflect on and agree what your fully fledged **Experts At Hand Offer** model should be and how this will be deployed via mainstream settings and providers (including those not based in your area – e.g. further education colleges attended by your young people) to build their capacity as well as identify and meet the needs of children and young people earlier and without the need for a statutory assessment for Education, Health and Care.
To help you fully consider the scope and scale of change required, you may find it useful to structure your response using these 4 building blocks of an inclusive system, reflecting on what is working well in your system, what you are most worried about, what needs to change, and how the enablers will help you achieve your 3 year vision.

When summarising where your local area partnership currently is, please include an assessment of where you are in reference to the core minimum requirements above and how you bridge the gap, making reference to and attaching additional documents that provide underlying evidence for your summary.

Strengthening inclusion across education settings– organising places and provision to meet as many needs as possible, as close to home as possible, with all settings and providers moving towards a shared understanding and consistent practices around inclusion.

System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production – putting in place the enabling conditions across a local area that ensures planning and provision reflects the local area & is joined up, including strategic co-production with parent carers and children and young people.

Access to specialist support and local placements – improving collaboration between settings and deploying expertise from a range of specialist and expert sources, to support schools and settings to meet the needs of children and young people earlier and locally.

Encouraging inclusive culture & behaviours – using funding and shared accountability towards a system that works for children and families while achieving value for money.

Local blueprint for the next 3 years	Where we are	Where we will be in the next 3 years
Building blocks *Strengthening inclusion across education settings* *Access to specialist support and local placements* *System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production* *Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours* **Enablers** *E.g.* *Capital – investment strategy across EY, mainstream, FE* *Workforce* *Data/digital systems* **Building blocks** **1. Strengthening inclusion across education settings** • Embed a universal offer of support for inclusion in all mainstream schools and settings through the Inclusion Framework **(see Appendix 1)** and Inclusion Support Offer (ISO), reducing escalation to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and increasing children and young people (CYP) with SEN Support / Individual Support Plans (ISPs) through earlier identification and workforce upskilling. • All settings will develop and maintain an Inclusion Framework Action Plan reducing variation between settings and ensuring improvements in consistency and quality throughout the borough. • Deliver a workforce development programme, including SENCO networks and training to increase capability to meet more predictable	*(a short summary of where you are now including a reflection on what is working well, what needs to change and the status of the enablers that underpin your system)* Cheshire East has a clear and shared understanding that the SEND system requires improvement, creating a strong collective mandate for change across education, health, care, and families. This has enabled the development of a co-produced Inclusion Strategy and Shared Journeys programme, giving a unified vision for a more inclusive, mainstream-focused system. **What is working well** • Strong system-wide commitment to reform, with partners aligned around a shared vision. • Established governance and delivery structures, including multi-agency workstreams, a SEND Operational Delivery Group (ODG) providing operational coordination, accountability, and oversight, reporting to a strategic SEND Improvement and Assurance Board (SIAB). • Co-production embedded across programmes, ensuring shared ownership with stakeholders, families, and CYP. • Inclusive Mainstream Practice (IMP) model is underway, with clear plans to scale delivery of the Inclusion Framework, SENCO networks, Inclusion Forums and	*(a short summary of the vision for your local system in the next 3 years including the system enablers, reflecting how your Experts At Hand Offer model will underpin this vision, helping you scale and enhance what is working well and change what is not working so well)* **Vision for the SEND System (2026–2029)** Over the next three years, Cheshire East will deliver a more inclusive, sustainable and responsive SEND system, where CYP consistently receive the right support, in the right place, at the right time. Aligned with national reform, our ambition is to ensure that high-quality mainstream provision meets a broader range of needs through early identification, workforce upskilling and an IMP approach, with earlier intervention reducing reliance on statutory processes and specialist placements. **Core delivery model: Inclusion Support Offer and Experts at Hand** This vision will be realised through the Inclusion Support Offer (ISO), delivered via Inclusive Mainstream Practice (IMP), a realignment of existing services into a locality model and a fully embedded Experts at Hand (EAH) model **(see Appendix 2).** The ISO provides a structured, locality-based continuum of support (universal, targeted, specialist) that: • Strengthens inclusive practice across all settings • Enables earlier intervention and clearer

needs without specialist support, enabling more needs to be met at SEN Support.
- Future alignment of the Inclusion Framework with national inclusion standards.

Enablers

- Workforce: Cheshire East (CE) Inclusion Support Advisory Teachers (ISATs) embedded in all localities providing structured support to settings, at least termly.
- Data and digital:
  - CE Inclusion Framework (which includes data dashboards) used as an improvement tool across all settings.
  - SEND Vital Signs data / performance tracking will be used to measure impact and inform next steps.
- Capital: investment in inclusive learning environments and accessibility within mainstream settings, and in inclusion bases in mainstream schools.

2. Access to specialist support and local placements

- Establish locality-based teams for the Inclusion Support Offer: this will include Experts at Hand (EAH) colleagues (i.e. ISATs, Educational Psychologists (EPs), Speech and Language Therapy (SALT), Occupational Therapy (OT) and existing services (e.g. Cheshire East Autism Team and Sensory Inclusion Service)) which will result in earlier identification and support at SEN Support without the need for a

routes to Inclusion Funding
- Increasing development of Experts at Hand (EAH) and Best Start in Life **(see Appendix 3),** strengthening early support and prevention.
- We have designed our EAH model and are now translating the design into operational practice on 6 July 2026 at the EAH planning meeting. This will include:
  - thresholds / triage rules
  - referral routes in practice
  - caseload expectations
  - decision-making
  - service standards (timescales, response times)
  - named link professional for each setting
- Growing culture of collaboration, shared language, and inclusion across the partnership.

What needs to change

- Greater consistency in early identification and graduated approach across all settings to enable more needs to be met at SEN Support.
- Stronger and more consistent inclusive practice in mainstream schools, reducing variation.
- Improved access to timely specialist support (EP, SALT, OT) and reduced waiting times.
- Reduced reliance on EHCPs, independent and out-of-area placements through

pathways to support at SEN Support
- Improves access to specialist advice without escalation
- Builds workforce confidence and consistency to enable more needs to be met at SEN Support
- Creates a joined-up system across education, health and care

Through EAH, multi-disciplinary teams (EP, SALT, OT, autism, sensory and inclusion teams) will work in locality-based models, aligned to Family Hubs, providing:

- Consultation, coaching, and modelling
- Targeted interventions and problem-solving
- Support to prevent escalation and sustain placements

Digital delivery models will extend this offer to out-of-area settings.

Our ISO will provide named specialists within the inclusion support service who develop strong relationships with, and a deep understanding of, their allocated schools.

Locality working will ensure that intelligence is gathered to understand needs at a community level, not just within individual schools and settings. Multi-agency collaboration within and across locality teams (where each discipline recognises and values the expertise and added contribution of others) will strengthen the delivery of inclusive practice.

Drawing on local knowledge and insight, support and training will be tailored to need, ensuring

diagnosis.

- Implement an EAH model reducing a reliance on statutory assessments and specialist places.
- Access to EAH will be through a locality pathway, with settings able to access consultation, support for targeted intervention or more specialist support through a graduated approach to meeting need. Thresholds and pathways will be defined and applied across all localities, with accountability sitting with our Strategic Lead for Inclusive Mainstream Practice supported by locality leads.
- Locality Inclusion Forums will be used to prevent escalation to EHCPs and change of placement, and for support needs to be met at SEN Support.
- The expansion of mainstream inclusion capacity through new bases and capital investment will increase the percentage of CYP educated locally.
- Combined, these steps will reduce reliance on independent placements and move towards a more financially stable system.

Enablers

- Workforce: expansion of multi-disciplinary teams, with recruitment and development of additional specialist roles. Implementation of locality-based multi-agency inclusion teams aligned to Families First structures to support earlier identification and increase SEN support capacity.

stronger local provision an increased support at SEN Support.

- Increased workforce capacity and new ways of working across SEND services.
- More robust and unified data and digital systems to support planning, sufficiency, and outcomes. This is achieved through the recruitment into a data and analytics post and data sharing agreements.
- Improved communication, co-production, and family confidence.
- Strengthened LA commissioning with new commissioning division formed in 2026.
- Strengthened joint accountability, joint commissioning, and financial sustainability.
- Increased pace of implementation, moving from design to embedded delivery.

Workforce capacity challenges

Workforce capacity remains an ongoing challenge within the Cheshire East SEND system and continues to play an important role in current pressures and future reform success.

Current challenges

- Capacity across EP, SALT, OT and specialist support services is creating pressures within assessment, advice, and intervention processes. This creates bottlenecks in the system and limits the ability to deliver early, preventative support.
- Demand for specialist input is outpacing

responsiveness to context not only at a whole-school level, but across the wider locality.

The Inclusion Team working with each school or setting will focus on building both workforce capacity and confidence to meet more children's needs at SEN Support. They will foster trust, ensuring that every school and setting feels heard and understood, and can access timely advice from a range of familiar experts who know them well.

Sufficiency

Cheshire East's approach to sufficiency is fundamentally driven by the ambition to improve inclusion and ensure more CYP with SEND can thrive within their local communities. While this includes increasing specialist placements through the expansion of special schools, specialist resource provisions and SEND units, this is not an end in itself. We strive to ensure all pupils can access the right level of support, while maintaining a clear focus on inclusion, appropriate placement, and successful preparation for adulthood across all phases.

Central to this approach is a shift towards strengthening inclusion within mainstream schools so that more children's needs can be met at SEN Support. Over the next 3 years, SEND capital funding is being strategically invested to remove environmental barriers, enabling mainstream settings to meet a wider range of needs more effectively. This aims to reduce the need for specialist placements where appropriate, minimise disruption to pupils' education, and promote

• Data: used to prioritise need, manage demand and prevent escalation.
• Capital: used for the expansion of inclusion bases and specialist provision in mainstream settings.
 	
3. System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production
 	
• Establish a strong system governance model including our SEND Improvement and Assurance Board (SIAB), SEND Operational Delivery Group (ODG) and specific Shared Journeys workstreams.
• Embed joint LA and ICB commissioning arrangements linking resources to need and move towards a more financially stable system.
• Strengthen multi-agency collaboration through locality models and Families First approach.
• Ensure co-production is embedded in all workstreams.
 	
Enablers
 	
• Governance:
  ○ Clear leadership and accountability through a named SRO (Senior Responsible Owner) and strengthened governance.
  ○ Programme and transformation capacity to oversee delivery.
  ○ Joint commissioning arrangements between LA and ICB linked to need. Financial planning linked to system
	available resource, driven by increasing complexity of need and rising expectations for statutory assessment.
	• There is variation in workforce capability across mainstream settings, particularly in confidence and expertise to meet a broader range of SEND needs without escalation.
	• Workforce pressures are compounded by recruitment and retention challenges, and reliance on traditional models of delivery which are not always sustainable or efficient.
	• Capacity constraints reduce opportunities for earlier intervention and consultation, limiting the ability to support children at SEN Support and reinforcing a reactive system rather than a preventative one.
	• Over-reliance on EHCPs, independent and out-of-area placements, partly due to insufficient appropriate places in specialist and mainstream provision.
	
	Impact on the system
	
	• Delays in accessing support contribute to increased EHC needs assessment (EHCNA) requests and demand for specialist placements, rather than needs being met earlier at SEN Support.
	• CYP do not always receive timely, needs-led support, impacting outcomes and inclusion.
	• Schools and settings may feel less confident in meeting needs, thereby
		belonging, participation and achievement for those with EHCPs and SEND Support.
		
		Capital funding will be allocated based on 'Provision Proposals', which must clearly outline demonstrable impact on inclusion. Proposals must show how plans tangibly improve inclusive practice, enhance access to learning and reduce barriers to participation, increase capacity to retain and support pupils with SEND in mainstream settings, strengthen engagement and outcomes, and evidence how attendance, progress, and whole-school inclusion will improve. Proposals must also include measurable impact indicators linked to inclusion, and linking intended outcomes to the identified needs of the school and its community, ensuring investment leads to sustained, meaningful improvements in inclusion.
		
		Sustained improvement will also depend on strengthening the wider system that supports inclusion. This includes workforce development, the creation of inclusive cultures and practices, high-quality curriculum design, effective assessment and tracking, and the delivery of appropriate, evidence-informed interventions.
		
		Robust quality assurance frameworks will also be essential to ensure consistency and continuous improvement. Together, these elements are critical to ensuring that any new or enhanced provision leads to measurable improvements in inclusion, enabling more pupils with SEND to access, participate in and succeed within mainstream education, and ultimately achieve better outcomes.

sustainability and demand reduction.
- Data: Integrated SEND Vital Signs reporting providing a single version of the truth across partners. Routine performance reporting and quarterly review cycles. Data sharing arrangements between LA, ICB and system partners.

4. Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours

- Promote a shared vision of inclusion across all partners and settings through the Inclusion Framework.
- Increase our training offer so that there is a consistent understanding of how to deliver, and improved confidence in delivering, inclusive mainstream practice and meeting needs at SEN Support.
- Increase engagement with SENCO networks, Inclusion Forums and Spotlight on Inclusion events so that there is improved consistency in practice across the borough.
- Strengthen communication with families which will result in increased family confidence and fewer complaints and disputes.

Enablers

- Workforce:
  - system-wide training to promote inclusive practice, early identification and intervention.
  - improved SENCO leadership.
- Data:

increasing reliance on external services.
- An increasing number of CYP are educated in independent / non-maintained and/or out of borough settings.
- Inequity emerges, with inconsistent access and postcode variation across localities.

Required shift

To address these challenges, the system needs to move from a scarce, specialist-led model to a capacity-building and preventative model, where specialist expertise is used more effectively to upskill the wider workforce.

Planned response

- Embedding Inclusive Mainstream Practice (IMP) to build capability and confidence within schools and settings through an Inclusion Framework, increasing capacity to deliver effective inclusion, support needs at SEN Support and reducing unnecessary escalation **(see Appendix 1).**
- Strengthening SENCO leadership, networks, and system-wide training to improve consistency in practice.
- Expansion of specialist workforce capacity, alongside new roles, within locality-based multi-disciplinary teams **(see Appendix 4).**
- Refocusing specialist services towards consultation, coaching, and workforce development, rather than primarily direct delivery.
- Developing new, more flexible ways of

System in 2029

By 2029, we expect:

- Early help and intervention embedded, with needs met at SEN Support wherever possible
- A fully operational digital ISP system
- Reduced EHCP demand and slower HNB growth
- Fewer exclusions, suspensions, and placement breakdowns
- More CYP educated locally in inclusive mainstream settings with less demand on high cost independent / non-maintained placements
- Consistent, transparent pathways for families
- A confident workforce delivering high-quality inclusive practice

System enablers

Delivery is underpinned by key enablers that address current gaps and support scale:

- **Workforce**: Expansion of multi-disciplinary capacity and a shift toward coaching and upskilling the universal workforce
- **Capital investment:** Development of inclusive environments and specialist provision within mainstream settings
- **Data and digital:** Improved systems, dashboards, and a digital ISP to track need, access, and impact
- **Commissioning and governance:** Strengthened joint LA-ICB commissioning, clear accountability, and locality-based delivery
- **Partnership and co-production:** Embedded collaboration with families, CYP and

• scheduled SEND surveys to monitor family and CYP confidence.
• monitoring of complaints, tribunals and service feedback
• Capital: capital and wider system investment.
• Recruitment into additional EHE Officer capacity to help address issues earlier in the process.
	working, aligned to the Experts at Hand (EAH) model, enabling earlier access to advice and intervention.
	
