

# Solihull's Additional Needs Strategy 2022 - 2025

*Annual Report*

December  
2024



**Solihull**  
METROPOLITAN  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

We have continued to make lots of changes to how we support children and young people with additional needs and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) this year. We set out our plans for this year in January 2024 but, as we always do, we have changed things during the year so we can keep working on things that you have told us matter the most.

In this report we want to tell you what we have done, what some of you think about this and some of the new things we have to now think about and plan for.

In our last report we shared some of the national changes with the [SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan](#). We know the new government has said that the SEND system isn't working for anyone, but we are still waiting to hear how much of this plan will be continued; and if they have any other plans. Until this is clear, we will keep working locally in Solihull to make the improvements we can for our children and young people.

## What have we been doing?

SEND has become an even bigger focus for our leaders in Solihull and a new Board started this year so SEND issues can be talked about at the highest levels of the council and health. This includes the [Leader of the Council](#), the councils Chief Executive Officer and the Integrated Commissioning Board's Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Nursing Officer; alongside service directors, schools and parent carers. This is helping us to be sure we are making the improvements we need.

We have increased places in our alternative provision and opened Apollo for children in primary school who need more support. We have also continued to increase our special school places and were very pleased to hear that the Department for Education have agreed to fund another new special school for us. This will take a few years to build but will give us much needed places in the future.



Last year we joined the Department for Education's Delivering Better Value programme. The outcome of this work is to make sure children and young people get the right support at the right time – supporting more without the need for an EHCP and within their local mainstream school. There has been some great engagement from schools and parent carers in the activities which have taken place and we have had good feedback in all areas.

Through this programme so far we have:

- ❖ 52 schools which are participating in NurtureUK training and working towards the national award to embed nurture principles into their everyday offer;
- ❖ 84 school staff receiving trauma and attachment training to give them skills to help children regulate their emotions;
- ❖ 50 schools looking to improve their Equity, Diversity & Inclusion work through an audit to support areas of focus and Champions within schools to lead this improvement work;
- ❖ 50 schools involved in projects to share and discuss best practice around meeting children's needs;
- ❖ 42 schools receiving speech, language and communication needs training to help them identify and meet needs and now setting up leads to continue this good work;
- ❖ 32 schools working with SPCV to set up engagement groups between school staff and parent carers to improve communications and joint working – with a further 8 schools asking for support with this;
- ❖ 34 schools involved in a SEND focused visit from our school improvement team to help them focus on areas of good practice and further development

This year there has been a focus on health waiting lists for children and young people because we know they are too long. We still have some way to go to make the improvements we would like to make and will continue this focus for next year. In the meantime we have created an online resource for information on the SEND support that is available in Solihull which can be accessed whilst you are waiting - [SEND support available to residents in Solihull](#). This also provides waiting times for services and a feedback form for you to share your experience with us.





We had a wonderful **SEND Celebration Event** in December 2024!

Schools nominated 96 children and young people for a range of awards, and children and young people (and their families) nominated 93 school staff for a SEND Champion award. Each nomination was a joy to read. We have many amazing people in Solihull and everyone deserved recognition for what they have achieved so we had a [Special Edition](#) newsletter.

Those children, young people and staff from schools and organisations who were shortlisted for an award enjoyed a wonderful celebratory event. Many certificates, medals, trophies, flowers and goody bags were handed out to everyone as friends and family came together in an evening which included entertainment from the brilliant [Solihull Inclusive Choir](#).

#### Child of the Year

Winner: Lukas from Cheswick Green Primary School  
Highly Commended: Oliver from Tidbury Green School

#### Young Person of the Year

Winner: Joshua from St Peter's Catholic School  
Highly Commended: Chad from Hazel Oak School

#### Kindness

Winner: Atiya from Alderbrook School  
Highly Commended: Jack from Tidbury Green

#### Bravery

Winner: Ollie from Park Hall School  
Highly Commended: Ralph from Monkspath Infant & Junior School

#### Achievement

Winner: Dawud from Lode Heath School  
Highly Commended: Jessica from Shirley Heath Primary

#### Leadership

Winner: Lawson from Merstone School  
Highly Commended: Megan from Alderbrook School

#### Young Carer

Winner: Miah from Greswold Primary  
Highly Commended: Charlie from Dicken's Heath Primary

#### SEND Champion - Special

Winner: Mrs Jaques  
Highly Commended: Ms McCluskey

#### SEND Champion - Primary

Winner: Miss Harvey  
Highly Commended: Miss Briggs

#### SEND Champion - Secondary

Winner: Miss Fogarty  
Highly Commended: Mrs Hopwood

#### SEND Champion Organisation

Winner: Ordinary Magic  
Highly Commended: Inclusive Sports



## What you have told us...

There has been lots of work happening in Solihull and we make sure that parent carers, children and young people are part of the whole process - working in co-production across all of our changes in education, health and care. Solihull Parent Carer Voice (SPCV) and Our Voices Heard (OVH) sit on all of our groups to make sure we are always listening to, and thinking about, what parent carers, children and young people want. We also hold SEND drop-in events through the EHCP Service and attend SPCV coffee morning meetings.

