



Author/Lead Officer of Report: Tim Armstrong,
Head of SEN

Tel: 0114 2930214

Report of: *Executive Director, People Services*

Report to: *Cabinet*

Date of Decision: *19th February 2020*

Subject: *Sheffield Inclusion Strategy, 2020-2025*

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Is this a Key Decision? If Yes, reason Key Decision:- | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - Expenditure and/or savings over £500,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| - Affects 2 or more Wards | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Which Cabinet Member Portfolio does this relate to? <i>People – Education and Skills</i> | | |
| Which Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee does this relate to? <i>Children, Young people and Families</i> | | |
| Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken? | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>648</i> | | |
| Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:- | | |
| <i>“The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i> | | |

Purpose of Report:

To agree the Sheffield Inclusion Strategy, 2020-2025

Following the local area SEND inspection in November 2018 we have worked with partners including Sheffield CCG and Sheffield Parent Carer Forum to co-produce a clear vision and strategy for inclusion, including Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

The strategy has been developed through a number of focus groups and co-production sessions, building on information already available prior to summer

2019 and then gathered through questionnaire feedback in summer 2019.

We sought views on the draft strategy via a formal consultation which took place from November 2019 to January 2020. The strategy was finalised after the consultation and we are now presenting it to Cabinet for final sign off and authorisation to publish.

Recommendations:

We recommend that Cabinet approves the Inclusion Strategy so that we can begin to write an associated action plan building on and incorporating the Written Statement of Action.

Background Papers:

(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)

- Inclusion Strategy
- Equalities Impact Assessment
- Research and consultation results
- Prior evidence including the PCF State of Sheffield Report and Our Voice Matters

| Lead Officer to complete:- | | | | | | | | | |
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| 1 | <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;">I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.</td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;">Finance: <i>Liz Gough, Sian Holmes (Commercial)</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="vertical-align: top;">Legal: <i>Nadine Wynter Steve Eccleston</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="vertical-align: top;">Equalities: <i>Bashir Khan</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;"><i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i></td> </tr> </table> | I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required. | Finance: <i>Liz Gough, Sian Holmes (Commercial)</i> | | Legal: <i>Nadine Wynter Steve Eccleston</i> | | Equalities: <i>Bashir Khan</i> | <i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i> | |
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| Date: <i>(Insert date)</i> | | | | | | | | | |

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 Sheffield City Council (SCC), Sheffield CCG (SCCG) and the Sheffield Parent Carer Forum (SPCF) have worked together to draft an inclusion strategy for Sheffield. We have:
- Built on previous research and consultation such as the SPCF State of Sheffield Report
 - Run focus groups with parents, young people and frontline staff during summer 2019
 - Held co-production sessions in October 2019 with leaders, frontline staff and parents
 - Run a formal consultation to gather views from across the city on a draft version of the strategy
- 1.2 As a Strategy Development Group, we have met on a weekly basis since July 2019 to coordinate the development of the strategy.
- 1.3 Our proposal is to publish the strategy attached to this report and to use it to write an action plan for putting its commitments into practice.
- 1.4 Inclusion is important to ensure that all young people and their families, regardless of their needs, get the opportunity to access the best life chances. The challenges to addressing inclusion, particularly around Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), are growing nationally with growing demand, changes in the complexities of needs, a new academic curriculum and financial pressures across sectors. The SEND reforms introduced through the Children and Families Act 2014, created an aspiration that those with additional needs would be at the centre of all decision making and that services would be more able to meet needs in a timely and co-ordinated manner.
- 1.5 Within Sheffield the views of our young people and their families are clear; we are not doing this well enough. The local area SEND inspection in November 2018 identified significant weaknesses and this is confirmed by feedback from families. Our schools have struggled to balance pressures and remain focused on good inclusive practice whilst support services have struggled to keep pace with growing demand. The aspiration across the city is to change our systems so that we act early to identify, assess and meet needs, work in partnership and establish integrated and local based processes and services that make Sheffield an inclusive city.
- 1.6 This strategy will build on changes and developments over the past 4 years including:
- Closer school sector working with schools supporting each other to address needs and improve access to support through work such as the Sheffield Support Grid, Primary and Secondary Inclusion Panels, locality working and a developed graduated