	Status of building blocks and enablers
	
	• **Building blocks:**
	  ○ Strong foundations are in place, particularly in system leadership, partnership working, and through the co-produced Inclusion Strategy.
	  ○ IMP demonstrates early progress in translating strategy into delivery, especially through locality models and workforce development.
	  ○ Cultural change toward inclusion is emerging but not yet fully embedded.
	
	• **Key enablers:**
	  ○ **Workforce:** Clearly identified as critical; expansion and upskilling underway but capacity gaps remain.
	  ○ **Capital:** Targeted investment in inclusive environments and local provision is mobilising and aligned to strategy.
	  ○ **Data and Digital:** Recognised as essential; improvements are planned but systems remain fragmented and further strengthening of data is required.
	  ○ **Governance and Commissioning:** Strengthening, with clearer accountability and joint working developing.
	  ○ **Partnership and Co-Production:** Strengthening, with a clear commitment from all partners to demonstrate a
		stakeholders
		
		What will have changed
		
		The ISO and EAH model will directly address current system challenges by:
		
		• Reducing variation in inclusive practice and early identification
		• Improving timeliness and equity of access to specialist advice
		• Reducing reliance on EHCPs and independent placements
		• Strengthening workforce capability and confidence to support more children at SEN Support
		• Increasing number of specialist placements in resourced provision, SEND units and special schools
		• Creating a more navigable, coherent system for families and professionals
		
		Future impact
		
		Over time, this model will deliver:
		
		• A skilled, confident universal workforce able to meet more needs of children at SEN support
		• Earlier, more effective support and reduced escalation to EHCPs
		• Improved equity of access across localities
		• More CYP supported successfully within mainstream provision with a reduced reliance on high cost independent / non-maintained placements.
		• A more sustainable system, aligned to demand

	shared accountability for system redesign. **Overall confidence in delivery** Cheshire East has taken a realistic and honest view of current challenges, including workforce capacity, financial pressures, and system fragmentation. The partnership recognises that transformation will be phased, but there is clear momentum to move from foundations to full implementation. The combination of: • Strong shared commitment • Clear strategic direction • Emerging delivery models (IMP / EAH), and • Identified and mobilising enablers provides confidence that Cheshire East is well placed to deliver sustained SEND reform over the next three years, improving outcomes for CYP and families.	and delivering better value for money Through this integrated approach of combining clear building blocks, strong enablers, and a fully embedded Inclusion Support Offer, Cheshire East will create a consistent, inclusive and high-performing SEND system, improving outcomes and experiences for CYP and families.
Success measures *Drawing on metrics from the accompanying data template E.g.* *I*mprove attendance of pupils in all maintained schools and academies (mainstream and special) with SEN Reduce reliance on independent special school places *No. Of M*ainstream settings with increased access to Education Psychologists/SaLT/OT *Reduced NEET rates for SEND YP*	*Baseline* *(outline the baseline for your success measures reflecting where you are now – these should be drawn from the metrics in the data template)*	*Target Metrics* *(outline the target metrics that will demonstrate you have achieved the vision summarized above – these should be drawn from the metrics in the data template)*
SEN support • Increased number of children and young people (CYP) at SEN support, to evidence	**SEN support** • As at January 2026 census, Cheshire East has 12.2% CYP (Primary 13.0%,	**SEN support** • % of CYP on SEN Support = 13.2% (Jan 2027) • % of CYP on SEN Support = 14.2% (Jan 2028)

more CYP being supported at this level and reducing the reliance on an EHC needs assessment for support.
 	
<u>Education, Health and Care Plans</u>
• Reduced growth in percentage of EHC needs assessment (EHCNA) requests
• Reduced growth in total number / % of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) across all Key Stages and Phases
 	
<u>Specialist places in mainstream settings</u>
• Increased numbers of CYP with EHCPs in specialist bases in mainstream settings
	Secondary 11.5%) recorded at SEN support in state funded establishments.
	• This is an increase from 11.1% in January 2025 (Primary 11.9%, Secondary 10.2%) when we were below National, North West and our statistical neighbour averages.
	
	<u>Education, Health and Care Plans</u>
	• We currently see a significant year on year increase in EHCNA requests. During calendar year 2025 (SEN2 January 2026) our overall numbers of EHCPs grew by 12%. This is above the national growth of 10.8% for 2024.
	
	<u>Specialist places in mainstream settings</u>
	• Number of CYP with EHCPs in specialist bases in mainstream settings = 193 (calendar year 2025)
		• % of CYP on SEN Support = 15.2% (Jan 2029)
		
		<u>Education, Health and Care Plans</u>
		Target metrics taken from data template and based on **calendar years**
		• % change year on year for total number of all EHCNA requests:
		  ○ 7% (2027)
		  ○ 8% (2028)
		  ○ 7% (2029)
		• Total number of EHCPs:
		  ○ 6318 (2027)
		  ○ 6772 (2028)
		  ○ 6908 (2029)
		• % change year on year for total number of EHCPs:
		  ○ 8% (2027)
		  ○ 7% (2028)
		  ○ 2% (2029)
		
		<u>Specialist places in mainstream settings</u>
		Target metrics taken from data template and based on **calendar years**
		• Number of CYP with EHCPs in specialist bases in mainstream settings
		  ○ 304 (2026)
		  ○ 474 (2027)
		  ○ 638 (2028)

Non maintained special schools (NMSS), independent schools or specialist post-16 institutions
• Reduced number of CYP with an EHCP being educated in a non-maintained special school or independent school
• Reduced % growth (over time) of CYP with an EHCP in specialist post-16 institutions.
• Increased number of children with EHCPs being educated in mainstream provision
This will demonstrate an improvement in being able to meet need locally in our maintained settings.
	NMSS, independent schools or specialist post-16 institutions
	We continue to see a growth in number of CYP with an EHCP being educated in an independent special school, non-maintained special school or specialist post-16 institution. This currently stands at 730 (as at January 2026) which indicates an increase greater than would be expected compared to last academic year (17% growth from last year to this year).
	
	Data template measures:
	• Number of CYP with an EHCP in NMSS or independent schools (LA funded placements):
	  ○ 676 (calendar year 2025)
	Note: this measure on the data template includes 122 placements in non-special (i.e. other) independent schools
	• Number of CYP with EHC plans in specialist post-16 institutions
	  ○ 176 (calendar year 2025)
	• Number of CYP in mainstream schools or academies
	  ○ 2414 (calendar year 2025)
		○ 638 (2029)
		
		NMSS, independent schools or specialist post-16 institutions
		Target metrics taken from data template and based on **calendar years**
		• Number of CYP with an EHCP in NMSS or independent schools (LA funded placements):
		  ○ 722 (2026)
		  ○ 662 (2027)
		  ○ 565 (2028)
		  ○ 532 (2029)
		• % change year on year for number of CYP with EHC plans by provision in NMSS or independent schools (LA funded placements)
		  ○ 7% (2026)
		  ○ -8% (2027)
		  ○ -15% (2028)
		  ○ -6% (2029)
		• % change year on year for number of CYP with EHCPs in specialist post-16 institutions
		  ○ 10% (2026)
		  ○ 15% (2027)
		  ○ 14% (2028)
		  ○ 7% (2029)
		• Number of CYP in Mainstream schools or academies
		  ○ 2654 (2026)
		  ○ 2918 (2027)
		  ○ 3169 (2028)
		  ○ 3265 (2029)

Suspensions • Maintain low % of fixed period suspensions for pupils at SEN Support • Maintain low % of fixed period suspensions for pupils with an EHCP	**Suspensions** • In academic year 2023/24, rate of suspension for pupils on SEN Support was 22.9%. 6.9% of pupils with SEN Support had at least one suspension (below national and North West averages). • In academic year 2023/24, rate of suspensions for pupils with an EHCP was 25.1%. 8.8% of pupils with an EHCP had at least 1 suspension (below national and statistical neighbours, but higher than the North West). *Note: DfE publication of 24/25 academic year figures expected mid-July 2026.*	**Suspensions** • Percentage of fixed period suspensions of CYP at SEN Support ≤ 24% (each academic year 2027 – 2029) • Percentage of fixed period suspensions of CYP with an EHC Plan ≤ 27% (each academic year 2027 – 2029) *(Caveat – as we are aiming to increase the number of CYP at SEN Support, this may result in a temporary increase in actual numbers of CYP at SEN Support with suspensions)*
Permanent Exclusions • Maintain low numbers / % of permanent exclusions for pupils at SEN Support • Maintain low numbers / % of permanent exclusions for pupils with an EHCP	**Permanent Exclusions** • In academic year 2023/24, permanent exclusion rate was 0.2% for pupils on SEN support and 0.2% for pupils with EHCPs. Both rates were better than National, North West and statistical neighbours. • In Spring 2025, permanent exclusion rate was 0.14% for pupils on SEN Support, which was slightly worse than national and our statistical neighbours, but slightly better than North West. • Just one child with an EHCP was permanently excluded, making our rate, 0.03%, better than National, North West and statistical neighbour average.	**Permanent Exclusions** • % of permanent exclusions of CYP at SEN Support ≤ 0.5% (each academic year 2027 – 2029) • % of permanent exclusions of CYP with an EHCP ≤ 0.3% (each academic year 2027 – 2029) *(Caveat – as we are aiming to increase the number of CYP at SEN Support, this may result in a temporary increase in actual numbers of CYP at SEN Support with permanent exclusions)*

Elective Home Education
• Reduction % growth (over time) of CYP with SEN in Elective Home Education (EHE)
 	
This should demonstrate increased inclusion (supported by qualitative evidence of less parents reporting choosing EHE due to mainstream settings being unable to meet SEN).
 	
Alternative Provision
• Maintain number of CYP with an EHCP in alternative provision year on year
• Increased number of CYP (including those with an EHCP) making a successful transition back into mainstream from our Alternative Provisions
	Elective Home Education
	• Data template baseline for academic year 2024/2025 gives number of all CYP with SEN in Elective Home Education (EHE) = 311
	
	Note: this is reported against 2025 calendar year in data template. Our information and intelligence workstream (WS2a) will have a focus on improving systems / processes for more accurate data capture for CYP with EHCPs and/or SEN Support who are EHE.
	
	Alternative Provision
	• Number of CYP with an EHCP in alternative provision year on year = 18 (2025 calendar year)
	
	We have very low numbers of CYP being successfully transitioned back into mainstream settings. Data on pupils that were reintegrated back into mainstream via the offsite direction / managed moved process:
	Oakfield lodge
	• 2024/25 AY - 7 pupils (only 1 was successful)
	• 2025/26 AY - 2 pupils (neither were successful)
	Fermain
	• 2024/25 AY - 0 pupils
	• 2025/26 AY - 0 pupils
		Elective Home Education
		• % change year on year for total number of all CYP with SEN in Elective Home Education (EHE) across academic years:
		  ○ 17% (2025/2026)
		  ○ -5% (2026/2027)
		  ○ -5% (2027/2028)
		  ○ -10% (2028/2029)
		
		Note: this is reported against calendar years in data template.
		
		Alternative Provision
		• Number of CYP with an EHCP in alternative provision year on year = 18 (2026 - 2029 calendar years)
		
		To see a year-on-year increase in the % of CYP (including those with an EHCP) making a reintegration back into mainstream from our Alternative Provisions which are successful:
		
		• 25% successful (2027 calendar year)
		• 50% successful (2028 calendar year)
		• 75% successful (2029 calendar year)

Part-time/transition timetables • Reduced overall number of CYP on a part-time timetable • Reduced number of CYP with SEN Support on a part-time timetable • Reduced number of CYP with an EHCP on a part-time timetable	**Part-time/transition timetables** • Current data (April 2026) shows that, of pupils currently on a part-time timetable, 44% have an EHCP and 35% are on SEN Support. This means that 79% of our CYP on a part-time timetable have identified SEN. However, potential issues with inconsistent recording of part-time timetables across settings have been identified and require focused work through our information and intelligence workstream.	**Part-time/transition timetables** Following targeted work to improve accuracy / reliability of data, and establishment of robust baselines, specific targets will be set for future years.

CYP with SEN not in education
• Reduced number of CYP with SEN not in education over time (includes Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) and Children Missing Education (CME))
	CYP with SEN not in education
	• CYP with SEN in local area not in education 2024/2025 academic year = 354
	
	Note: this is reported against 2025 calendar year in data template. Our information and intelligence workstream (WS2a) will have a focus on improving systems / processes for more accurate data capture for CYP with EHCPs and/or SEN Support who are not in education.
		CYP with SEN not in education
		• Number of all CYP with SEN in local area not in education (across academic years):
		  ○ 287 (2025/2026)
		  ○ 312 (2026/2027)
		  ○ 295 (2027/2028)
		  ○ 265 (2028/2029)
		
		Note: this is reported against calendar years in data template.

Inclusive Mainstream Practice Engagement • Increased number of schools and settings engaging with the Inclusion Framework. • Increased number of schools and settings engaging with SENCO networks. • Increased number of schools and settings engaging with Spotlight on Inclusion.	**Inclusive Mainstream Practice Engagement** • Currently schools and settings are not supported through the Inclusive Mainstream Practice Model and report a lack of in-school support from specialist services.	**Inclusive Mainstream Practice Engagement** Achieve by financial year Q4 2026/2027 and maintain each year afterwards: • 100% schools and post-16 settings to be engaged with the Inclusion Framework. • Minimum 95% schools and post-16 settings to be engaged with SENCO networks.