This year we have been focusing on our engagement with children and young people so we can build good relationships and hear their views and experiences. We have done this through our Celebration and Let's Talk SEND events.

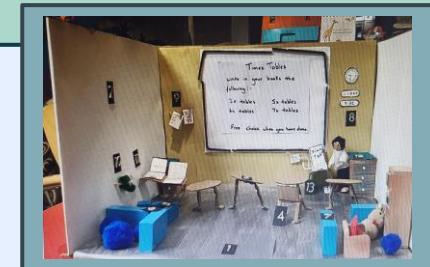
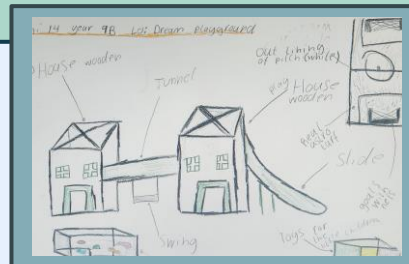
In January we met with 40 children and young people at our Celebration Event who were able to share their thoughts and opinions on the things that matter to them. This included being listened to and included, having local services, help with money and mental health – and swings that fit bigger children in playgrounds.



In June we met with 61 children and young people at our Let's Talk SEND events who gave us lots of views on how they feel when things change, what they like to do outside of school – and what they would do if they were Mayor for the day! This included being safe in the community, nice parks and having more chances to tell their school friends what it was like to be them.

Well done to the competition winners:

- ★ The team at Mill Lodge for designing a fantastic sensory classroom
- ★ Cashi from Forest Oak for designing an amazing sensory playground



In March 2024, 53 parents met with 37 professionals at the SEND Community Event. This is always a great way to come together to talk about what is happening in Solihull and what else needs to be done.

Improvements in the EHCP services working with parent carers, the social care transitions work, multi-agency working, employment and skills support, community support and the HAF offer were all named as positive changes in the past year.

However, there were many areas suggested for development; including early identification and support, greater ADHD support and guidance for schools in following systems and processes.

The full report from the event was published by SPCV and our response to the recommendations, including the actions we agreed to take, were also published. Both reports are on the SEND Engagement Hub [You said, we did](#).



SPCV carried out a further a survey of parents over the summer about their experiences of SEND in Solihull.

This again identified some positive changes such as: **improvements in parent carer experiences of children's** social care and the adults transitions team, information on the Local Offer and positive feedback on some schools SEND provision.

But also reinforced the view that more needs to be done to improve the consistency of school practice (including **using the child's voice**), the local **Post 16 offer**, health waiting times and services and support from the Children's Disability Team.

Parent carers also raised concerns around the new attendance focus from government and wanted reassurance we would focus on support rather than enforcement in Solihull.

We also receive a report from Our Voices Heard (OVH) in September covering the things that matter to children and young people. Areas they have asked to be improved include transition from primary to secondary school, knife crime and safety, post 16 options, communication with health services and access to mental health services.

The full reports from SPCV and OVH were published on the SPCV website [Reports - Solihull Parent Carer Voice](#) and discussed by the Children Services Educational and Skills Scrutiny Committee. Our response to these, including the actions we agreed to take, is also on the SEND Engagement Hub [You said, we did](#).

Towards the end of 2024 we asked parent carers and children and young people for their views using an online survey shared through Solihull Parent Carer Voice (SPCV) and Our Voices Heard (OVH); and other organisations providing support for parent carers. We received far fewer responses this year from parent carers (68) and children and young people (5) so we will work with SPCV and OHV in the next year to review all of our engagement methods.



56% of parent carers responding said they knew of the Additional Needs Strategy which is a slight increase compared to last year (54%).

Unfortunately, this year only 18% of parent carers responding said they had seen improvements in support for children and young people with additional needs and SEND in the past year in Solihull (which is down from 55% in 2023). 7 parent carers told us about the services where they had seen improvements and these included the EHCP team, the Health Visiting Team, training and workshops and school support.