approach to meeting needs

- Piloting approaches to address needs locally, for example through addressing sensory needs or sharing of skills
- A strategic joint commissioning approach to plan support and provision at all levels of need, including a focus on all age disabilities
- Ensuring that young people and parent voices are central to developments with an evolving approach to co-production
- Developing pathways for assessment, support and provision, particularly through the development of vulnerable learner reviews and early years partnership
- Improvement in the timeliness of EHC Needs Assessments
- A focus on key transition points at age 2, 9 and 14 – focusing on planning two years in advance
- Successful improvement of our social care systems to build quality frameworks that address safeguarding needs
- Improving integration of health advice to co-ordinated needs through commissions including speech and language support via Primary Inclusion panel and pilots around addressing sensory needs
- Improving the use of data, policies and procedures to ensure access to education for all young people, including around elective home education, partial timetables and agreeing school places.

1.7 While this has all driven forward improvement, there is a clear recognition that more needs to be done to reach the aspirations that the local area has for its most vulnerable young people, including where families feel change is not rapid enough. This strategy provides the overarching focus for that to be achieved, covering all areas of inclusion, including SEND.

1.8 A review of our research and consultation with parents, young people, leaders and frontline workers identified five key themes which we have written as commitments in the strategy. These are:

1. Effective identification of needs with appropriate assessments (*Assessment*)
2. A wide range of services and opportunities that meet the needs of our young people (*Provision*)
3. Smooth transition at every stage of a young person's life, and particularly to adult life (*Transition*)
4. Excellent communication and engagement between young people, families, services and schools (*Communication*)
5. Skilled leader and staff capabilities to deliver the services (*Workforce*)

1.9 Our co-production identified a number of broad cross-cutting values that, alongside our commitments, underpin our strategic approach:

- Person centred approaches and effective engagement – ‘No decision about us, without us’
- Consistency across the city

- Accountability and trust
- A culture of working in partnership
- All children and young people should be safe, settled and ready to learn

1.10 Whilst we are not legally required to have an inclusion strategy, the need to work in partnership to ensure that improvement is made is clear. The local area SEND inspection in November 2018 identified it as a significant weakness and our consultation clearly detailed the need for a single citywide document that enabled services to be held to account for improvement.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

2.1 The strategy lays out our commitment to:

- Reduce inequalities by ensuring that every child and young person has the right support at the right time so that they can live a happy and fulfilled life.
- Improve young people and their families experience by skilling up staff, creating better collaboration between services, providing clear communication and carrying out timely reviews and responses.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

3.1 Yes. We carried out soft consultation/research over summer 2019, which involved focus groups with parents, young people and leaders/frontline workers, a parent survey and a young person survey. Together, these activities helped us build on what we had already been told, for example in the Sheffield Parent Carer Forum State of Sheffield report, to identify five key areas to focus on. We then worked with Dr Kamal Birdi from The University of Sheffield, to run a co-production session using the CLEAR IDEAS model. This enabled us to co-produce our priorities and solutions, working with over sixty individuals from our key stakeholders. This proved successful in identifying positive solutions and priorities which have formed the basis of the strategy.

3.2 We have worked closely with the Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group (SCCG) and Sheffield Parent Carer Forum (PCF) throughout, to regularly check which areas or people we needed to focus on and to identify ways to reach them.

3.3 We worked with SCCG to develop an EIA for their Strategic Public Experience and Engagement Committee (SPEEC) which sets strict guidelines for public consultation. A copy of this EIA is attached. It was officially passed by SPEEC on 10th September 2019.