		• Minimum 95% schools and post-16 settings being aware of and accessing, when appropriate, the Spotlight on Inclusion events.
Attendance / Absence • Maintain low % of absence from schools for pupils at SEN Support • Maintain low % of absence from schools for pupils with an EHCP	**Attendance / Absence** SEN Support: • Absence of pupils on SEN Support has improved from 9.6% in academic year 22/23, to 9.3% in 23/24 and 9.0% in 24/25. The 24/25 absence was better than national and North West. • Approximately a quarter of pupils were persistently absent; the rate in 24/25 improved and was better than National and North West. • In 24/25, 3.8% of our pupils on SEN Support pupils were severely absent, which was worse than the previous year, but better than National and North West. EHCP: • Absence of our pupils with an EHCP has worsened from 11.6% in academic year 22/23, to 12.2% in 23/24 and 12.8% in 24/25. The 24/25 rate was just above National (12.7%) and North West (12.4%). • Approximately a third of pupils were persistently absent in those 3 years; the rate in 24/25 improved and was better than National and North West. • In 24/25, 8.7% of our pupils with an EHCP were severely absent, which was worse than the previous year and National and North West figures.	**Attendance / Absence** • % of school absence for pupils at SEN Support ≤10% (each academic year 2027 – 2029) • % of persistent school absence for pupils at SEN Support ≤ 25% (each academic year 2027 – 2029) • % of several school absence for pupils at SEN Support ≤ 4% (each academic year 2027 – 2029) • % of school absence for pupils with an EHCP ≤13% (each academic year 2027 – 2029) • % of persistent school absence for pupils with an EHCP ≤ 33% (each academic year 2027 – 2029) • % of several school absence for pupils with an EHCP ≤ 8% (each academic year 2027 – 2029)

Access to specialist services
• Increased number of CYP in mainstream settings accessing:
  ○ Education Psychologists (EP)
  ○ Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)
  ○ Occupational Therapy (OT)
 	
Financial stability
• Controlling demand through reduced EHCP growth and strengthened decision-making
• Expanding local provision to improve sufficiency and reduce reliance on costly external placements **(see Appendix 5)**
• Reducing unit costs through improved commissioning and placement management
• Embedding strong financial governance, accountability, and performance monitoring
The implementation and embedding of the EAH, IMP and approach to increasing sufficiency in both specialist and mainstream settings will begin to slow the pressure on the DSG HNB through a reduction in need for high-cost places.
	Access to specialist services
	• Numbers of CYP without an EHCP or specialist placements supported by specialist services for financial year 2025-26:
	  ○ EP: 939
	  ○ SALT: 2092
	  ○ OT: 152
	
	Financial stability
	Our DSG in-year deficit was £33.497m in 2024/2025 and £43.217m in 2025/2026 and children with EHCPs increased by c.12% over calendar year 2025.
		Access to specialist services
		Numbers of CYP without an EHCP or specialist placements supported in each financial year:
		
		EP
		• 1346 (2026-2027)
		• 1835 (2027-2028)
		• 1835 (2028-2029)
		SALT
		• 2524 (2026-2027)
		• 2928 (2027-2028)
		• 3344 (2028-2029)
		OT
		• 333 (2026-2027)
		• 482 (2027-2028)
		• 633 (2028-2029)
		
		Financial stability
		• During 2026/27 financial year, our net High Needs Block expenditure (after schools block transfer) is predicted to increase by 6%.
		• During 2027/28 financial year, our net High Needs Block expenditure (after schools block transfer) is predicted to increase by 6%.
		• During 2028/29 financial year, our net High Needs Block expenditure (after schools block transfer) is predicted to increase by 3%.
		
		Feedback and satisfaction
		• Tribunal appeal rate ≤ 4.4% (calendar years

Feedback and satisfaction • Maintain a low Tribunal appeal rate • Increased total respondent number to annual SEND Partnership survey • Increased % positive feedback from CYP with SEND, parents / carers, educational settings and partnership staff across various measures in SEND partnership surveys compared with previous years	**Feedback and satisfaction** • Tribunal appeal rate = 4.4% (calendar year 2025) • Total respondent number to annual SEND Partnership survey = 652 (2025), up from 474 in previous survey	2026 - 2029) • Total number of respondents to the annual SEND Partnership survey ○ > 700 (calendar years 2026 - 2029)

INSERT DOCUMENT UPLOAD LINK

3. **What is the local area partnership's strategy for delivering on the above?**

   A brief summary of your local system's theory of change or reform strategy. Reflect on the output of your **Local Partnership Maturity Assessment Tool**, particularly your *Local System 'change story.'*

Cheshire East's partnership strategy aims to deliver the Right Support, in the Right Place, at the Right Time. The Maturity Assessment shows progress from emerging to developing, with a clear shift from siloed, reactive practice to more collaborative working, supported by stronger governance and a shared vision through Shared Journeys.

We have mapped the key gaps across the system into 6 distinct workstreams (**see appendix 6** for workstreams; the maturity matrix, and the analysis of the matrix shown in **appendix 7**). Whilst recognising that collectively our workstreams will ensure improvements in outcomes for children and young people, the reform programme primarily focuses on three linked priorities, i.e.:

a) Increasing inclusive capacity in mainstream schools through early intervention is expected to reduce escalation of need, leading to lower EHCP growth, more children with an EHCP being educated in their local mainstream schools and more children supported at SEN Support.

b) Strengthening workforce capability, through the Experts at Hand model, and a growth in inclusion bases will improve the quality and consistency of provision alongside reducing reliance on independent and out-of-area placements.

c) Improved data, commissioning and financial planning will enable earlier, more targeted support and more sustainable use of resources and better value for money.

Success will be measured through earlier intervention, reduced escalation, more children educated locally and, as a consequence, increasing financial stability - supported by a clearer link between investment, activity and outcomes. Leadership and Governance will ensure accountability through robust oversight.

4. **Please upload a completed copy of the Local Partnership Maturity Assessment Tool.**

   INSERT DOCUMENT UPLOAD LINK

5. **What is the local area partnership roadmap for the next 3 years?**

Reflecting on the broad timescales and expectation for deliverables set out in the Schools White Paper, key documents and core minimum requirements set out in this document, please provide a high-level roadmap for the next 3 years. Please highlight key milestones and a trajectory to the target metrics identified above, including leading indicators.

In the 2026-27 column, in particular, please reference how you plan to meet the core minimum requirements in your narrative, including details and evidence in supporting documents.

You can insert or upload supporting documents including graphics/visuals that illustrate your data trajectory.

Local roadmap for the next 3 years	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Building blocks *Strengthening inclusion across education settings* *Access to specialist support and local placements* *System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production* *Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours* **Enablers** *E.g.* *Capital – investment strategy across EY, mainstream, FE* *Workforce* *Data/digital systems*	**Year 1: Establish** **Building blocks** **1. Strengthening inclusion across education settings** • Roll out and embed the Inclusion Framework across all schools and post-16 settings, reaching 100% engagement by year end. • Expand SENCO networks and inclusion events ('Spotlight on Inclusion') to increase workforce capacity to improve inclusive practice. • Start to pilot Inclusion Forums and Inclusion Funding initiatives.	**Year 2: Scale** **Building blocks** **1. Strengthening inclusion across mainstream settings** • Inclusive practice becoming embedded and with reduced variation between settings. • Good practice is celebrated across Cheshire East through the development of a resource bank linked to the Inclusion Framework. • All settings will review their Inclusion Action Plan and continue improvement based on review findings.	**Year 3: Sustain** **Building blocks** **1. Strengthening inclusion across mainstream settings** • Sustained inclusive mainstream-first system with ISP as default rather than escalation to EHCP. • Regular reviews by all settings of their Inclusion Action Plan with continued improvement based on review findings. • SENCO networks and inclusion events ('Spotlight on Inclusion') are embedded and reflect locality-based need gathered through IMP

	• Increase capacity of the Inclusion Support Advisory Teacher and other specialist teams (e.g. Educational Psychologists, therapists) to support early intervention • Improve transition planning and support, including guidance, planning tools and increased participation in transition meetings. **2. Access to specialist support and local placements** • Design and implement the Experts at Hand (EAH) model to provide timely specialist advice without escalation to EHCPs. • Increase capacity of the Inclusion Support Advisory Teacher and other	• SENCO networks and inclusion events ('Spotlight on Inclusion') are embedded and SENCO surveys evidence the value of the support and training offered. • Continued delivery of Inclusion Forums which will develop a consistent approach to addressing individual need that supports inclusion, transition and reduction in escalation of need. • Use impact data and learning from the pilot of Inclusion Funding to develop a consistent approach that supports inclusion, transition and reduction in escalation of need. • Continued implementation of pilots to support successful educational transitions for September 2027 with evaluation of their impact and agreement of wider implementation next steps, leading to fewer pupils leaving mainstream at phase transfer. **2. Access to specialist support and local placements** • EAH fully rolled out. • Expanded local inclusion bases. • Reduced independent placements. • Quality assure (QA) and review of standardised and revised	work. SENCO surveys evidence the value of the support and training offered. • Inclusion Forum fully embedded and is demonstrating impact through reduced escalation of need. • Inclusion funding used proactively to support inclusion, transition, risk of placement breakdown and reduce the need for escalation. • Wider roll out / implementation of successful pilots to support educational transitions for September 2028. **2. Access to specialist support and local placements** • Predictable, timely specialist support meeting need earlier and locally. • Review / revise SEND provision pathways and sufficiency

	specialist teams (e.g. Educational Psychologists, therapists) to support early intervention
	• Strengthen local sufficiency of provision, including new resource provisions (RP) and SEND units and targeting capital funding allocations to support more pupils locally.
	• Reduce reliance on out-of-area and independent placements by improving local capacity and matching provision to need.
	• Improve timeliness and quality of EHC needs assessments and plans, including:
	  ○ Digital portal rollout
	  ○ Standardised processes and quality assurance systems
	  ○ Increased completion within statutory timescales
	• Develop integrated data ('Vital Signs') and joint commissioning approaches to better align services, reduce waiting times and improve access.
		processes, paperwork, panel arrangements and quality assurance systems implemented in year 1, with learning informing further refinements
		• Strengthen alternative provision (AP) commissioning and monitoring to define purpose and access and improve early pathways and outcomes
		• Develop AP and RP / SEND Unit networks linked to workforce development
		• Review / revise SEND provision pathways and sufficiency assessment, following 2026/27 capital allocation developments
		• Finalise, publish and promote Cheshire East SEND Sufficiency Strategy with clear priorities, outcomes and delivery plans.
		• Develop and implement quality assurance arrangements and a monitoring and evaluation framework to track impact of all RPs / SEND units and other recent capital funded developments.
			assessment, following 2027/28 capital allocation developments.

	3. System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production
	• Establish strong governance through a SEND Improvement and Assurance Board (SIAB) with clear oversight, reporting cycles and accountability. Develop a shared partnership vision, SEND strategy (2027–2030), and joint commissioning strategy, co-produced with partners and families.
	• Embed multi-agency working across education, health and care through:
	  ○ Integrated data systems
	  ○ Joint commissioning infrastructure
	• Aligned panel and decision-making processes strengthen data-driven decision making, including:
	  ○ Shared KPIs and dashboards
	  ○ Improved data quality and integration between LA and health
	• Expand co-production with children, young people and families, ensuring their feedback shapes priorities and service improvements.
		3. System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production
		• External review of partnership governance arrangements
		• Joint commissioning strengthened, with proactive decision-making and continued 2027 – 2030 Joint Commissioning Strategy implementation
		• Embed co-production and genuine partnership across the SEND system.
			3. System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production
			• Fully integrated leadership with high trust and shared accountability.
			• Co-production is the foundation underpinning all Cheshire East planning and development in relation to children and young people with SEND and their families.
			• Fully embedded 2027 – 2030 Joint Commissioning Strategy with significant implementation progress against priorities
			• Review of aligned panel and funding arrangements for complex cases.

	4. Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours
	• Embed the 'TOGETHER' co-production principles across all services and decision-making.
	• Improve communication and engagement, including:
	  ○ A SEND Communication Strategy
	  ○ Enhanced Local Offer and information accessibility
	• Regular engagement cycles and feedback mechanisms increase confidence and satisfaction among families, evidenced through improved survey feedback and reduced complaints, appeals and mediations
	• Build a culture of shared accountability and continuous improvement, supported by governance, transparency and partnership working.
	• Promote inclusive attitudes across the system, reflected in:
	  ○ Increased sense of belonging for CYP
	  ○ Improved experiences of participation and CYP voice
		4. Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours
		• Implement initial quality assurance process to test extent to which TOGETHER principles are being routinely used, and agree plan for Business as Usual (BAU) QA on ongoing basis
		• Continued use of annual partnership surveys and engagement events in line with Communication Strategy and forward plans,
		• Implement processes for regular quality assurance of effectiveness of strategic engagement
		• Develop and pilot options for 'SEND shared communities of practice' for SEND Partnership practitioners to learn from one another and put forward recommended next steps
		• Continued improvement of Local Offer for SEND in line with agreed improvement plan for academic year 2027/2028
			4. Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours
			• Inclusive practice is 'the norm' for all leaders.
			• Implemented preferred option for 'SEND shared communities of practice' (for SEND Partnership practitioners to learn from one another) across all localities
			• Established processes in place for systematic review, refresh and improvement of Local Offer for SEND

	Overall Year 1 Impact • By the end of 2026/27, the partnership will have established strong foundations for an inclusive, data-driven, and collaboratively led SEND system, with clearer pathways, improved local provision, strengthened workforce capability, and demonstrable improvements in experiences and outcomes for children and young people. **Enablers** **Capital** • Capital programme launched for inclusion bases **(see Appendix 8)** and slides 17 – 22 and note this slide desk was used with a headteacher meeting in April 2026 and was a point in time). • Developing strengthened commissioning approaches. • Development and implementation of Quality Assurance processes and approaches. • Proactive contract management to ensure impact and outcomes are linked to commissioning (Service Level Agreements). • Ensuring commissioned services and placements are responsive to needs.	**Overall Year 2 Impact** • By the end of 2027/28, the partnership will focus on further scaling inclusion and sufficiency initiatives, building on learning from pilots undertaken, and more robust systems, standardised processes and strategies developed in 2026/27. **Enablers** **Capital** • Local educational sufficiency expanded to support SEND needs, supporting reduced costly out-of-area travel and/or independent / non-maintained placements. • Continue to develop strengthened commissioning approaches.	**Overall Year 3 Impact** • By the end of 2028/29, the partnership will focus on embedding inclusion and sufficiency initiatives to ensure their sustained delivery for enduring financial sustainability and improved outcomes for local children and young people with SEND and their families. **Enablers** **Capital** • SEND Sufficiency Strategy properly linked to demand forecasting. • Embedding strengthened commissioning approaches.

	Workforce • Develop the skill level of the wider workforce* with support and training through EAH models and specialist practitioners. * (Practitioners across the whole SEND system over three years). **Data / Digital** • Developing a digital portal approach to EHCNA. • Development of a more robust and consistent process to ensure more accurate tracking of pupils on SEN Support. • Develop the use of Liquidlogic system to provide more efficient processes and data management. • Refresh of data processes to ensure the accuracy of data input across the SEND partnership. • Implementation of "Knowing me" ND tool for ND signposting and support.	**Workforce** • Develop the skill level of the wider workforce* with support and training through EAH models and specialist practitioners. * (Practitioners across the whole SEND system over three years). • Stable specialist workforce with less turnover. **Data / Digital** • Implement improvements to recording, updating and reporting on primary area of need of CYP with an EHCP or SEN Support • Develop concise measures, with Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and training for recording, EHCP annual reviews and cease reasons and amend Liquidlogic to support accurate / sustainable reporting • Data informing sufficiency, commissioning and workforce planning. • Continue the development of a more robust and consistent process for more accurate tracking of pupils on SEN Support / ISP.	**Workforce** • Sustainable workforce with minimal agency needed. • Skilled workforce able to identify and meet the needs of a wide range of children and young people in mainstream settings. **Data / Digital** • Data analytics driving sufficiency and investment. • Embed a robust and consistent process to ensure more accurate tracking of pupils with an ISP.