***“Solihull health visiting team have provided great support to my disabled son with additional speech and language play sessions and monitoring”***

***“EHCP team much better at meeting timeframes and better quality EHCP's. The communication from the team is also loads better”***

Parent carers reported which services they had contacted to feedback on changes needed: the most responses were for schools (18) ahead of LA SEND Services (13), mental health (8), LA Early Years (6) and health services (5). But also which services they had contacted to compliment: and the most responses were for schools (10), ahead of LA SEND Services (8). This shows that there is still too much variation in families experiences of the same services; which we need to work on.

Some parent carers referred to the challenges created by service pressures and growing demand for support. We know this reflects the issues that are being felt across the country but want to do all we can in Solihull to make things work as well as they can. Other parent carers felt there was still much more to be done to support disabled children and those who needed social care support alongside reducing waiting lists and offering more support post-diagnosis.



# What have we been doing to improve the priority areas we shared with you in our strategy?

## Priority 1

I can see that everyone is working together to help me make my life better...

What we said we would do	What we have done	What we are doing next
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make sure everyone in Solihull thinks about how their work can help make things better for you. This includes sharing information and finding ways to check we are making things better.</li><li>• Look for ways that staff supporting you work better together. Including, continuing to support early years settings with the Dingley's Promise training so they can better support young children.</li><li>• Continue to review and update the Local Offer and hear from you about what</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We have been reviewing how services have worked together to support you (our multi-agency audit). We hear from parent carers and children and young people first so your views are shared with services who then meet together to discuss what worked well and what could have been better. We are using this to change what we do.</li><li>• We have continued our SEND visits in schools to look at their offer and see what is working well and where they need support to make changes. School staff have begun to share their good practice with other schools so they can learn from each other.</li><li>• We have regular meetings between social care, health and education to plan our support for those children and young people whose complex needs cross all of these areas.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We are working with group of young people to help us set up information on our local offer aimed at young people and use different ways of showing that information.</li><li>• We will work more closely with the Police to help children and young people feel safer when they are out.</li><li>• Senior leaders will spend longer looking at what difference our plans are making to your lives.</li><li>• Children's Social Care are working with partners to make sure the <a href="#">Early Help Strategy</a> works well in giving children and young people the support they need, when they need it.</li></ul>



<p>information you want on the Local Offer, and how you want it to look.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to embed Oliver McGowan training at appropriate levels for all staff in health and social care to further strengthen the training offer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have been using feedback on the local offer to make it easier for you to use and find the information you want.</li> <li>7 settings have so far completed sufficient training for a Dingley's Promise Mark of Achievement. These are shown on the <a href="#">FIS directory</a>. Over 1000 learners have accessed the modules available so far.</li> <li>The Adult Social Care Directorate have been rolling out Oliver McGowan training and this will continue into 2025.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will release two more Dingley's Promise modules due in Spring 2025, which includes leading SEND. We will encourage more settings to complete the training and apply for a Mark.</li> </ul>
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Only 29% (20 out of 68) of parent carers told us that you thought we were improving against this priority which is much less than the 57% (140 out of 246) in 2023 and 59% in 2022. We know we still have work to do and will unpick this data further with SPCV and partners to understand some of the reasons for this, and the limited number of responses this year. You are reporting continued improvements in the Local Offer but only 21% (14 out of 68) of parent carers said they had used it recently. The biggest issue for you was how well, or not, services were communicating; both between each other and with you and your family.

*"Guidance on how to navigate everything. It's daunting and can feel overwhelming..."*

*"Communication between parents and professionals. Not being scared to delve deeper into parent's experiences..."*



## Priority 2

### I can see that Solihull has the services and support I need...

What we said we would do	What we have done	What we are doing next
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council will take some of the health responsibility for making sure the services you need are in place (joint commissioning) so decisions can be made more easily starting early next year.</li> <li>We will progress the north Solihull integrated model of care pilot. This includes how we plan and use resources for the needs of the local community and setting up a new way of working with local partners.</li> <li>We will put more support in for you if you are in primary school and cannot attend school (alternative provision).</li> <li>We will work with schools to look at how they can offer you different lessons and courses (vocational) if you are finding learning hard.</li> <li>Solihull Family Hub offer will launch in Spring 2024 with four hubs, outreach and a digital offer with services and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council and health signed an agreement in April 2024 and have started to look at what is provided by community therapies, Lyndon House and SENDIASS.</li> <li>After the success of supporting families through the <a href="#">Connected Care Network</a> pilot in north Solihull we took steps to work in a similar way in the south of the borough.</li> <li>We have set up a <a href="#">webpage</a> to help you find out what support is available whilst you wait for health services.</li> <li>The Apollo Centre opened in November 2024 for children in primary school who have been excluded or are at risk of this.</li> <li>Schools were given a list of <a href="#">opportunities</a> which may help their pupils.</li> <li>Four Family Hubs have opened (<a href="#">Smith's Wood</a>, <a href="#">Kingshurst</a>, <a href="#">Elmdon &amp; Chelmsley Wood</a>) as well as an outreach centre in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will set up a group (Quality Improvement Task &amp; Finish Group) to check we are making progress on our plans for health support, communication, pathways, workforce and technology.</li> <li>We will review our joint service models to make sure they are delivering what you need.</li> <li>Education teams will start to review all specialist places to make sure the right children and young people are able to access them.</li> <li>We will act on feedback about the structure of the Early Years Local Offer to aid it's use and help people find information about the early years offer with greater ease.</li> </ul>