3.4 We ran a formal consultation on the draft Inclusion Strategy between

11th November 2019 and 26th January 2020. [This was originally due to run until mid-December 2019 but was extended due to SCCG not being able to consult during PERP]. From the consultation responses, we have been able to see the percentages of people who agreed or disagreed with various elements of the strategy and also to theme comments and identify parts of the strategy to write more clearly, or focus differently.

3.5 During the first four weeks of the consultation we listened to what people told us up to that point and re-drafted the strategy commitments in plain English. We re-issued these alongside the original draft strategy for further comment in December (23rd) for the remainder of the consultation period.

3.6 In total, we received 160 responses to the consultation. Of those who told us which category they belonged to:

- 63 (39.6%) Parent, carer or family member of a child aged 0-25 with SEND
- 1 (0.6%) A child / young person
- 36 (22.6%) Leader (education, health or care)
- 38 (23.9%) Frontline professional
- 21 (13.2%) Other

3.7 The majority of respondents (84%) felt the strategy had correctly identified what needs to be done to improve inclusion within the city. Under every commitment, the majority of respondents (i.e. consistently over 50%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the statements about our challenges, what it looks like now, our priorities, what we will change and the impact, as set out in the table below.

3.8 We kept a detailed spreadsheet of responses and met with the Strategy Development Group on a regular basis to study responses, going through each comment in turn and assessing the degree to which to reflect it in the strategy. Analysis of the responses identified several areas for us to make clearer:

- Language and tone – too much jargon
- Provision - what current provision is available, any gaps and what we will be doing to plan future provision and address any gaps.
- Resourcing and how to make it a reality
- Role of schools and SENCO
- Early years - it was felt that this didn't come through strongly enough in the original draft

3.9 As a result of people's responses we have reworded sections of the strategy to try and ensure that comments have been taken on board:

- Making the language clearer and using less (or explaining better) jargon
- Making early years more visible within the document
- Being clearer about transition points and what we are referring to
- Adding a paragraph around resourcing so that people are clear what our plans are here

- Being clearer about timescales and that the action plan will follow on from the strategy
- 3.10 Where we haven't incorporated comments it is because we made a considered decision that it wasn't appropriate – for example we didn't include reference to families in the vision because this is a child and young person strategy and if we get it right for the child or young person then this should have a knock on effect on the wellbeing of the family. As part of the consultation we took additional steps to reach specific BAME communities, including offering to run focus groups or drop ins. We did not have any take up from this offer.
- 3.11 We have kept a detailed record of promotions for the consultation.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality of Opportunity Implications

- 4.1.1 Decisions need to take into account the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 which identifies the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 4.1.2 The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex and sexual orientation.
- 4.1.3 An EIA has been carried and highlights that we have built on our previous research and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders to prepare a draft SEND and Inclusion Strategy for Sheffield.
- 4.1.4 The Strategy will help us to better meet the needs and aspirations of children and young people in Sheffield and will positively impact on the health of young people and their parents and carers; young people; SEN and disabled young people; some BAME communities and carers.
- 4.1.5 We have widely consulted on the vision and the five key commitments of the draft strategy and took specific steps to try to engage with and get the views of all communities.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 No direct financial or commercial implications arise from this report and the strategy is in line with current business plans. Regular reviews of SEN costs and affordability are undertaken between Business Strategy and Finance. Any changes in funding requirements for SEN will be subject to a separate report which will need to go through the appropriate approval process.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 The Children and Families Act 2014 places a number of legal duties on local authorities, which include ensuring that children, young people and their parents are involved in discussions and decisions about their individual support and about local provision. The proposed strategy forms part of the Council's commitment to being open and transparent in the way that it deals with inclusion, including SEND across the city.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Not applicable – we are duty bound to co-produce an Inclusion strategy as part of our Written Statement of Action for Ofsted.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Sheffield requires a clear strategic plan for improvement in regards to inclusion. The strategy has been co-produced to do so.