		• Embedded digital means for Knowing Me tool will collect needs data.	
Success measures ***Drawing on metrics from the accompanying data template*** *E.g.* *Improve attendance of pupils in all maintained schools (mainstream and special) with SEN* *Reduce spend on ISS places* *Increase # children and young people supported by Education Psychologists/SALT/OT in maintained provision* *Improve overall effectiveness of provision* *NEET data* *Leading indicators* ***CY = calendar year*** ***FY = financial year*** ***AY = academic year***	• % of CYP on SEN Support ○ 13.2% (Jan 2027) • Number of CYP with EHCPs in specialist bases in mainstream settings ○ 304 (2026 CY) • Number of CYP with an EHCP in NMSS or independent schools (LA funded placements): ○ 722 (2026 CY) • % change year on year for number of CYP with EHC plans by provision in NMSS or independent schools (LA funded placements) ○ 7% (2026 CY) • % change year on year for number of CYP with EHCPs in specialist post-16 institutions ○ 10% (2026 CY) • Number of CYP in Mainstream schools or academies ○ 2654 (2026 CY) • Percentage of fixed period suspensions of CYP at SEN Support ○ ≤ 24% (each AY 2027 – 2029)	• % of CYP on SEN Support ○ 14.2% (Jan 2028) • % change year on year for total number of all EHCNA requests: ○ 7% (2027 CY) • Total number of EHCPs: ○ 6318 (2027 CY) • % change year on year for total number of EHCPs: ○ 8% (2027 CY) • Number of CYP with EHCPs in specialist bases in mainstream settings ○ 474 (2027 CY) • Number of CYP with an EHCP in NMSS or independent schools (LA funded placements): ○ 662 (2027 CY) • % change year on year for number of CYP with EHCPs by provision in NMSS or independent schools (LA funded placements) ○ -8% (2027 CY) • % change year on year for number of CYP with EHCPs in specialist post-16 institutions ○ 15% (2027 CY) • Number of CYP in Mainstream schools or academies ○ 2918 (2027 CY) • Percentage of fixed period suspensions of CYP at SEN Support ○ ≤ 24% (each AY 2027 – 2029)	• % of CYP on SEN Support ○ 15.2% (Jan 2029) • % change year on year for total number of all EHCNA requests: ○ 8% (2028 CY) ○ 7% (2029 CY) • Total number of EHCPs: ○ 6772 (2028 CY) ○ 6908 (2029 CY) • % change year on year for total number of EHCPs: ○ 7% (2028 CY) ○ 2% (2029 CY) • Number of CYP with EHCPs in specialist bases in mainstream settings ○ 638 (2028 and 2029 CYs) • Number of CYP with an EHCP in NMSS or independent schools (LA funded placements): ○ 565 (2028 CY) ○ 532 (2029 CY) • % change year on year for number of CYP with EHCPs by provision in NMSS or independent schools (LA funded placements) ○ -15% (2028 CY) ○ -6% (2029 CY) • Number of CYP in Mainstream schools or academies ○ 3169 (2028 CY) ○ 3265 (2029 CY) • Percentage of fixed period suspensions of CYP at SEN Support ○ ≤ 24% (each AY 2027 – 2029) • Percentage of fixed period suspensions

	• Percentage of fixed period suspensions of CYP with an EHC Plan ○ ≤ 27% (each AY 2027 – 2029) • % of permanent exclusions of CYP at SEN Support ○ ≤ 0.5% (each AY 2027 – 2029) • % of permanent exclusions of CYP with an EHCP ○ ≤ 0.3% (each AY 2027 – 2029) • % change year on year for total number of all CYP with SEN in Elective Home Education (EHE): ○ -5% (2026/2027 AY) • Number of CYP with an EHCP in alternative provision year on year ○ 18 (2026 - 2029 CYs) • Number of all CYP with SEN in local area not in education: o 312 (2026/2027 AY) • Achieve by FY year Q4 2026/2027: ○ 100% schools and post-16 settings to be engaged with the Inclusion Framework. ○ Minimum 95% schools and post-16 settings to be engaged with SENCO networks. ○ Minimum 95% schools and post-16 settings being aware of and accessing, when appropriate, the Spotlight on Inclusion events. • % of school absence for pupils at SEN Support ○ ≤10% (each AY 2027 – 2029)	• Percentage of fixed period suspensions of CYP with an EHC Plan ○ ≤ 27% (each AY 2027 – 2029) • % of permanent exclusions of CYP at SEN Support ○ ≤ 0.5% (each AY 2027 – 2029) • % of permanent exclusions of CYP with an EHCP ○ ≤ 0.3% (each AY 2027 – 2029) • % change year on year for total number of all CYP with SEN in Elective Home Education (EHE): ○ -5% (2027/2028 AY) • Number of CYP with an EHCP in alternative provision year on year ○ 18 (2026 - 2029 CYs) • % of CYP (including those with an EHCP) making a reintegration back into mainstream from our Alternative Provisions which are successful: ○ 25% successful (2027 CY) • Number of all CYP with SEN in local area not in education: o 295 (2027/2028 AY) • Maintain for FY 2027/2028: ○ 100% schools and post-16 settings to be engaged with the Inclusion Framework. ○ Minimum 95% schools and post-16 settings to be engaged with SENCO networks. ○ Minimum 95% schools and post-16 settings being aware of and accessing, when appropriate, the Spotlight on Inclusion events. • % of school absence for pupils at SEN Support ○ ≤10% (each AY 2027 – 2029) • % of persistent school absence for pupils at SEN Support	of CYP with an EHC Plan ○ ≤ 27% (each AY 2027 – 2029) • % of permanent exclusions of CYP at SEN Support ○ ≤ 0.5% (each AY 2027 – 2029) • % of permanent exclusions of CYP with an EHCP ○ ≤ 0.3% (each AY 2027 – 2029) • % change year on year for total number of all CYP with SEN in Elective Home Education (EHE): ○ -10% (2028/2029 AY) • Number of CYP with an EHCP in alternative provision year on year ○ 18 (2026 - 2029 CYs) • % of CYP (including those with an EHCP) making a reintegration back into mainstream from our Alternative Provisions which are successful: ○ 50% successful (2028 CY) ○ 75% successful (2029 CY) • Number of all CYP with SEN in local area not in education: o 265 (2028/2029 AY) • Maintain for FY 2028/2029: ○ 100% schools and post-16 settings to be engaged with the Inclusion Framework. ○ Minimum 95% schools and post-16 settings to be engaged with SENCO networks. ○ Minimum 95% schools and post-16 settings being aware of and accessing, when appropriate, the Spotlight on Inclusion events. • % of school absence for pupils at SEN Support ○ ≤10% (each AY 2027 – 2029) • % of persistent school absence for pupils at SEN Support

	• % of persistent school absence for pupils at SEN Support
	  ○ ≤ 25% (each AY 2027 – 2029)
	• % of several school absence for pupils at SEN Support
	  ○ ≤ 4% (each AY 2027 – 2029)
	• % of school absence for pupils with an EHCP
	  ○ ≤13% (each AY 2027 – 2029)
	• % of persistent school absence for pupils with an EHCP
	  ○ ≤ 33% (each AY 2027 – 2029)
	• % of several school absence for pupils with an EHCP
	  ○ ≤ 8% (each AY 2027 – 2029)
	• Numbers of CYP without an EHCP or specialist placements supported in each financial year:
	  ○ EP: 1346 (FY 2026/27)
	  ○ SALT: 2524 (FY 2026/27)
	  ○ OT: 333 (FY 2026/27)
	• Net High Needs Block expenditure:
	  ○ predicted to increase by 6% (during FY 2026/27)
	• Tribunal appeal rate
	  ○ ≤ 4.4% (CYs years 2026 - 2029)
	• Total number of respondents to annual SEND Partnership survey
	  ○ > 700 (CYs 2026 - 2029)
		○ ≤ 25% (each AY 2027 – 2029)
		• % of several school absence for pupils at SEN Support
		  ○ ≤ 4% (each AY 2027 – 2029)
		• % of school absence for pupils with an EHCP
		  ○ ≤13% (each AY 2027 – 2029)
		• % of persistent school absence for pupils with an EHCP
		  ○ ≤ 33% (each AY 2027 – 2029)
		• % of several school absence for pupils with an EHCP
		  ○ ≤ 8% (each AY 2027 – 2029)
		• Numbers of CYP without an EHCP or specialist placements supported in each financial year:
		  ○ EP: 1835 (FY 2027/28)
		  ○ SALT: 2928 (FY 2027/28)
		  ○ OT: 482 (FY 2027/28)
		• Net High Needs Block expenditure:
		  ○ predicted to increase by 6% (during FY 2027/28)
		• Tribunal appeal rate
		  ○ ≤ 4.4% (CYs years 2026 - 2029)
		• Total number of respondents to annual SEND Partnership survey
		  ○ > 700 (CYs 2026 - 2029)
			○ ≤ 25% (each AY 2027 – 2029)
			• % of several school absence for pupils at SEN Support
			  ○ ≤ 4% (each AY 2027 – 2029)
			• % of school absence for pupils with an EHCP
			  ○ ≤13% (each AY 2027 – 2029)
			• % of persistent school absence for pupils with an EHCP
			  ○ ≤ 33% (each AY 2027 – 2029)
			• % of several school absence for pupils with an EHCP
			  ○ ≤ 8% (each AY 2027 – 2029)
			• Numbers of CYP without an EHCP or specialist placements supported in each financial year:
			  ○ EP: 1835 (FY 2028/29)
			  ○ SALT: 3344 (FY 2028/29)
			  ○ OT: 633 (FY 2028/29)
			• Net High Needs Block expenditure:
			  ○ predicted to increase by 3% (during FY 2028/29)
			• Tribunal appeal rate
			  ○ ≤ 4.4% (CYs years 2026 - 2029)
			• Total number of respondents to annual SEND Partnership survey
			  ○ > 700 (CYs 2026 - 2029)

INSERT DOCUMENT UPLOAD LINK

6. **What will the local area partnership deliver in the first year?**

Please outline the key workstreams, milestones and trajectory your local area partnership will deliver and achieve in 2026-27 as well as how you plan to spend the investment allocation that will help fund this year's delivery. Please share key milestones and anticipated dates, success measures, cost breakdown and category. These should incorporate the core minimum requirements, be mapped to the building blocks above and should reflect a more detailed trajectory to the narrative, milestones and target metrics outlined in the 2026-27 column above.

2026-27 Local delivery plan		**Q2**		**Q3**		**Q4**	
Workstream outline – mapped to building block ***Outcome -*** *what you want to achieve with this workstream* ***Success measures –*** *how you measure progress drawing on metrics from the accompanying data template*	***Responsible lead per workstream*** *– accountable for the delivery of the workstream and the identified outcome.*	***Milestones per workstream*** *What key milestones will enable you achieve your targeted trajectory*	***Target trajectory per workstream*** *Where do you expect your data to be?*	***Milestones per workstream*** *What key milestones will enable you achieve your targeted trajectory*	***Target trajectory per workstream*** *Where do you expect your data to be?*	***Milestones per workstream*** *What key milestones will enable you achieve your targeted trajectory*	***Target trajectory per workstream*** *Where do you expect your data to be?*
Workstream 1: Vision, Leadership and Governance (See appendix 6 for all workstreams) **Building block(s)** • Strengthening inclusion across education settings • Access to specialist support and local placements • System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production • Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours **Outcome** • Robust, shared partner ownership and oversight of performance to ensure a cohesive approach to	**Leads:** • Chair CE PCF • Interim Project Director – SEND Reforms	• New SEND Improvement and Assurance Board (SIAB) by May 2026 • Finalised SIAB Terms of Reference (TOR) and membership • Forward plan and standing items for SIAB and Operational Development Group (ODG) completed by August 2026 • Detailed project plans and RAID (Risk,	• Reporting format for top-level KPIs agreed for SIAB • Programme oversight formatting and support agreed and all workstreams reporting monthly to ODG	• All workstreams report to ODG using agreed format • Further 3 deep dives into workstreams at SIAB • Agreed format of highlight / exception / risk reporting from workstreams via ODG to SIAB implemented • Initial draft of SEND and Inclusion Strategy for 2027 – 2030 (based on Local	• Top-level KPIs agreed and programme oversight formatting fully implemented and being used to actively inform next steps	• Embedded cycle of highlight / exception and deep-dive reporting for all workstreams via ODG to SIAB • Ensure format for reporting broader KPIs for remaining governance levels (ODG and workstreams) addressed through workstream 2a	• Increased confidence from parent and carers in the reforms as evidenced from PCF survey / feedback • Progress against SIAB KPIs demonstrate improvement in line with anticipated data template targets • 100% compliance with reporting and governance processes

continuous improvement and reform **Success measures** • Partnership senior leaders have an accurate understanding of experiences and outcomes of our SEND children and young people (CYP) and areas for development • Forecasted annual overall cost avoidance targets achieved in line with data template • SIAB oversight drives improvements to quality of practice, resulting in improved outcomes for SEND CYP • Increased % positive feedback from SEND CYP and parents / carers, in SEND partnership surveys compared with previous years, and feedback informs priorities		Assumption, Issue and Dependencies) logs completed for all workstreams, then informing commenced collation of overarching programme tracker • Format of highlight / exception / risk reporting from workstreams via ODG to SIAB agreed • First 3 deep dives into workstreams at SIAB • Analysis of 2026 SEND partnership survey results shared with SIAB to inform priorities • Agreed format of sharing SIAB outcomes across partnership		SEND Reform Plan, Shared Journeys and previously developed strategies) • Confirmation of agreed partnership vision through existing communication channels • Priorities from partnership survey identified and discussed at ODG to inform workstream actions, shared at SIAB			• Evidence of workstreams impacting individual or strategic outcomes shown via case studies
Workstream 2: Understanding of Needs – a) Information and Intelligence and b) Identification and Assessment **Building block(s)** • Access to specialist support and local placements	**a) Information and Intelligence** **Lead:** • SEND Programme Manager **Deputy Lead:**	• Risk register created, with RAG ratings and required actions, re: quarterly data template return • From workstream	• Development needs identified for data template quarterly return, ideal quantitative and qualitative strategic KPIs and operational	• Further actions delivered to improve accuracy, reliability and relevance of Liquidlogic data - e.g. draft SOPs for recording AP,	• Minimum 25% of quarterly data template risk register items mitigated • Continued improved in reliability of SEND data,	• Format for reporting broader KPIs for remaining governance levels (ODG and workstreams) agreed through SEND 'Vital	• Minimum 50% of quarterly data template risk register items mitigated • Continued improvement in reliability of SEND data,