<p>advice for families with children/young people aged from before pregnancy to 25 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are looking for ways to increase our special school places, so if you need one for your learning you can get this more quickly and closer to home.</li> </ul>	<p>Shirely Heath. All offer support and advice to children, young people and families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early years have piloted a small play and stay group for children who have Early Years Team support in the home. This group uses Elmdon for group support and access to services in the Family Hub.</li> <li>• We have expanded places at Hazel Oak and the Department for Education have now agreed to pay for a new 150 place special school for Solihull.</li> </ul>	
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Only 24% (16 out of 68) of parent carers told us that you thought we were improving against this priority which is much less than the 50% (123 out of 246) in 2023 and 54% in 2022. We know we still have work to do and will unpick this data further with SPCV and partners to understand some of the reasons for this, and the limited number of responses this year. The main concerns raised were with waiting lists for assessment and support - although some parent carers reported that they had seen some improvements. Some issues were also raised about the differences across the borough – with some schools putting good support in place for children where others were struggling, and the lower number of activities available for young people in the south of Solihull.

## Priority 3

### My voice is heard, and it makes a difference...

What we said we would do	What we have done	What we are doing next
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We want to increase our parent and student groups so they are in more schools.</li> <li>We will work with a national young people's group (KIDS) and some of you in schools to make a video which helps people understand why your voice is important, and how it can be heard.</li> <li>We will begin to ask schools to let us know if you have been involved in your EHCP annual review, if you have one. This is so we can see how much you are a part of deciding what is, and isn't, working.</li> <li>We will work with OVH to find out what matters to you the most and what you want to talk about – so we can make sure the right people listen to you.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With some money we have been given (through Delivering Better Value) we have helped SPCV set up new parent groups in over 30 schools so they can hear directly from you about the things that matter.</li> <li>A number of children and young people shared their thoughts on being listened to and a young person's group helped us put a video together which we have shared with everyone (Experiences of Special Educational Needs in Solihull - <a href="#">Information for children and young people</a>).</li> <li>We have held a number of Celebration and Let's Talk events for staff across education, care and health to talk to children and young people about the things that matter to them.</li> <li>OVH have covered different topics at their meetings and invited people from the services involved so these conversations can help us change things.</li> <li>Some schools are using the new form we made so we can check if you have been</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>We are planning our next Let's Talk SEND events</b> based upon what young people have asked for. The first event of 2025 will be about mental health and lots of people will be there to offer advice to children and young people and hear what is important to them.</li> <li>We will work with SPCV and OVH to work out how best to seek your views throughout the year.</li> <li>Education services will be working with schools to see how they can increase the number of young people attending their EHCP annual reviews and SPCV and OVH will be helping us with this.</li> <li>The Mental Health transformation programme will have a focus on meeting the needs of those with SEND.</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will encourage a wider use of the Mind of my own App across social care.</li> </ul>	<p>involved in your EHCP annual review, if you have one. Not all schools are using this form but this is showing us that parent carers are not always asking for their child to be involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The use of Mind of My Own App is being embedded in children social care social work practice and use is reviewed and reported on a quarterly basis.</li> <li>The Early Years Team had a focus on helping providers understand how the young child's voice can be 'heard' and responded to. The impact of this was seen in referrals and conversations with practitioners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Considering the impact of the child's voice has been threaded into the annual visit offers from The Early Years Team for this year.</li> </ul>
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26% (18 out of 68) of parent carers told us that you thought we were improving against this priority which is much less than the 52% (128 out of 246) in 2023 and similar in 2022. We know we still have work to do and will unpick this data further with SPCV and partners to understand some of the reasons for this, and the limited number of responses this year.

