



Birmingham and Solihull
Integrated Care System
Caring about healthier lives

Strategic Vision

Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

2023-28



Birmingham
City Council

FINAL

September 2023

Vision

Our vision is that individuals with learning difficulties and disabilities can access the right support at the right time, to enable them to live a good and fulfilling life as part of our diverse local communities. Our residents with learning disabilities and difficulties want to enjoy their lives in Birmingham and Solihull, to feel valued and have the same opportunities of living their best life as other residents. This means tackling the health and social inequalities they face.

Who is included in this strategy?

- Children with learning difficulties – whether these are caused by different processing of information or by ability to learn, whether formally diagnosed with a specific learning disability or not
- Adults with learning disabilities – from mild disabilities through to severe and multiple needs.

What do we mean by learning difficulties and disabilities?

Recognising different terminology is used dependent on age and context:

‘A Learning Difficulty is a type of Special Education Needs, which affects areas of learning, such as reading, writing, spelling, mathematics etc.’¹ This may arise from a learning disability, or from a neurodiverse processing of information.

‘A learning disability affects the way a person learns new things throughout their life. A learning disability is different for everyone. No two people are the same. A person with a learning disability might have some difficulty:

- understanding complicated information
- learning some skills
- looking after themselves or living alone’²

What do we know about our population in Birmingham and Solihull?

It is estimated that 0.44% of people in England have a learning disability.

Currently we have an estimated 15,549 school age children with a learning difficulty from ranging from moderate to profound³ and are estimated to have 24,7874 adults with a learning disability.

¹ [Learning Difficulty \(datadictionary.nhs.uk\)](https://datadictionary.nhs.uk)

² [Learning disabilities - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

³ DFE 2021 School Census Data – SEN and EHCPs⁴ PANSI Projects – Institute for Public Care, Projections as at August 2022

⁴ PANSI Projects – Institute for Public Care, Projections as at August 2022

The current estimates have their limitations as they exclude those before school age and are from school returns relying on identification of the learning difficulty or disability by the school. It also excludes the growing population of home-schooled children. Adult estimates are based on national prevalence estimates applied to population projections.

Within these data sets there will be diverse ethnicities. There is no precise data for the number of people with learning disabilities from different ethnicities, although some research does indicate varying prevalence of different conditions in different communities⁵. This means progressing a detailed understanding of the local population, and the extent to which this aligns with access to services will be a really important check on whether services are reaching everyone that they should. The final 2021 census outputs should support this work.

Between 2020 and 2040 the adult population aged 18-64 of people with a learning disability is expected to rise by 6.4% for Birmingham and 7.7% for Solihull. For adults over 65, improvements in health care mean that the population will be rising far faster – by 30.6% for Birmingham and 24.5% for Solihull – within that the numbers of people who are 85 years and older rising by 41.9% and 58.6% respectively⁶. This means we need to make sure there are the right services to meet the specific needs of an increasing elderly population. Despite high percentage increases in people with learning disabilities in older age groups, life expectancy for people with learning disabilities remains well below the national average.

Who has been involved in creating this vision?

This vision has been co-produced by experts by experience, Birmingham and Solihull ICB, Birmingham City Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Solihull Parent Carer Voice, others.

What do we mean by a good and fulfilling life

Individuals with a learning difficulties and disabilities have told us that they want a life in which they have equitable access and are included, not simply in terms of access to health and social care support. We know that the support people want and need changes across their lives, especially during major transitions, but that they want our support offer to be responsive to those changes.

⁵ [Learning difficulties and ethnicity: updating a framework for action | Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities](#)

⁶ PANSI Projects – Institute for Public Care and POPPI – Institute of Public Care – projects as at August 2022

How we work as a Health and Care System to support people

Living a good life in Birmingham and Solihull How personal, community and system support work together



Personal support **Community support** **System support**

From our engagement on this and linked strategies (e.g. the Additional Needs Strategy) we have developed a set of 'I' statements which sit under these groupings.

Personal Support I know what I need and how to look after myself	Community Support I get the support I need to maintain my independence	System Support I am able to access the right support at the right time for me
<p>I have a voice that will be listened to, and my voice makes a difference.</p> <p>I know I have choice and control about my support.</p> <p>I have people around me who I like – family / friends.</p>	<p>I know what community support is available and how to access it.</p> <p>I feel safe, welcome, included and valued in my community.</p> <p>I am able to find appropriate housing for me.</p>	<p>I tell my story once and there is a single record of my support.</p> <p>I have access to the right support as I get older.</p> <p>I am able to communicate my needs in an emergency.</p>

Personal Support	Community Support	System Support
I know what I need and how to look after myself	I get the support I need to maintain my independence	I am able to access the right support at the right time for me
<p>I have access to employment.</p> <p>I have access to education and learning.</p> <p>I am involved in all the decisions about my life.</p>	<p>I get support to keep myself well.</p> <p>I am able to access good support.</p> <p>I am supported to do the things that interest me.</p>	<p>I have support which is coordinated, cooperative and works well together</p> <p>I am supported to plan for key changes and know who I can discuss any concerns with.</p>

Priorities

How we decide our priorities

A combination of factors has determined our local priorities, including:

- Feedback and engagement with people with a learning disability, parents, carers and local residents that have identified gaps or services which are not working as well as they should
- Feedback from our own staff across the Birmingham and Solihull health and social care organisations
- National and local policies
- Recommendations from safeguarding reviews
- Building on what has worked well

Workshops and engagement events were held with key stakeholders from partner agencies and with experts by experience between March 2022 and March 2023 to understand the priorities locally. We have grouped the priorities into these themes:

Access and Inclusion

What we want to achieve:

- Communication needs are asked and accommodated as standard across health and social care
- An inclusive community for people with learning disabilities and difficulties
- Increased awareness of learning disabilities and difficulties
- Digital accessibility
- Increased access to early support and, where relevant, diagnosis

- Increased access to employment and meaningful activities
- Increased access to affordable housing of choice with reasonable environmental adjustments
- Good access to information which is timely and accessible

Quality and Choice

- Health and social care provide consistent support and share records
- There is good choice of good quality local support providers
- People are able to live in their local area and in their own home
- High aspirations in education and the transition to employment
- There is good quality support for end of life care
- There is good quality support for people with dementia
- People in receipt of services are protected from significant risk of avoidable harm

Holistic Support

- Considering the whole family network, not just the presenting need
- Good pathways to strengthen holistic support
- Person centred support
- Building social networks
- Complex care coordination
- Effective, person centred support for young people preparing for adulthood

Reducing Inequalities

- Training for carers and families
- Person centred Annual health checks
- Delivering recommendations from Learning Disability Mortality Review (LeDeR) to improve health outcomes
- Access to services is available at the right time and it is easy to find support
- Connect with all communities supported by places of worship to ensure inclusion
- Reduction of school exclusions
- Reasonable adjustments within the workplace

What will success look like?

Measurable outcomes will be co-produced with our experts by experience, as they know what good looks like. These will be monitored at an appropriate frequency for the indicators agreed.

How we will deliver this:

- Birmingham Learning Disability Delivery Plan
- Solihull Learning Disability Delivery Plan

Interdependencies

Solihull Additional Needs Strategy 2022-25