• System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production **Outcome** • *a) Good decisions depend on good data* - to implement accurate, meaningful, robust and sustainable data sets to inform ongoing work and effective decision making through useful performance tracking, proactive identification of areas for improvement and a single version of truth • b) To improve the quality, consistency and timeliness of education, health and care needs assessments (EHCNAs) and plans (EHCPs) and impact of decision-making and review processes **Success measure** • Improved data sharing and recording leads to increased positive feedback from partnership staff and families around: ○ confidence in, and understanding of, local needs, experiences / outcomes of CYP and families, and performance, including ability to identify trends / challenges early ○ shared understanding of individual needs, local processes and working relationships with one another • Increased positive feedback from SEND CYP, families, settings and partnership staff around experiences of EHCP	• Strategic Lead for Inclusive Mainstream Practice	plans, collated list of ideal quantitative and qualitative strategic KPIs across Shared Journeys work indicating availability, source, current sharing arrangements and development needs • Collated list of required and desirable measures for tracking EHCNA operational performance indicating availability and development needs • Measurable set of shared top-level KPIs for SEND Reform Plan and Shared Journeys tracking, and their reporting format, developed and agreed with SIAB • Initial actions delivered to improve accuracy, reliability and relevance of Liquidlogic data	EHCNA performance measures	EHE, EOTAS, NEET and Supported Internships (SIs) etc.) • Commenced development of concise measures for EHCP holders attending PRU / AP or with EOTAS / EHE arrangements, and identification of required Liquidlogic amends for accurate / sustainable reporting • Commenced development / refinement of consistent sharing tracking measures / mechanisms to re: Educational Psychology (EP) advice performance for EHCNAs • Current Liquidlogic configuration for EHCP Annual Reviews reviewed against statutory timescales	particularly around educational setting types – to inform / target sufficiency and inclusion work	Signs' framework • Further actions delivered to improve accuracy, reliability and relevance of Liquidlogic data (e.g. finalised SOPs for recording AP, EHE, EOTAS, NEET and SIs and commenced roll out / training of staff etc.) • Implementation commenced on concise measures for EHCP holders attending PRU / AP or with EOTAS / EHE arrangements, and required Liquidlogic amends for accurate / sustainable reporting • Finalised consistent sharing tracking measures / mechanisms re: EP advice performance for EHCNAs • Completed data / process review to identify issues in	particularly around educational setting types – to inform / target sufficiency and inclusion work • Improved timeliness of EP advice for EHCNAs due to improved performance oversight

processes compared with previous years • Increased positive feedback from CYP and families in feeling heard / involved, and their views being acted upon around individual decisions affecting them • Reduced number and themes of SEND-related complaints / mediations and appeals registered with First-tier Tribunal / other challenges • Improved quality of EHCPs, as measured by agreed quality assurance (QA) processes • Increased % of EHCNAs completed within 20 weeks • Increased % of timely EHCP annual reviews		- e.g. review of picklists and standard operation procedure (SOP) for recording educational settings etc. • Current data sharing agreements between LA and ICB reviewed, with gaps identified				recording, updating and reporting on primary area of need of CYP with EHCP or SEN Support, with proposed mitigating actions • Completed review of Inclusion Framework data page to: a) understand current automated data availability and development needs for termly sharing b) inform initial (ideally automated) format automated) for regular / termly collation and circulation of school by school inclusion and need profile data (for targeting support / promoting school collaboration)	

	b) Identification and Assessment **Lead:** • Head of Service (HOS): SEND **Deputy Lead:** • SEND Senior Project Manager • Designated Social Care Officer	• Complete externally commissioned end to end review of EHCNA process • Commenced review of paperwork, templates, communication materials, panel processes and panel Terms of Reference (ToR) for EHCNAs • Analysis of pilot digital portal for all EHCNA requests and commenced training for wider rollout, with next steps identified from pilot learning. • Reviewed timeliness of annual reviews for existing EHCPs and identification of required actions to prioritise completion of any delayed annual reviews • Established subgroup focused on EHCP QA, with priorities to improve feedback and	• EHCNA / EHCP results from 2026 SEND Partnership survey (demonstrating 2026 baseline impact changes from 2025 and 2023) • QA exercise completed for 5 EHCPs as part of Invision360 tool pilot • Minimum 10% of Sept 2026 EHCNA requests processed through digital portal as part of pilot	• Fully implemented digital portal for all EHCNA requests • EP recovery plan agreed • Prepared draft SOPs / end to end process maps for EHCNA and annual review processes • Prepared new draft TOR for EHCNA panel(s) (purpose, membership, decision making, interdependencies etc). • Publish guidance on private reports and thresholds (private reports guidance already shared by DCO). • Completed review of paperwork, templates and communication materials associated with EHCNAs • Completed analysis of pilot results for Invision360 tool	• Minimum 50% of Dec 2026 of EHCNA requests submitted through digital portal	• Finalised SOPs / end to end process maps for EHCNA and annual review processes with implementation underway • Finalised new TOR for all EHCNA panels • Guidance / training materials on new panel arrangements prepared for panel members and wider education, social care and health workforce, with dissemination underway • Implemented improved paperwork, templates and communication materials associated with EHCNAs • Implemented improvements to EHCP QA feedback and learning loop	• Minimum 70% of March 2027 of EHCNA requests submitted through digital portal • Reduction in number of complaints related specifically to EHCNA and annual review timeliness • Reduced complaint escalation to LGO • Improved quality of EHCPs, as measured by agreed QA processes • 25% increase in new EP advice requests issued within 6 weeks • Targets set for increase in EHCP annual review processes completed within statutory timescales, once confidence established in robust data

		learning loop agreed • Commenced pilot of, and training on, Invision360 tool for QA of EHCPs • Revised structure for LA SEND team implemented		for QA of EHCPs and agreed next steps			
Workstream 3: Meeting needs, delivery and workforce planning **Building block(s)** • Strengthening inclusion across mainstream settings • Access to specialist support and local placements • Encouraging inclusive behaviours **Outcome** • An inclusive system that supports SEND CYP early, effectively and equitably within high-quality mainstream provision (where appropriate) • School staff to identify and meet needs early, accompanied by prompt, consistent EAH approaches and support without relying on statutory assessment. **Success measure** • Improved mainstream inclusive practice in settings, evidenced by: ○ Increased % / number of CYP at SEN Support	**Lead:** • Strategic Lead for Inclusive Mainstream Practice **Deputy Lead:** • Designated Clinical Officer	• Digital role secured. • Additional 6 x FTE inclusion support advisory teachers and 2 x FTE business support secured. • Pilot of inclusion framework completed with minimum 20 schools and settings (across primary, secondary and post-16). • Finalise inclusion framework based on pilot learning. • Implement new format of termly SENCO networks and finalise forward plan for 2026/27	• Minimum 15% schools and post-16 settings engaged with inclusion framework (covering • Minimum 50% of schools and post-16 settings have engaged with SENCO networks.	• Commenced wider roll out of inclusion framework to schools / post-16 settings • Termly SENCO networks in line with 2026/27 forward plan • First 'Spotlight on Inclusion' event delivered. • Commenced pilot of Inclusion Forum and special schools outreach. • Commenced pilot of targeted inclusion funding. • Commenced capacity building of specialist workforce via joint LA / ICB recruitment strategy.	• Minimum 80% schools and post-16 settings engaged with inclusion framework. • Minimum 75% schools and post-16 settings have engaged with SENCO networks. • Minimum 50% schools and settings attending 'Spotlight on Inclusion' events. • Minimum 50% EY school-based settings engage with PQUIPS	• Every school / post-16 setting had first inclusion framework meeting • Termly SENCO networks fully embedded as business as usual (BAU) • Second 'Spotlight on Inclusion' event delivered. • Inclusion Forum, with accompanying special schools outreach, amended in line with pilot learning and fully operational. • Completed pilot and final access and delivery model for targeted inclusion funding.	• 100% schools and post-16 settings engaged with inclusion framework • Minimum 95% schools and post-16 settings engaged with SENCO networks. • Minimum 95% schools and settings attending 'Spotlight on Inclusion' events. • Minimum 90% of EY settings engage with PQIPS. • 1% increase in CYP at SEN Support • Decreased % / number of requests for, and agreements of, change of

○ Decreased number of EHCNA requests ○ Increased % / number of EHCP holders in mainstream ○ Decreased % / number of EHCP holders in NMSS / independent schools ○ Decreased % / number of EHE SEND pupils ○ Decreased % / number of requests, and agreements of, change of placements • Increased number of schools and post-16 settings engaging with Inclusion Framework, SENCO networks and attending 'Spotlight on Inclusion' events • Increased number of CYP without EHCP or specialist placement supported by EAH workforce • More positive feedback from CYP and families around how included they feel within settings, and regarding support experiences at SEN Support, compared with previous years		• Workforce audit completed and analysed. • Workforce recommendations to SIAB and recruitment begins • EAH audit from schools and settings completed and analysed. • EAH proposed delivery model agreed by SIAB • Audit of existing partnership workforce training and development needs completed which includes workforce capacity planning (EP, SALT, therapy services); develop a capacity plan (including EP and SALT supply) • Baseline % / number of requests, and agreements of, change of placements		• Completed review and gap analysis of existing AP support at tiers 1 / 2 / 3 • Set targets for % / number of requests, and agreements of, change of placements. • Complete implementation of ND tools and pathways, including roll out and embedding of the new profiling tool • Revise and recirculate medical needs guidance for education settings.		• Commenced delivery of complete EAH model following recruitment and identification of PCF rep for every locality. • Joint plan developed with sufficiency workstream to address AP gaps	placements in line with targets
Workstream 4: Resources – a) Sufficiency and b) Aligned and joint commissioning	**a) Sufficiency** **Lead:**	• Completed window for phase 1 provision	• First round of funding allocated of circa up to £2m	• SLAs and QA processes for new provisions developed	• Continued allocation agreed of phase 1 funding	• Window for phase 2 provision proposal	• Second round of funding allocated of circa up to £2m

Building block(s) • Strengthening inclusion across education settings • Access to specialist support and local placements • System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production • Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours **Outcome** • a) A resilient, varied and creative provision offer matching local needs, offering value for money (VfM) and producing positive outcomes for SEND CYP • b) Robust strategic, multi-agency SEND commissioning which delivers better outcomes, quality, impact and VfM across all commissioned services **Success measure** • More positive feedback from CYP and families around how included they feel within settings, and regarding support experiences, compared with previous years • Increased % positive feedback from SEND CYP, families, setting and partnership staff around access to and support from local services, compared with previous years • Improved sufficiency of appropriate places evidenced by: ○ Increased % / number of CYP at SEN Support	• Director of Education, Skills and Inclusion **Deputy Lead:** • HOS: Education and Head of Virtual School	proposal submissions (seeking improvements to physical environments to support inclusion of CYP with SEND – across mainstream and expansion of RPs / SEND unit places) • Multi-agency panel reviewed proposals and agreed phase 1 funding allocations (pending regulatory approvals) • Engagement with CYP and families around ideal physical environments	(dependent upon proposals received and required regulatory processes) • Increased number of available RP places and CYP attending RPs (following expansions of 2 existing RPs from September 2026)	• Processes implemented to monitor delivery progress for phase 1 allocations • Analysis of Q2 engagement with CYP and families around ideal physical environments, ready to inform phase 2 proposal window • Review current Sufficiency Statement and agree plan to develop SEND Sufficiency Strategy	(dependent upon proposals received and required regulatory processes) • Monitoring processes evidencing delivery progress on phase 1 allocations • Data captured around number of CYP directly impacted to date through phase 1 allocations	submissions delivered (seeking improvements to physical environments to support inclusion of CYP with SEND – across mainstream and expansion of RPs / SEND unit places) • Multi-agency panel reviewed proposals and agreed phase 2 funding allocations (pending regulatory approvals) • Review and embed fair access protocols and expand participation of AP, post-16 and early years partners.	(dependent upon proposals received and required regulatory processes)
	b) Aligned and Joint Commissioning **Lead:** • Interim Head of Children's and Family Commissioning **Deputy Lead:** • Senior Project Manager ICB	• Completed review of previous Joint Commissioning Strategy • Commenced mapping of all SEND-related commissioned services (LA + ICB), including: ○ spend	• Minimum 50% of services mapped with initial gap analysis underway • 40% recruitment to six LA SEND commissioning posts achieved • Agreed governance structure in	• Co-produced draft 2027 – 2030 Joint Commissioning Strategy and Delivery Plan • Completed mapping and baseline performance review of all SEND-related	• 100% of services mapped • Baseline performance established across all SEND-related commissioned services • Minimum 80% alignment of	• Finalised 2027 – 2030 Joint Commissioning Strategy with initiated implementation and 80% recruitment to LA commissioning team achieved • Completed gap, duplication and	• Clear evidence of: ○ reduced duplication ○ improved alignment of spend • Initial impact on: ○ waiting times ○ access ○ placement demand

○ Increased % / number of EHCP holders in mainstream ○ Decreased % / number of EHCP holders in NMSS / independent schools or educated outside Cheshire East ○ Decreased % / number of requests, and agreements of, change of placements • Increased VfM and reduced average cost per placement with forecasted annual overall cost avoidance targets achieved in line with data template • Increased % commissioned services meeting contracted performance indicators • Decreased wait times for commissioned services, and increased % of CYP receiving timely assessments		○ outcomes ○ demand ○ gaps • Established shared commissioning governance framework, including: ○ clear accountability ○ reporting into SIAB / ODG • Draft joint commissioning principles and priorities agreed across partners • Potential joint commissioning requirements for proposed EAH delivery model outlined. • Progressed recruitment to a fully staffed commissioning function • Agreed ICB–LA integrated commissioning infrastructure and roles	place and operational • Draft high-level commissioning priorities agreed	commissioned services • Established standardised contract management and performance framework across LA and ICB • Commenced mapping, review and alignment of panel arrangements, funding routes and decision-making processes for complex cases • Confirmed priority areas for joint commissioning and transformation agreed across partners	panel processes and frameworks • Joint commissioning strategy at 80% completion with clear implementation plan	sufficiency analysis on SEND-related commissioned contracts across LA and ICB, informing future investment • Embedded joint performance reporting framework with regular oversight • Finalised aligned panel and funding arrangements for complex cases with implementation underway • Launched priority joint commissioning initiatives (e.g. therapies, early help, SEND outreach)	• Fully aligned panel frameworks in place
Workstream 5: Transitions and Preparing for Adulthood **Building block(s)** • Strengthening inclusion across education settings • Access to specialist support and local placements	**Lead:** • HOS: Early Years, Family Hubs and Lifelong Learning **Deputy Lead:**	• Review previous transition patterns • Map all current transition pathways and	• Draft transition data sets	• Completed review of existing, and produce revised first draft(s) of, good practice and reintegration	Established baselines for: • SEND CYP with a transition plan in place • EHCP annual reviews including	• Finalised good practice guidance • Commence transition pilots with KPIs ahead of Sept 2027	• 20% increase of CYP with SEND who have a documented transition plan in place for key transitions • 20% increase of EHCP annual

• System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production
• Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours
Outcome
• To embed:
  ○ Clear, proactive, consistent processes to facilitate smooth transitions for SEND CYP and their families at all transition points (educational phases or children's - adults' services)
  ○ high quality, consistent and timely support for SEND CYP in achieving good outcomes in adulthood
Success Measure
• Increased % of SEND CYP who experience a successful transition, evidenced by:
  ○ sustained placement and attendance post-transition
  ○ positive feedback from CYP, families, settings and partnership staff
• Decreased % / numbers of EHCNA requests, and EHCPs issued, at transition points
• Decreased % / numbers of requests for change of placements at transition points
• Increased % / number of CYP with EHCPs in mainstream provision
• Decreased % / number of CYP with EHCPs in NMSS or independent schools
	• SEND Transition Manager	identify system vulnerabilities
		• Engaged with CYP, families, educational settings and partnership staff to gather feedback and lived experience on key education, health and social care transition pathways
		• Collated data and intelligence to enable identification of children potentially vulnerable to unsuccessful transitions
		• Review of SEND statutory transition processes
				guidance from EY to post 16
				• Design transition pilots with KPIs ahead of Sept 2027 educational transitions
				• Commenced modelling of data dashboards to identify vulnerable transitions per school, local area, trust etc.
				• Standardise transition information flows and embed shared processes.
					transition planning when a transition is due within 12 months.
					• settings participating in formal transition meetings with feeder and receiving setting.
					• placement breakdowns (exclusions/ suspensions) within 12 months at key transitions
					• pupils requiring emergency placement changes following key transition points.
					• attendance rates during the first term after transition.
					• parent/carer satisfaction with transition support.
					• CYP reporting they felt prepared for their transition.
					• families participating in transition planning meetings.
						educational transitions	reviews including transition planning when a transition is due within 12 months
							• 20% increase of settings participating in formal transition meetings with feeder and receiving setting
							• 20% increase of families participating in transition planning meetings
							• 20% increase of EHCP holders with confirmed post-16 destinations by agreed deadlines
							• 20% increase of YP with health and care transition plans by age 16