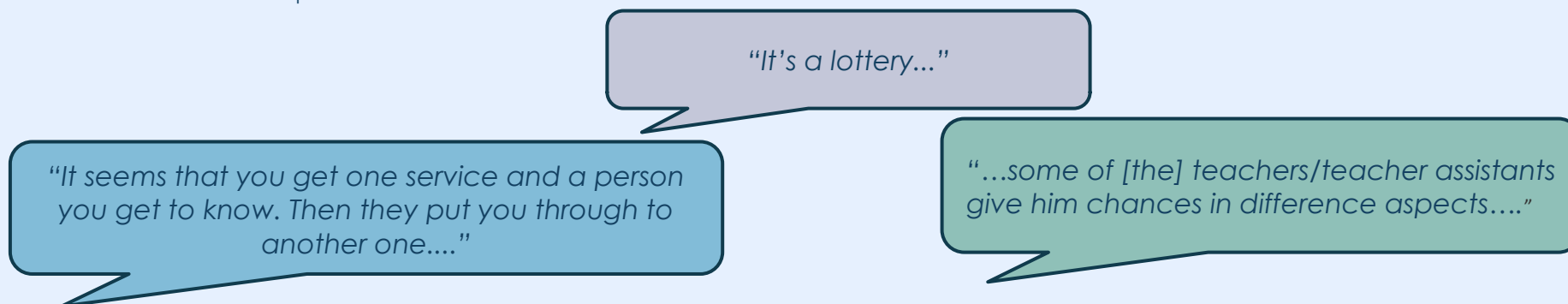
At the SEND Community Event in March 2024 we talked a lot some of the things parent carers thought were helping - which included the sharing of information and opportunities to talk to the professionals involved in their child' support:

*"School engagement sessions with SPCV are really helpful..."*

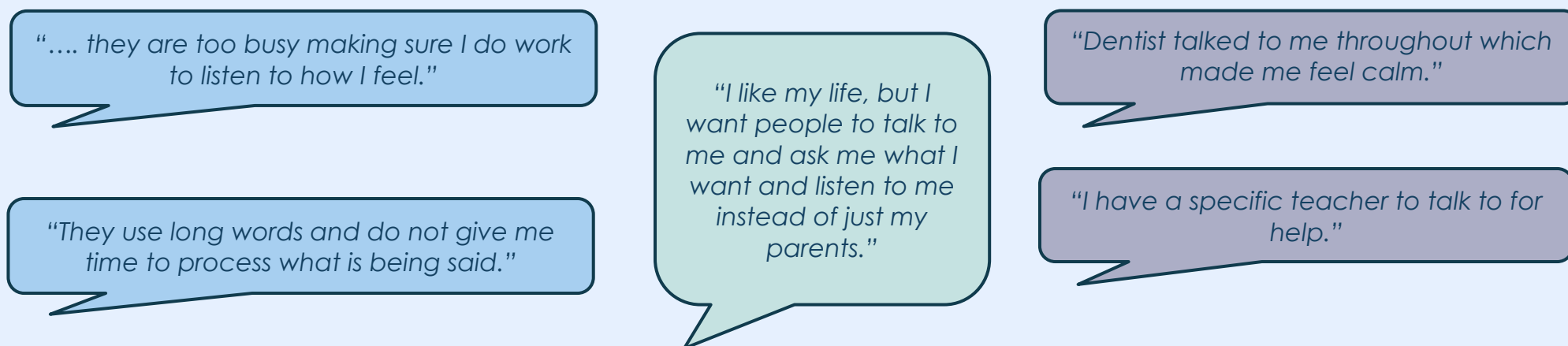
*"Person-centred planning meetings in the [EHCP] assessment process are really positive, they are really helping."*



But we need to do more to make this happen all of the time. The SPCV survey report told us that only 49% of parent carers felt involved with their child's SEN reviews, plans and provision and 33% felt communication with their child's school or setting was poor. In our survey a number of parents commented on the differences experienced between schools and different services and asked for this to be improved.



Communication was also a big theme from the OVH report on children and young people's thoughts. This included not being understood by those supporting them, or being listened to, and not being able to understand what is happening in their health appointments.



## Priority 4

### I feel welcome, understood, valued, appreciated and included wherever I go...

What we said we would do	What we have done	What we are doing next
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will continue to be trained and look at what they are doing; and can do. We will give them more support on the things they are struggling with.</li> <li>We will look across education, care, health, community safety and the community to see how we can better work together where you are struggling to attend school, or are at risk of being excluded from school.</li> <li>We will continue to promote the important role which youth sector organisations can have in promoting inclusion, wellbeing and outcomes for young people in education settings.</li> <li>We will fund improvements to community buildings, which will make them more inclusive and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools have been doing a lot of work in this area. We have offered them trauma and attachment, nurture, speech and language and equity, diversity and inclusion training (page 3) and are helping them to share good practice.</li> <li>There have been good relationships built between education, communities and the voluntary sector which has helped us share local services with schools to help children and young people.</li> <li>Our <a href="#">Graduated Approach</a> provides people with information and services across education, health and care to help them support children and young people.</li> <li>Health colleagues help us make decisions on any alternative education provision a child or young person needs.</li> <li>The Council has secured funding to help make community settings and buildings to be more inclusive and accessible to children and young people with SEND. Four buildings which provide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will use information in our different directories to develop one, new all-age directory which covers services, activities, places to go and events so you can find everything more easily in one place.</li> <li>We want to look more at how we can help children and young people feel safe in their community as they have told us this is a concern for them.</li> <li>We will identify what good looks like in Solihull with respect to community buildings and the practices of community organisations, to then develop shared standards and investment in practices, and buildings.</li> <li>We will continue to develop the local youth offer, in line with statutory guidance and in</li> </ul>



<p>accessible to children and young people with SEND.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will identify local good practice that promotes the inclusion of children and young people in their community, and use this to inform training, development and a recommended standard for voluntary, community and faith organisations.</li> </ul>	<p>activities for children and young people are receiving this funding - which will improve accessibility through new ramps, toilets and better environments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have started up a new project that is reviewing the accessibility of community buildings and the practices of the organisations that manage those buildings. This is to identify good practice, current standards and to inform investment in training, capacity building and investment in buildings.</li> <li>• We have been reviewing the youth offer in Solihull to identify what is strong, and where the opportunities and gaps are. Developing confidence and practices with respect to SEND has been identified as a key theme.</li> </ul>	<p>readiness for government investment from the new National Youth Strategy. This will be whilst ensuring that the offer is relevant and accessible to children and young people with SEND.</p>
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32% (22 out of 68) of parent carers told us that you thought we were improving against this priority which is much less than the 59% (145 out of 246) in 2023 and 57% in 2022. However, parent carers said this was the priority area where we were doing the best. We know we still have work to do and will unpick this data further with SPCV and partners to understand some of the reasons for this, and the limited number of responses this year.

In contrast to last year you told us that you felt schools and colleges were the most accessible and welcoming to children and young people (an increase from 41% and 45% last year) but you said that all other areas were not as accessible and welcoming as they had been. We will unpick this with SPCV as the lower number of responses may not reflect what everyone is really feeling. We have included more responses from our survey below:



My child finds this area very <b>or mostly good for...</b>	Education	Clubs, groups and holiday clubs	Medical appointments	Mental health appointments	Local community
being accessible	45% (29/65) (41% in 2023)	36% (20/55) (49% in 2023)	35% (22/62) (47% in 2023)	16% (7/43) (44% in 2023)	20% (11/56) (46% in 2023)
making them feel welcomed and included	51%(34/67) (45% in 2023)	39% (22/56) (55% in 2023)	44% (26/59) (52% in 2023)	18% (7/39) (48% in 2023)	30% (17/56) (55% in 2023)

The OVH report on children and young people's thoughts stated that some enjoy their community, feel there is lots to do and feel safe - but others do not. Most children and young people agreed that they worried about their safety when travelling around and were not sure who to turn to if they were lost or in danger.

"I love going to wheelchair basketball, I would go every day if I could. I wish there were more things like it"

"I wish people in the community understood disabilities more"

"It doesn't matter who you are, what colour you are, who you love or what disability you have: everyone should be included."

"Shop keepers help me and help me to get the right money out. I like being independent and going to the shops on my own."

"I would like more play equipment in parks – bigger things for older children"