					• YP progressing to education, employment or training. • EHCP holders with confirmed post-16 destinations by agreed deadlines. • YP achieving Preparing for Adulthood outcomes. • YP with health and care transition plans by age 16. • YP successfully transferred to adult health services without service interruption		
Workstream 6: Coproduction, Communication and Engagement **Building block(s)** • Strengthening inclusion across education settings • System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production • Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours **Outcome** • Meaningful, consistent and effective coproduction, communication and engagement with CYP, families and partners across the SEND Partnership	**Leads:** • HOS: Education Participation and Inclusion • Chair CE PCF **Deputy Lead:** • HOS: Early Years, Family Hubs and Lifelong Learning	• Refreshed 'TOGETHER' Principles with updated content and visual design • Results of 2026 SEND Partnership Survey for CYP, parent / carers, educational settings and partnership staff analysed, published • Finalised Memorandum of Understanding	• 2026 SEND Partnership survey showing 2026 baseline and changes from 2025 and 2023	• 'Practice guidance' published, outlining examples of applying 'TOGETHER' principles at strategic and individual levels • Single calendar and forward plan for strategic engagement activity across Partnership • Initial draft of 2027 - 2030 SEND	• Results from 2026 PCF survey (demonstrating 2026 baseline)	• Finalised and published 2027 - 2030 SEND Partnership Communication Strategy • Implemented mechanisms, shared space and templates for storing survey links, findings and 'you said, we did' resulting actions • Completed mapping of existing SEND single and multi-	• Evidence of better co-ordination of coproduction and communication activity • Increase to 90%, (from 88%) open rate on CEPCF newsletter • Increase to 45% (from 29%) open rate of SENDing You the News e-newsletter

Success measures • Increased % positive feedback on communication from SEND CYP, families and staff in SEND partnership surveys compared with previous years • Increased positive feedback from CYP and families in feeling heard around decisions affecting them • Reduced number and themes of SEND-related complaints / mediations and appeals registered with First-tier Tribunal / other challenges • Improved sentiment of comments in Partnership online posts / stories • Increased SEND Local Offer positive feedback and page views		between LA, ICB and PCF • Developed Local Offer for SEND improvement plan for academic year 2026/2027		Partnership Communication Strategy prepared • Completed CYP / parent and carer gap analyses around engagement reach, with agreed action plan to increase reach • A SEND Partnership Communication Plan to forward plan and capture ongoing communication / promotion activity, incl SENCO networks, education partnerships and CEOs. • Revised SEND Team communication standards and expectations for enquiries published		agency complaints and feedback processes across LA, ICB and health providers • Proposed format for 'end of EHCNA process' feedback mechanism for families and/or practitioners	• Baselines and targets established for: ○ 2026 page views on Local Offer for SEND (compared to 2025) ○ Evidence from CYP and families in feeling heard / involved in, and their views being acted upon around individual or strategic decisions affecting them ○ feedback from CYP and families around communication with or about local services / provision ○ sentiment of comments in Partnership online posts and stories

Workstream Investment Spend per quarter

Please specify funding source for each category

Example categories:
Programme oversight/additional leadership capacity.
Workforce
Recruitment
Workforce training and development
Data/Digital

EAH funding		Qtr 1 and Qtr 2 (£)
Leadership	Trans	51,638
Finance, BI, PMO	Trans	58,314
Leadership	Admin	25,000

EAH funding		Qtr 3 (£)
Leadership	Trans	25,819
Finance, BI, PMO	Trans	35,484
Leadership	Admin	12,500

EAH funding		Qtr 4 (£)
Leadership	Trans	25,819
Finance, BI, PMO	Trans	35,484
Leadership	Admin	18,500

Total Spend	Finance, BI, PMO, Admin	Admin	44,787	Finance, BI, PMO, Admin	Admin	35,880	Finance, BI, PMO, Admin	Admin	35,880
	Resources	Admin	5,064	Resources	Admin	15,192	Resources	Admin	15,192
	EP Additional	Delivery	35,927	EP Additional	Delivery	107,781	EP Additional	Delivery	107,781
	SALT/OT Additional	Delivery	-	SALT/OT Additional	Delivery	227,319	SALT/OT Additional	Delivery	227,319
	Specialist Teachers Additional	Delivery	-	Specialist Teachers Additional	Delivery	139,188	Specialist Teachers Additional	Delivery	139,188
	Specialist Outreach	Delivery	-	Specialist Outreach	Delivery	94,409	Specialist Outreach	Delivery	94,409
			220,729			693,570			699,570
	Plus: Sufficiency - Up to £2m per phase of SEND capital spend			Plus: Sufficiency - Up to £2m per phase of SEND capital spend			Plus: Sufficiency - Up to £2m per phase of SEND capital spend		

INSERT DOCUMENT UPLOAD LINK

7. **How will the local area partnership deliver the first-year plan?**

Please set out how you will ensure the required capacity and capability is in place from organisational corporate functions to support implementation of the plan. This could include reference to how you plan to build or bring in workstream delivery capability to manage delivery against the plan, support prioritisation, and effective use of resources; and how you plan to build the capacity and capability in data and analytics to support effective tracking against the measures in the plan and reporting that informs decision making.

The partnership will deliver the Year 1 plan through a structured, delivery-focused programme that combines strong governance, dedicated delivery capacity and enhanced corporate support functions.

Delivery is organised through workstreams (**see appendix 6**) each with a named accountable lead, clear milestones and quarterly outputs. Delivery is coordinated through a strengthened programme structure, with the Operational Delivery Group (ODG) providing monthly performance oversight and escalation to the SEND Improvement and Assurance Board (SIAB).

To ensure sufficient delivery capacity and capability, the partnership is:

- Stablishing a central council-based programme management office to coordinate workstreams, manage dependencies and maintain pace.
- Deploying dedicated workstream delivery leads and project support, including additional capacity where required, such as around data and analytics.
- Embedding delivery expectations, through tools such as SLAs, into partner organisations (LA, ICB) to focus resources on priorities.

Workforce capability is strengthened through:

- Implementation of the EAH locality model, which will reconfigure specialist capacity (EP, SALT, OT) towards consultation, capacity building and system support.
- A workforce development programme (SENCO networks, Inclusion Framework etc.) to build system capacity and capability.

Data and analytics capability is improved through:

- Development of SEND Vital Signs dashboards to track progress against key measures.
- Strengthening the data and intelligence function to improve data quality, integration and reporting.
- Routine performance reporting to inform decision making and resource allocation.

This combined approach means that Year 1 delivery is supported by the right capability, infrastructure and accountability, which will lead to consistent implementation and measurable impact.

8. **Other funding Local Authorities.**

Block Transfers: If you have made a block transfer (Schools Block to High Needs Block) for 26-27, please set out how your plans for this funding align with the activities outlined above.

A high needs block transfer was requested to sustain and develop inclusive support services for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), particularly those with autism and sensory impairments, within mainstream schools. We will also use a block commission for alternative provision at primary level and supported reintegration. Targeted SEN funding will assist those schools with high populations of pupils with EHCPs, while our Cheshire East Autism Team and Sensory Inclusion Services will support children through specialist outreach.

The funding will also enable Enhanced Mainstream Provision in 12 schools, supporting pupils with EHCPs and generating significant potential cost avoidance by preventing escalation to specialist placements or statutory assessments. A Strategic Lead for Inclusive Mainstream Practice role has been introduced, resulting in the co-production of an Inclusion Strategy for Cheshire East schools and settings which has significantly improved engagement with schools and partners.

We have also introduced an Inclusive Mainstream Practice model which ensures all schools receive regular support focused around our recently developed Inclusion Framework (**see appendix 1**) and deploys Inclusion Support Advisory Teachers into localities. We deliver 'SENCO Development Days' alongside 'Spotlight on Inclusion' events where we take a deep dive into an aspect of SEND provision. In addition, we will be introducing Inclusion Forums in which schools and settings can request additional multi-agency and outreach support, including our special schools, when advice is needed beyond our universal offer. Outcomes aim to increase access to mainstream education, reduce exclusions and specialist placements, and achieve long-term cost efficiencies across the HNB and transport.

Capital: We have announced at least £3 billion in high needs capital between 2026-27 and 2029-30 to support children and young people (CYP) with SEND, or those requiring alternative provision (AP). This funding is intended to support place delivery across the full 0-25 age range, including early years and post-16. We expect funding to support the following outcomes:

a. Inclusion at the core of high needs sufficiency strategy, resulting in more children and young people with SEND accessing suitable places in mainstream settings, across all phases of education

b. Every child or young person who needs a place in an inclusion base can access one

c. Fewer children and young people with SEND needing to travel a long way to access a suitable placement

d. Improved suitability of the mainstream estate to support children and young people with SEND, with adaptations to improve inclusivity and accessibility of the physical environment

We also welcome innovative uses of high needs capital to drive inclusion, for example, investment in assistive technology for use in mainstream settings.

Please outline your strategy for how this funding will meet the outcomes above, with reference to the core minimum requirements and other Projects in this reform plan where appropriate. We would like to see detail around your plans to increase capacity for inclusion bases (formerly known as SEN units, resourced provision and pupil support units – SU/RP/PSUs), such as schools, colleges or early years providers identified, engagement with relevant settings and trusts, and target cohort of needs.

If your plans include increases to places in special schools or specialist post-16 institutions, please include a clear rationale, showing the need that is being met, and why it cannot be met through other types of provision, such as inclusion bases.

If you are receiving additional capital funding to replace one or more planned special or AP free schools, please set out how this funding will meet need in your area, and plans for engaging relevant trusts in your sufficiency planning.

Our Shared Journeys workstream on judicious and effective use of resources leads on this element of the reform plan.

Children and young people in Cheshire East with an Education, Health and Care plan are too frequently placed in non-maintained special schools. We know there is growing demand for specialist and resourced provision, particularly in the north of the borough, and there are significant increases in autism and SEMH as primary needs for children with EHCPs.

Our reforms will rebalance the system from reactive towards proactive capacity building across 0-25 education sector. In April 2026, 114 education providers engaged in a planning event around SEND capital investment to make capital adaptions in education settings (academy and maintained schools, FE and school based early years settings) to meet more predictable needs of young people. This will aim to strengthen the ability of mainstream schools and settings to meet a broader range of needs effectively and sustainably. This includes investment in inclusive physical environments, the expansion and development of inclusion and resource provisions and SEND units, and the building of workforce capacity to deliver and sustain specialist and inclusive practice. Allocation of funding will be based on ability to meet needs of children on a place basis and considering travel and rurality.

The plan responds directly to Cheshire East's local context, including rising levels of need and complexity, increasing demand for Education, Health and Care Plans, and the longstanding imbalance in specialist provision inherited following the 2009 local government reorganisation. At this point, Cheshire East assumed responsibility for four special schools, compared with ten in Cheshire West and Chester. This historic discrepancy has shaped local sufficiency pressures and reinforces the need for a strategic, system-wide approach that reduces reliance on specialist and out-of-area placements while improving local capacity. In January 2026, Cheshire East Council agreed to develop and fund from council resources the creation of a 140 place all-through special school. This is intended to help address the flow of places into out of area independent and non-maintained special schools. Initially, this will be considered via an expansion strategy of local special schools ahead of a wider competition if necessary.

The approach is underpinned by robust analysis of need, sufficiency mapping, and future demographic trends, ensuring that investment decisions are evidence-led, geographically balanced, and aligned with longer-term system sustainability. By promoting local inclusion, strengthening early intervention, and improving pathways across education phases, the reform plan aims to reduce escalation of need and dependency on high-cost specialist provision.

Overall, our plan positions SEND capital as a catalyst for meaningful and lasting system change. Through strengthening mainstream inclusion alongside targeted growth in specialist provision, Cheshire East aims to create a more equitable, resilient, and effective education system which delivers better outcomes, increased parental confidence, and improved experiences for children and young people with SEND.

9. **System partner and stakeholder engagement, and co-production.**

Please outline how the local area partnership plans to engage system partners and stakeholders to develop and implement the plan – include planned engagement with schools and early years settings, alternative providers, FE and post-16 providers (including those your young people attend that are not within your local area), Parents and Carers and children and young people with SEND, with reference to the core minimum requirements. Consider changing roles and responsibilities in the context of the Schools White Paper and how you work collaboratively to manage the transition. Please indicate where additional support is required to engage partners or stakeholders - senior officials at the Department for Education will be available to contribute to summer term events with education leaders and parent carer forum leaders.

Cheshire East is committed to system-wide partner engagement. Building on this has been crucial in co-producing this Local Area SEND Reform Plan. Efforts have centred on building shared understanding, readiness for change, and collective ownership across education, health, social care, parent carers, and children and young people with SEND.

Since December 2025, multi-agency and stakeholder workshops totalling between 800-1,000 people hours, have been invested into local area reform planning with sessions in December 2025 and January, March, and April 2026. Participants have included the PCF, Youth Forum, SEND Partnership Board, health, LA teams, and representatives from a range of educational settings, including early years to post-16. These are in addition to a forum session with MAT leaders to help design our reforms Direct feedback has helped shape the partnership vision, outcomes and structure of the Shared Journeys workstreams. Input through workstreams continues to influence delivery outcomes, e.g. the EAH design.

In March 2026, workstream groups aligned to the seven reform pillars were formed, with PCF representation embedded in these to ensure ongoing coproduction. Funding has been allocated to the PCF to sustain meaningful participation, and a shadow board established to strengthen the voice of young people.

Collaboration between partners has helped to develop a better understanding of the link between financial outcomes and the future landscape for SEND provision. The Strategic Lead for Inclusion Mainstream Practice has ensured continuing feedback with SENCOs. The DCO is a visible and strategic leader across health, education and the local area SEND system.

Cheshire East has a shared coproduction definition rooted through ‘TOGETHER’ principles showing how we work on coproduction. These principles underpin how people have worked to develop our response to the reforms. The PCF has been part of the significant “Meeting Needs, Delivery and Workforce Planning” workstream. It is recognised that the pace of change puts pressure on the PCF and the council has provided support to make engagement more possible.

We know our learners access provision outside the local area. Work is underway to strengthen mechanisms for collaboration and communication with these settings, ensuring that the plan reflects the experiences of all young people with SEND, regardless of where they are educated.

It is important to us that our approach aligns with national expectations for co-production. PCF and Youth Forum remain integral as we move forward and in 2027 we will assess ourselves against the coproduction NHSE guidance. SENDIAS is now outside of the council’s education division ensuring that it is perceived as being independent.

A SEND reforms communication plan has been established to ensure coherent messaging. Information is shared through webinars, supporting shared understanding of the reforms. Engagement aims to reach a wide range of stakeholders, including elected members, Trust CEOs, senior leadership teams, staff groups across health and education, as well as education settings, young people and parents and carers.

To further strengthen engagement, we would welcome involvement from DfE officials during the summer term 2026, including feedback on our new Inclusion Framework to support pupils and schools.

10. Risks and Mitigations

What are the key risks that could affect the successful implementation of your Local SEND Reform Plan, and what mitigation strategies are in place to manage these risks? Please include a maximum of 5 risks with impact and likelihood RAG for each risk. See Annex C for suggested risk matrix.