## Priority 5

**In planning for my future, I know what will happen, when it will happen and who I can communicate with about this...**

What we said we would do	What we have done	What we are doing next
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transition audit tool pilot will be undertaken to gain feedback from people who have or are transitioning from Children's to Adult Social Care, to understand, learn and make improvements to existing pathways.</li> <li>We will continue to work with our experts by experience to develop information to support people with a Learning Disability and their families to understand the value of and access to Annual Health Checks.</li> <li>The Council and Solihull Community Housing will look to offer more internships, supported jobs and job opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have launched a dedicated webpage on the local offer to provide comprehensive information for young people transitioning from children's services to adult social care. This <a href="#">'Preparing for Adulthood'</a> section includes resources and guidance developed in collaboration with young people to support them during this critical period.</li> <li>We are working closer together and sharing information more effectively between Children's Services and the Adult Social Care Directorate to improve preparing for adulthood processes.</li> <li>We have begun looking at our Post 16 education offer in detail, so we can clearly tell you what the options are and work on making these better. We have put this on the local offer.</li> <li>Some schools have worked with a university to look at how they can better help children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We know that the number of young people with EHCPs who are 16 or older will continue to grow in Solihull so we will make a plan on what education, employment and community options we need to develop.</li> <li>Our new Preparing for Adulthood Support Worker based in the Adult Social Care Directorate will work directly with young people from the age of 14, and their family and carers, to help them plan for their future.</li> <li>School leaders will be working closely with SPCV and OVH to make sure the views and experiences of children and young people are used to update the schools transitions guidance.</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job Fairs for people with SEND will be planned for 2024-2025 to promote opportunities as well as Disability Confident events for businesses so they can offer more placements.</li> <li>• We will look at how best to make sure young people in schools outside of Solihull have timely and appropriate information on career and work options by working with those schools and parent carers.</li> <li>• We will write a Young Person friendly and an easy read version of the Routing for them guide and look at how else to promote information with schools, pupils and parents, including through our Schools Career Enterprise Advisors.</li> </ul>	<p>transition within, and between, schools so they can share good evidence about what works.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We piloted the transitions audit tool across both <b>Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care</b>. The insights gained from these audits have been shared across Directorates, leading to the introduction of a new Transitions Support Worker role in Adult Social Care to enhance joint working and support. Following the pilot, it has been agreed that the transitions audit will form part of our regular cycle of audits and will be undertaken on a quarterly basis.</li> <li>• Collaborating with experts by experience, we produced two local information videos to raise awareness about the importance of annual health checks for individuals with learning disabilities. These videos will be widely shared during 2025 to ensure maximum reach and impact.</li> <li>• We have successfully placed 17 Supported Internships across the borough, partnering with Solihull College, Mencap, and Hereward College. These internships provide valuable work experience and skill development opportunities for young people with SEND.</li> <li>• A Supported Employment Forum has been set up and is attended by all stakeholders to develop the Internship offer across Solihull.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health services will share a child focussed animation video in January 2025 and a parent carer focussed video in March 2025 to promote annual health checks. Information leaflets for Community Services, Education, Social Care have will also be shared. We will continue to work with our experts by experience to develop a process to improve the quality of annual health checks.</li> <li>• There will be a series of Disability Confident engagement events throughout 2025 - the first being an in-person event at Blythe Valley Business Park in January.</li> <li>• The next event Apprenticeship Show on 29<sup>th</sup> January at North Solihull Sports Centre will have Supported Internship Providers in attendance to promote into work opportunities for young pupils with an EHCP.</li> <li>• Wider development of Supported Internships in Solihull to increase current offer of 17.</li> <li>• Solihull Careers Hub is working with <b>Schools, SENCo's, SPCV and OVH</b> to promote the Local Offer (incl.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability Confident is being promoted across the borough with local businesses. The Disability Resource Centre are engaging with businesses to develop opportunities and help employers achieve a more inclusive workforce.</li> <li>• We have organised multiple Jobs Fairs across Solihull, both in the north and south of the borough, with dedicated support for disabled residents. In 2025, we plan to host additional bespoke SEN events tailored to the needs of learners and businesses, aiming to increase employment opportunities for young people with SEND.</li> <li>• We have written a young person friendly version of the <a href="#">Routing for them guide</a> which gives advice and activities to help young people think about what they would like for their future and what options they could have.</li> <li>• On the back of successful Apprenticeship Shows, businesses have asked to support career pathway events for our SEN young pupils to provide career related aspirations at school.</li> <li>• The Apprenticeship Shows now have a quiet hour at the start of each event, over 100 young pupils and parents attended this time and spoke to multiple business about apprenticeships.</li> </ul>	<p>Supported Internships). Every article or update from Careers Hub uses the local offer to provide parents/pupils with information (routing for them) to support post 16 transitions, providing all with as much information as possible to help inform career related decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the findings from the Castlewood/BBV collaboration, the Careers Hub want to link more employers with special schools to provide careers related support to help those pupils achieve</li> <li>• A Link Worker Post will work with Social Workers and Personal Assistants to help broker a triage service for employment related asks. Another post has already made a significant impact on the numbers of older age residents with learning disabilities accessing jobs.</li> <li>• Skills for Success operating across Years 11 upwards (some Year 10 preparation work) in all Solihull Schools to help those pupils at risk of becoming NEET (not in employment, education or training) to sustain</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The first collaboration between Castlewood School and Balfour Beatty Vinci is taking place.</li></ul>	school and move into internships, apprenticeships or further education.
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18% (12 out of 68) parent carers told us that you thought we were improving against this priority which is much less than the 51% (125 out of 246) in 2023 and same in 2022. We know we still have work to do and will unpick this data further with SPCV and partners to understand some of the reasons for this, and the limited number of responses this year.

Parent carers have shared positive feedback about their experiences with Adult Social Care and the Preparing for Adulthood Team. However, they also highlighted the need for further improvements in post-16 education options within the borough. The concerns about college were also shared by young people in the OVH report who said they wanted to stay in Solihull and go to a college they are happy with.

*"I want to go to the 6<sup>th</sup> form at my school but I won't get the grades as they want 6's and 7's at GCSE. I won't have any option other than Solihull College and I don't want to go there, it's too big and I am really scared...."*

*"I am on transport far too long in the morning and evening – I am trying to move colleges as it's too far from my home."*



## Priority 6

### I can get the right support I need at the right time for me...

What we said we would do	What we have done	What we are doing next
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will share information on how schools can support your SEND needs, and where they can get more help from (graduated approach) on our website by Easter 2024.</li> <li>We will make it easier for schools to ask for help to support you when you need something more than they can give you (alternative provision).</li> <li>We will work further with children, parents and carers, and professionals to design how waiting list information is shared, ensuring that it is easy to understand with a new "support whilst waiting" webpage in early 2024.</li> <li>We will review pathways of care and invest into some community health services across Birmingham and Solihull.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have revised our <a href="#">Graduated Approach</a> pages on the local offer so you can find more information on how schools can be supporting your child or young person; and that all schools have a similar offer.</li> <li>We have made a document to help you and schools understand what different provisions are available (<a href="#">ARPs, ARCs and Alternative Provision</a>) and set up a panel which means that schools only have to ask once for a child or young person to get support from any alternative provision.</li> <li>Our website sharing information on support available whilst your child or young person is waiting for a health appointment has been set up (<a href="#">support available to residents in Solihull</a>) and four times a year we update the waiting times for therapy, paediatric, autism and ADHD assessments.</li> <li>We have started initial reviews of some community services – looking at Speech, Language and Communication needs, Autism and ADHD support and services through a</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will work closely together to put our plans in place to help support children and young people as early as possible and reduce waiting times.</li> <li>The Early Years Team Around the Child [EYTAC] process is launching as an online form to help early identification, support of need and automatic referral sharing. This encourages a shared graduated approach for young children.</li> <li>We will take our Joint Commissioning arrangements further by developing our Quality Improvement programme of work with the focus on Speech, language and communication needs, autism and ADHD support and services. We will also look at wider reviews as required, including for example focus on Special</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will work with our therapy services to find ways to speed up the waiting time. We will give you more information and advice whilst you are waiting and make sure you, and your parent carers, know where to find this.</li> </ul>	<p>system-wide Quality Improvement programme of work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have put in Joint Commissioning arrangements between the LA and ICB; for services including, Speech and Language Therapy, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, SENDIAS and Short Break (Lyndon House). These arrangements will support the robust review and development of integrated services across Solihull.</li> <li>• University Hospital Birmingham have made a plan to reduce waiting times and this links to a quality improvement plan which we are all working on.</li> <li>• We have worked hard to make sure that if you have an EHCP that needs changing after your review meeting, that we do this quickly.</li> </ul>	<p>School Nursing and Community Paediatrics.</p>
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22% (15 out of 68) parent carers told us that you thought we were improving against this priority which is much less than the 50% (123 out of 246) in 2023 and same in 2022. We know we still have work to do and will unpick this data further with SPCV and partners to understand some of the reasons for this, and the limited number of responses this year.

Many parent carers shared their concerns about delays in assessments or support and we know this is a big issue we are trying to address. This seems to be more of an issue for mental health services where young people are struggling the most. The SPCV report on parental views of SEND services in Solihull also told us that 49% of parent carers were not confident that their child's education setting was putting the provision included in their EHCP in place.



**Thank you to every child and young person, parent carer and service lead for working so hard this year to make things better in Solihull. We look forward to continuing this work together.**

## **Useful Links:**

To sign up for the Council's monthly SEND Newsletter: [Solihull Council \(govdelivery.com\)](https://solihullcouncil.gov.uk/govdelivery.com) (SEND is under the Education option)

To read engage with us through our SEND Hub: [SEND and Additional Needs | Your Voice Solihull \(engagementhq.com\)](https://solihullcouncil.gov.uk/SEND-and-Additional-Needs-Your-Voice-Solihull-engagementhq.com)

To find information on our Local Offer: [Solihull Local Offer | solihull.gov.uk](https://solihull.gov.uk)

To get support from SENDIAS: [Solihull SEND Information, Advice and Support Service - Family Action \(family-action.org.uk\)](https://family-action.org.uk)

To talk to Solihull Parent Carer Voice (SPCV): [Solihull Parent Carer Voice SPCV | Inspiring Positive Change](https://solihullparentcarervoice.org.uk)

To join Our Voices Heard (OVH): [Children and Young People's Voice- Our Voices Heard! - Solihull Parent Carer Voice \(spcv.org.uk\)](https://solihullparentcarervoice.org.uk)