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	RAG	Mitigation	Residual RAG

Local system capacity constraints across education, health and social care.
 	
The reform timeline coincides with pressure on local system capacity, including:
 	
• ICB reform. This is particularly around structural uncertainty across Cheshire & Merseyside ICB, including:
  ○ Changes to commissioning arrangements for CYP services.
  ○ Potential loss or redeployment of key SEND/EAH-aligned health leads.
  ○ Reduced management and transformation capacity within ICB and provider organisations due to internal restructuring.
  ○ The new ICB locality footprint does not fully align with Cheshire East place-based delivery model and potentially limits ability to embed consistent locality teams and school engagement.
• National shortages of specialist professionals (EPs, SALT, OTs).
• Lack of school funding uplifts following successive national pay
	High	High	Red	Retention and recruitment should be a tool to address risks so that the area has capacity to deliver the EAH model. The risk owners will be the council's Director of Education and the ICB SEND reform SRO. Therefore, the area will consider:
				
				• A joint risk log between CE and ICB, reviewed monthly at ODG, covering workforce, commissioning gaps, and decision delays.
				• ICB SEND Reforms Group has been established, led by Head of SEND with a CYP Commissioning Lead, Finance Lead and a C&M NDP Lead. The group will oversee the onward commissioning of the clinical aspects of the EAH model.
				• Linking EAH delivery to both council and ICB statutory duties and priorities (e.g. waiting lists and early intervention etc.), so it remains a priority.
				• Full time DCO for CE.
				• Co-ordinated campaign by Q3 2026/7 by council LA Director of Education, Skills and Inclusion and ICB reform SRO to recruit EAH staff and especially EP and SALT roles. Escalate back to the SIAB if vacancy rates are greater than 20% for two quarters.
				• Creative ways of recruiting via social media, wide marketing campaigns etc.
				• Highlighting workforce benefits so retention becomes a recruitment strategy for both health and LA.
				• Grow your own models in EP, OT and SALT services.
				• Phased deployment of Experts at Hand, linked to workforce availability.
				• ICB to appoint a SRO as soon as their redesign has been finalised and SIAB Chair to meet with ICB regarding this.
					Amber

awards. • Increased demand on social care arising from Children's Social Care reform. It also assumes consistent locality teams with consistent school and setting engagement. This leaves risks around pace of implementation and the coaching capacity to upskill school and setting staff.				Existing structures will be used to avoid overstretching the capacity, such as: • Use of existing networks (MATs, PCF, Family Hubs) to extend reach. • Effective implementation of Families First reforms and especially Education Navigator roles. • Establish online delivery for strengthening inclusion by Q4 2026/27 to reduce demand on specialist services. Use of new strategies will help extend reach without overstretching capacity such as: • Use training / digital methods to extend reach to rural areas, to cover a wider range of settings and especially out of area settings.	
Inconsistent adoption of Inclusive Mainstream Practice across schools and settings. This is also based on the assumption that schools and settings will change their core practice and could lead to variation in SEND practice across schools.	High	Medium - High	Red	The LA Director of Education, Skills and Inclusion is responsible for this risk. Going forward, the Inclusion Framework core tool to be used for the inclusion forum and to access capital funding for small scale adaptions, to more than an optional self-reflection. This should be apparent by June 2026. This should focus schools and settings on the benefits of inclusion. Q3 2026/27, strengthen SENCO networks and leadership development around the Inclusion Framework to promote consistency through as many different forums as we can reach. Inclusion Forums as a visible route of support before an EHCP route.	Amber
Reform confidence There is anxiety from some parts of the parent and carer communities over the future of EHCPs irrespective of the reform guidance. This is driving local demand for EHNCAs.	High	Medium	Amber - Red	The LA Director of Education, Skills and Inclusion, the ICB SRO for SEND reforms and Chair of PCF are equally responsible for this risk. Clear, consistent system-wide messaging is important to reduce anxiety and this should be co-designed with the PCF to promote confidence and for all stakeholders to better understanding the anxieties which exist. Visible EAH input will show quick wins and help to grow confidence of families. The timeline for these will be included in the partnership communication strategy bas published in Q4 2026/27. Case studies of successful mainstream inclusion will help to grow confidence of families.	Amber
Delivery infrastructure This is widespread and complex and	Medium - High	Medium	Amber	By Q2 2026/27 the Director of Education, Skills and Inclusion will fully develop a programme management office with critical path mapping to create strengthened workstream planning and address	Amber

covers multiple areas, such as: • Workstreams are in their early stages of development and require strengthened workstream planning, including workplans and highlight reports which show risks and also successes. • The DfE delivery infrastructure is in its early stage of development and gaps sometimes appear. • Interruptions to delivery through ICB changes or local area inspections.				infrastructure gaps and identify priorities and risks. Monthly exception reporting to SIAB to ensure that any risks are known so SIAB can help address these. Exception reporting thresholds to be built into the Shared Journeys workstream reporting formats. This will show clear and rapid escalation routes for delivery blocks or gaps. This could be to the SIAB, Ofsted, ICB, NHSE or DfE. The earlier delivery blocks are known, then the earlier they can be addressed to prevent escalation.	
Reform pace and policy overload impacts our workforce and stakeholder confidence. The scale and pace of national reforms creates a significant delivery risk. In Cheshire East this is exacerbated by local ICB's financial and structural reform which are needed, but which directly affects system and leadership stability, and partner engagement. Key pressures include: • National reform timetable (SEND/AP, Families First, Best Start in Life, curriculum review). • Rising demand from families for statutory routes (EHCPs, social care assessments). • Workforce fatigue across education, health and social care. In Cheshire East, ICB reform introduces additional specific risks: • Reduced ICB leadership capacity and continuity, limiting strategic input into SEND/AP reform and Experts at Hand • Competing ICB priorities (waiting lists, financial recovery, restructure),	High	High	Red	The LA Director of Education, Skills and Inclusion, ICB SRO for SEND reforms and Chair of PCF are equally responsible for these risks. The LA Director of Education, ICB SRO for SEND reforms to agree, via SIAB, a local area ICB agreement setting out minimum expectations for ICB engagement in SEND governance and named accountable leads during the reform period to 31 Aug 2028. This should be completed by 30 Sept 2026. Consistent narrative about reform purpose, and what will (and will not) change will help manage expectations. Interim Director SEND reforms to share Local SEND Reform Plan with SIAB in June 2026 showing what can be achieved in Year 1, 2 etc should help to avoid pinch points and policy overload. Engage DfE / Ofsted / CQC / NHSE on timing impacts. The earlier delivery blocks are known, then the earlier they can be addressed to prevent escalation. Transparent communication with education providers and stakeholders about expectations and support. ICB to confirm SIAB membership as soon as ICB structures are finalised.	Amber

reducing focus on early intervention and SEND transformation • Commissioning uncertainty, impacting confidence in sustainability of therapy input and linking to the EAH model. • ICB restructuring timelines do not align with DfE reform expectations.					
DSG: the mitigations do not have sufficient impact in a timely way and increased use of independent provision continues. Therefore, the DSG pressure continues and grows over and above our predictions. This is in addition to a legacy pressure which will need to be managed by the council. The council is continuing to borrow funding to fund the deficit position. There is a risk the council would need to issue a S114 notice. Allied to this is the risk around the longevity of the EAH grant funding beyond what has been announced.	High	High	Red	LA Director of Education, Skills and Inclusion and LA S151 Officer will jointly hold this risk. LA Director of Education, Skills and Inclusion to rapidly develop our strengthened decision making and risk log via the SEND Improvement and Assurance Board (SIAB) and ensure that SIAB unblocks any barriers to better deliver priority improvement areas through the Shared Journeys workstreams to manage the DSG deficit. LA S151 Officer to closely monitor DSG recovery plan. DfE should consider additional options for the application of the High Needs Stability Grant in exceptional circumstances - for example, this could include a two stage approach, with grant allocations based on deficit positions at (a) 31 March 2026 and then (b) the cumulative DSG deficit position as at 31 August 2028, which is aligned with the implementation of SEND reforms from Sept 2028 onwards (Every Child Achieving & Thriving, DfE 2026 and also OBR Economic and Fiscal Outlook, November 2025). Alternatively, it could include right sizing the DSG etc. This approach would allow DfE to assess the impact of both the SEND reforms and the Stability Grant policy by monitoring spend trends and financial risk over the period 2026–2028.	Red

11. Dependencies

Please detail the key areas of the local area partnership's proposed SEND future state and roadmap that may be impacted by wider reforms nationally and locally and outline how you will manage these. We expect these will include but not be limited to:

- NHS reforms
- Local Government Re-organisation
- Reforms to Children's Social Care
- Best Start in Life, including Family Hubs
- Best Start In Life Strategy
- Curriculum and Assessment Review

The delivery of the local area partnership's SEND future state and roadmap is influenced by a range of national and local reforms. These dependencies affect capacity, pace of delivery, system alignment and the ability to embed sustainable change.

NHS reforms (ICB and provider landscape): Delivery of the EAH model is dependent on NHS workforce availability, clinical leadership and commissioning priorities. National reforms and financial constraints may affect the speed of scaling health input. To mitigate this, we have established a joint governance structure through SIAB, operational delivery group and a named SRO. Dependencies are managed through a shared risk and dependency log. We will phase implementation of the jointly commissioned EAH model, triaging highest needs through the inclusion forums, while linking workforce plans across LA and ICB. The ICB has established a 'SEND Reform Group' and an SRO will be confirmed once the ICB restructure has concluded. However, the substantive experienced DCO will remain in post, providing ongoing support, review and oversight.

LGR: Change through the council's improvement context present risks to decision making pace. Mitigation focuses on maintaining continuity of priorities within new governance arrangements. The Cabinet model, SIAB, and Children's Transformation Board provide escalation routes.

Reforms to children's social care: may impact through increased family expectations caused by national reform and is expected to initially lead to increased demand for early help. To mitigate this, we are aligning SEND reform with the Families First agenda and our EAH model will operate across the locality footprint. We will integrate SEND delivery with preventative models such as the ND profiling tool and learning from projects such as PINS.

Best Start in Life (Including Family Hubs): may impact through the risk of fragmented early years if SEND expectations are not consistently embedded. We will mitigate this through effective childcare sufficiency and link our EAH model to this. We will co-design the EAH SEND early years model alongside Family Hub development. Increased focus on school readiness may place additional pressure on early years SEND systems. To mitigate this, we will use our portage workers and embed SEND inclusion within early childhood pathways and build on the Early Years Forum.

The education system pressures and curriculum review: may impact as financial pressures on educational settings may limit their ability to invest in inclusion. Workforce challenges may reduce their capacity to support SEND effectively. Uncertainty from the curriculum review may delay engagement meaning there is a risk schools may struggle to fully engage. To help mitigate these, we will use our workstreams to strengthen transition pathways, including PfA, and provide guidance and support to schools. We will maintain strong engagement with education leaders to embed the Inclusion Framework and link the SEND strategy with curriculum reforms as it becomes clearer.

Across all areas, interdependencies are managed through a programme management framework, including a risk and dependency log, and escalation routes. This ensures that if national or structural changes impact timelines, the partnership can adapt and maintain delivery.

Section 3 – Monitoring and Evaluation

12. **How will the local area partnership know delivery is on track?**

Please set out how you will monitor and track progress referencing:

- ***Monitoring tools and processes*** **-** the specific tools, systems, and data you will use to track delivery milestones and measure the impact on outcomes.

> *Some Local Area Partnerships hold data in a central SEND operational dashboard. This is used by teams on a weekly basis to identify trends in demand or inform conversations with local school or setting leaders.*
>
> *In some Local Area Partnerships, a view of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) is reviewed monthly by a SEND Board to take decisions on prioritisation, resourcing and delivery of services informed by regular data.*

Please set out how you will use data to track demand (e.g., EHCP applications for assessment), Service delivery (e.g., Speech and Language Specialists deployment; places created), Service quality (e.g., parental satisfaction) and outputs (e.g., pupil attendance; pupil exclusions)

- ***Feedback and adaptation mechanisms*** **-** what feedback loops and stakeholder input you will use to review progress and adjust your approach.

Cheshire East's approach to monitoring and evaluation provides clear line of sight from delivery through to strategic assurance, ensuring the reform plan remains on track, risks are identified early, and action is taken where required.

1. Monitoring

The partnership will use a shared SEND performance framework, as the trusted evidence base across education, health and care. The framework will draw on data from core systems including Liquid Logic (case management), the EHCP portal, and health partner datasets.
This will track areas such as:

(a) Demand (EHCNA requests, SEN Support trends, tribunal activity).
(b) Delivery (timeliness of EHCP processes, deployment of EP, SALT and OT).
(c) Quality (EHCP QA outcomes, parental confidence and feedback).
(d) Outcomes (attendance, exclusions, independent placements, NEET rates, financial performance).

The performance framework will operate as a monthly highlight and exception report, used by the ODG to monitor delivery against milestones and KPIs.
Each KPI will have a named accountable lead, responsible for performance monitoring, ensuring data accuracy, and leading corrective action where performance is off track.

2. Data quality and assurance

To ensure confidence in the evidence base the project management office will oversee data integrity and reporting.
Data will be subject to routine checking and audit processes, including:

- cross-partner data.
- consistency checks.
- deep dives into key datasets, such as EHCP timeliness and placement data.
- agreed data standards and definitions will ensure consistency across partners and establish a clear "one version of the truth".

3. Governance, reporting and escalation

A clear governance and escalation framework is in place. ODG (monthly) monitors performance manages risks and interdependencies and agrees corrective actions. SIAB (monthly) provides independent challenge and strategic oversight, focusing on impact and system performance. Escalation thresholds will be explicitly defined, such as KPIs outside of agreed ranges (e.g. timeliness being below national average), sustained negative trends over reporting periods, or emerging risks to delivery or financial sustainability. Where thresholds are breached, ODG will require recovery actions led by the accountable officer, and SIAB will oversee delivery of recovery plans and, where necessary, escalate to partner governance (LA, ICB, Health and Wellbeing Board).

4. Feedback

Monitoring is strengthened by continuous feedback and co-production. Feedback will be triangulated with performance data from the SEND Vital Signs dashboard to provide a balanced view of both quantitative data and lived experience. Feedback will be obtained through SEND surveys (parents / carers, young people and partnership staff), engagement events and direct input into transformation activity to provide an insight into experience and confidence. Regular engagement with the Parent Carer Forum, including weekly dialogue, allows for real time feedback and rapid response. Borough-wide stakeholder briefings and engagement sessions with education providers, including MAT leaders, ensure ongoing system learning. Feedback will be built into performance reporting and used to inform service improvement, adjust delivery as needed and determine if reforms improve lived experience.

5. Evaluation of impact

Alongside performance monitoring, the partnership will strengthen its evaluation approach by tracking trends over time against baseline and target metrics. This will allow the partnership to determine the progress being made, including on outcomes, and value for money.

13. **Reporting to DfE**

Using the attached data template, the local area partnership is required to provide quarterly data returns to DfE against selected key metrics. DfE will, in turn, provide quarterly data reports with visualised analysis and benchmarking that will support your local delivery, monitoring and evaluation. This will include data the department holds on **Attendance**, **Exclusions**, and **Unauthorised absence**.

Please use the attached data template to upload your initial data return to DfE.

INSERT DOCUMENT UPLOAD LINK

Section 4 – Governance

14. **How will the local area partnership ensure delivery of plans remain on track?**

Please outline the governance structures in place to oversee delivery. Clearly set out who is responsible for overseeing reform delivery, what each governance group or individual is accountable for, and how these arrangements ensure progress is monitored and decisions are made transparently. Please identify where the named SRO for the Local SEND Reform Plan sits within the governance structure and ensure your response incorporates the core minimum requirements.

Governance Mechanism *This may be a governance group, or an individual (e.g. SRO).* **The SRO is: Iain Peel - reporting to Dawn Godfrey (DCS), the Cabinet Member and to SIAB. Iain Peel is a member of SIAB and involved n workstream 1.**	**Purpose/ Responsibilities** *What is the function of this governance mechanism? What are they accountable for overseeing? What information is reported to this governance mechanism?*	**Membership** *Who does this governance mechanism comprise of? [should include health and PCF representation] What stakeholders are represented at this governance mechanism? Please indicate who chairs this.* *(Include n/a if an individual).*	**Cadence** *How regularly does this governance mechanism meet?*	**Decision Rights** *What decisions can this governance mechanism make?*	**Escalation Route** *Where can this governance mechanism escalate issues or decision to?*
Financial governance and risk oversight	Financial governance is embedded across the SEND partnership governance structure to ensure that resources are linked to priorities and risks are managed. Financial performance, cost pressures, and delivery affordability are monitored through the SEND ODG and escalated to the SIAB for	This is a cross-cutting governance function instead of a single group. As a partnership, financial management sits with each stakeholder, and this is distinct from financial oversight. This sits with existing governance structures, including: • ODG	Financial monitoring and risk review takes place: • Monthly through ODG. • Monthly through SIAB through	Financial governance operates within delegated arrangements across partners: • ODG can make decisions on alignment and use of existing resources within agreed budgets and delivery plans	Financial risks and pressures are escalated through the governance structure: • From delivery workstreams and ODG to SIAB for system oversight and challenge. • From SIAB to statutory bodies, including the

	system-level oversight. Statutory financial decision-making sits within partner organisations (LA and ICB), and financial risks are escalated through SIAB into formal decision-making routes including the Council's Cabinet, Section 151 Officer processes, and ICB governance structures. This ensures effective and strong oversight, transparency, and timely mitigation of financial risks that may impact delivery of the Cheshire East SEND reform plan.	• SIAB • LA finance leadership through the DCS and S151 officer. • ICB finance and commissioning leads.	strategic financial oversight and risk assurance. • In line with LA and ICB formal financial reporting cycles.	• SIAB can influence, challenge and recommend system level financial priorities and mitigations and influence existing spend. • Statutory financial decision making, DSG management, commissioning spend, recovery plans etc. each sit with the LA (DCS, S151 and through to the Cabinet Member) and in the ICB through their formal governance arrangements.	LA (DSC, S151 Officer, Cabinet Member), ICB financial governance and NHS provider boards. Where required, issues are escalated into broader system leadership forums such as the Health and Wellbeing Board.
SEND Improvement and Assurance Board (SIAB)	The Cheshire East SEND Improvement and Assurance Board (SIAB) is a strategic governance Board responsible for providing system-wide leadership, assurance, and oversight of SEND improvement across the local area. Its main function is to drive and accelerate progress against the local area reform plan, especially across the six 'Shared Journeys' priority areas, by identifying barriers, challenging performance, and ensuring	From May 2026, this board has an independent chair, John Pearce. John has worked in children's services for more than 30 years and in senior leadership roles since 2006. He has spent over eleven years as a Corporate Director holding the DCS role. Recently, John was part of the Presidential Team for ADCS where he worked with ministers and senior civil servants on national policy: this included Children's Social Care	This board meets monthly	SIAB has the authority to make system level, partnership decisions that enable and accelerate improvement across the local area SEND system. Its decisions focus on agreeing strategic direction, priorities, actions and escalation routes required to deliver the Local SEND Reform Plan and improve outcomes for children and young people. In practice, the Board can:	The SEND Improvement and Assurance Board (SIAB) can escalate issues and decisions through clearly defined governance routes across the local area partnership. Where issues cannot be resolved within its remit, the Board will escalate formally to the Health and Wellbeing Board, which provides overarching system leadership. It also ensures that progress and key issues are reported to the Council's Cabinet and

	that improvements lead to tangible impact on outcomes and experiences for children, young people and families. The Board is accountable for overseeing partnership delivery, performance, risks and transformation activity, and for agreeing and influencing actions across organisations. SIAB provides strategic oversight of financial sustainability across the SEND system. It reviews finance pressures, including DSG pressures, high needs spend, and commissioning intentions. The Board ensures that financial considerations are integrated into decision making. While SIAB does not hold delegated financial authority, it plays a critical role in influencing and recommending system-wide financial decisions and ensuring that risks to affordability or delivery are escalated to the appropriate statutory bodies. SIAB will receive monthly, high quality assurance reports from the SEND ODG, including multi-agency	reforms, the Schools White Paper and the SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan. Membership is shown in **Appendix 9**		• Agree and direct partnership actions needed to deliver improvement priorities, ensuring these are implemented at pace across organisations. • Set and refine priorities and expectations, particularly across the 'Shared Journeys' areas and wider transformation activity. • Scrutinise performance and identify corrective actions, including changes where progress, quality or impact is not good enough. • Escalate risks, issues or resource issues to the appropriate organisations (e.g. LA or ICB, Trust Boards) and start formal decision-making processes where needed. • Agree approaches to resolving system barriers, including workforce, capacity, commissioning or financial challenges.	the ICB Board, enabling escalation into statutory decision-making forums. Financial risks identified through SIAB are escalated to the LA (including the S151 Officer and Cabinet) and to the ICB through its financial governance arrangements. This ensures that financial risks are considered within formal budget-setting, recovery planning, and commissioning decisions. In addition, the Board can escalate or share issues through partner organisations' own governance arrangements. This includes routes such as LA executive decision-making (e.g. Cabinet Member decisions), ICB or Trust Boards, and wider partnership forums including the PCF, Schools Forum, headteacher groups, early years and education networks, and Primary Care Networks.

	data, performance metrics, risk logs, and qualitative and quantitative analysis of impact. Through this, the Board has transparent oversight, whilst also embedding co-production by ensuring the voices and lived experiences of children, families and carers inform decision making and system change. Full details are shown in **Appendix 9**			• Endorse or recommend major changes to service delivery or system design, ensuring alignment across education, health and care partners. • Hold partners to account for delivery, performance, and impact, ensuring shared ownership of outcomes. •	Cabinet Member and DCS escalate any financial risks through their own escalation routes. ICB escalate any financial risks through their own escalation routes.
SEND Operational Delivery Group (ODG)	ODG functions as the operational implementation oversights arm of the governance structure, responsible for translating the strategic direction set by the SIAB into operational action. It is accountable for overseeing the delivery of the reform plan and 'Shared Journeys' priorities, ensuring that agreed actions are implemented at pace. The group monitors progress, manages performance, and addresses operational risks and barriers before escalation is required. In terms of oversight, the ODG is responsible for tracking delivery against	ODG is a multi-agency, officer level group that brings together key stakeholders responsible for delivering SEND services across education, health and care. It includes senior operational leads from the LA (including SEND, education, early help and social care), health partners (including ICB and NHS providers), education reps, and PCF to make sure lived experience informs delivery. • This governance mechanism includes the leads and deputies of each Shared Journey workstream and represents the delivery	The SEND ODG meets monthly	ODG has authority to make operational and delivery focused decisions that ensure the effective implementation of the Local SEND Reform Plan and 'Shared Journeys' priorities. It can: • Agree and coordinate actions across services to deliver against partnership priorities, making sure activity is aligned and moving at pace. • Make decisions on how delivery is structured, including prioritisation of workstreams and allocation of available	ODG escalates issues and decisions through the formal SEND governance structure, ensuring that matters beyond its remit are addressed at the appropriate level. It can escalate to: • SIAB. This is the main escalation route, where the group reports risks, performance concerns, and recommendations for system-level decisions, strategic direction, or additional resources. • Partner organisation governance structures,

	plans, coordinating multi-agency activity, managing system risks and ensuring that services are aligned and responding to demand. It also plays a role in ensuring that co-production, quality of service delivery, and frontline experiences are reflected in implementation. The information reported to ODG includes performance data, progress updates against delivery plans, risk and issue logs, workforce and capacity challenges, communication and co-production requirements, and qualitative insight on impact and outcomes for children and families. This is included in regular assurance reports for SIAB, supported by multi-agency data and analysis, enabling the Board to provide scrutiny, challenge and strategic direction. ODG is also responsible for monitoring financial pressures linked to delivery, including cost drivers,	stakeholders across the local area partnership, PCF to ensure co-production and family voice. The group is chaired by a children's services Director (Director of Education, Skills and Inclusion, with Director of SEND reform deputising) ensuring clear accountability for delivery and alignment with the reform programme, while working in close partnership with health colleagues. Its membership ensures that all key parts of the SEND system are represented at operational delivery oversight level, enabling coordinated action, shared ownership of performance, and real time problem solving.		resources within existing frameworks. • Resolve operational issues and barriers at a service or system level where possible, including addressing capacity, process and coordination challenges. • Agree changes to delivery plans in response to performance data, emerging risks, or changing demand. • Manage and mitigate risks and issues taking corrective action where delivery is off track. • Commission or direct activity or workstream work to address specific challenges or priorities.	via SIAB or directly where appropriate, including: ○ LA governance (Director level forums, Cabinet Member decision making) ○ ICB and NHS governance. • In addition, issues may be shared with or influenced through wider partnership and stakeholder forums, such as the PCF, Schools Forum, and education leadership networks, particularly where engagement is needed.

	demand trends, and resource implications.				
'Shared Journeys' Workstream Groups	The Shared Journeys workstreams are delivery groups responsible for designing, developing and implementing specific parts of the SEND future state within each priority area. Their role is to translate the overarching SEND reform ambitions into practical changes to pathways, services, and experiences for children, young people and families. They act as the engine for change. In terms of accountability, the workstreams are responsible for overseeing the detailed design and delivery of improvements within their allocated priority area, including developing new models of practice, aligning services across education, health and care, and ensuring that changes improve outcomes and experiences. They are accountable for delivering against agreed milestones and outcomes, whilst embedding co-	The Shared Journeys workstreams are multi-agency, practitioner led groups that bring together the key stakeholders responsible for designing and delivering improvements within each priority area. Their membership is intentionally broad to ensure that solutions are co-produced and based in practice. They typically comprise: • LA reps, including SEND, education, early years, and children's social care leads relevant to the workstream theme. • Health partners, including representatives from the ICB and commissioned services / provider trusts. • Education sector representatives, including early years providers, schools (mainstream and special), and post-16 settings.	As determined by each group	The Shared Journeys workstreams have authority to make design and delivery decisions within their defined priority area, ensuring that the SEND future state is translated into practical, implementable solutions. They can: • Design and agree new models of practice, processes, pathways and service improvements within their workstream (e.g. early years, post 16, transitions, inclusion). • Prioritise delivery activities in their area to meet agreed milestones and outcomes. • Identify and implement solutions to local barriers and challenges within their remit, ensuring progress is maintained. • Agree recommendations for how resources are used.	The Shared Journeys workstreams escalate issues and decisions through the formal SEND governance structure**,** so that risks or barriers identified at a thematic level are addressed at the appropriate level of authority. They escalate to: • ODG. This is the main escalation route**,** where workstreams raise delivery risks, resource challenges, dependencies, or decisions that cannot be resolved within their scope. The group then coordinates system wide responses and determines whether further escalation is required. • Partner organisation governance structures via the ODG and SIAB where needed.

	production with children, young people and families. They also play a role in identifying risks, dependencies and system barriers within their area and working to resolve these or escalate where necessary.	• PCF reps to make sure that lived experience and co-production are embedded in the design and delivery of improvements • Wider partners as needed, such as voluntary, community organisations, family hub leads, or specialist practitioners, depending on the focus of the workstream.		• Shape and embed co-produced approaches, so that the PCF and young people's input on lived experience directly informs decisions.	• In addition, workstreams may highlight issues requiring wider engagement or influence through stakeholder forums such as the PCF or education networks.

If you have a diagram to show the relationship between these governance mechanisms, please upload this here.

INSERT DOCUMENT UPLOAD LINK **See appendix 9**

Section 5 – Central Government Support

15. **How can we help you?**

Please outline any practical support you need from central government to implement your plan effectively.

This may include:

- Access to specialist expertise or advisory support
- Help with workforce development or recruitment challenges
- Tools or templates to support data collection, reporting, or evaluation
- Facilitation of peer learning or regional collaboration

- Support with system-level coordination across education, health, and care
- Guidance on navigating regulatory or policy barriers

We would welcome practical, timely support to help translate national SEND reform ambitions into effective local delivery.

Clear, timely national communication is critical. Guidance is often released at pace, making it difficult to absorb alongside delivery pressures. We would value regional briefings at publication, setting out changes, expectations and implications. Without this, there is a risk of inconsistent implementation which may impact on outcomes for children and families.

Greater clarity in funding is essential. Current EAH grant conditions were only published on 5 June 2026 and after EAH planning was already progressing at pace. There is still yet to be confirmation of funding beyond that announced. Without this, delivery of EAH is constrained, for example recruiting people on substantive contracts, and long term impact is at risk.

Cost pressures within the independent / non-maintained special school (INMSS) sector remain a significant risk to DSG sustainability. Government action to better control pricing and limit annual increases is essential. Without this, local systems will struggle to invest in local provision with resources going to INMSS.

Workforce shortages across EPs, therapies and SEND practitioners continue to be a challenge to delivery. National pipeline planning, flexible workforce models and proportionate assessment approaches, which includes not always requiring EPs as part of the SEND assessment process, are needed to reduce delays and maintain quality.

We would welcome sharing of best practice, including effective commissioning, inclusive provision and EAH models. We would welcome national QA tools to support consistent evaluation and evidence of impact.

Annex B - Supporting Documents

Document	Link
The Schools White Paper	Every Child Achieving and Thriving
SEND Consultation Document	SEND reform: putting children and young people first.
LA and Schools Budget 2026-27	Schools Operational Guide 2026-27
Local Partnership Maturity Assessment Guidance and Tool	Included in commission pack

Local SEND Reform Plan – Data template	Included in commission pack
Local SEND Reform Plan Quality Assessment Framework	Included in commission pack
Local Inclusion Partnership Grant 2026-27	To be published Spring 2026
Experts at Hand Guidance	To be published Spring 2026
High Needs Capital Allocations 2026-27	To be published Spring 2026
Guidance on Inclusion bases	To be published Spring 2026

Annex C – Risk Matrix

IMPACT DESCRIPTION	IMPACT LEVEL	PROBABILITY/LIKELIHOOD				
		< 10%	>10% - <30%	>30% - <60%	>60% - <90%	>90%
		Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Very Likely
Cannot deliver Reform Plan; Failure of mission critical activity.	**Crisis**					
Significant impact to objectives; Significant and sustained disruption to activity.	**Critical**					
Delivery targets are compromised; Project delay / budget overrun.	**Moderate**					
Limited impact on delivery targets; Deviations from project resource, timescale or targets.	**Marginal**					
Minimal impact on delivery targets; Minimal impacts to project / programme efficiency.	**Negligible**					