

Area SEND inspection and SEND strategy

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Area SEND inspections – 2016-2022

Summary

- Inspections began in 2016 to check how well local areas were implementing the 2014 SEND reforms.
- 2017, Gateshead was inspected and it was positive. There was no written statement of action required.
- **Over half** of the inspected local areas had SEND service weaknesses significant enough to trigger a formal improvement programme, known as a “written statement of action” (WSOA);
- **Inspection outcomes got worse over time:** across 2021 and 2022, **two-thirds** of inspected local areas were told to put together a WSOA;
- Measured by the proportion of formal improvement instructions given out, **no other sector that Ofsted inspects performs as badly as local area SEND does.**
- In all, Ofsted & CQC inspectors identified **over 440** individual areas of significant weakness in the local area SEND services they inspected between 2016 and 2022. The three most common areas of weakness were **defective leadership & strategy, poor joint commissioning** of education and health services, and **flawed Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP)** processes.

The new Area SEND inspection system

- Firstly, these will be a **cycle of inspections**, not a one-and-done set like the last lot. The standard cycle will still be one area SEND inspection every five years – but if local area performance is inconsistent or worse, then there will also be monitoring inspections that will happen sooner. These inspections will be interspersed with engagement meetings *“to keep a spotlight on SEND provision.”*
- Second, the **purpose of inspection will change** slightly. The new inspections will be broader in scope, to check *“the effectiveness of the local area partnership’s arrangements for children and young people with SEND [and] where appropriate, recommend what the local area partnership should do to improve the arrangements.”*
- Third, the first set of inspections focused mostly on **education** and **health** aspects of SEND services. The new framework will also look at the **social care** side of the SEND house, bringing Ofsted’s social care inspectors onto inspection teams for the first time.
- Fourth, the new area SEND inspections will look at aspects of **alternative provision** (AP) for the first time, as well as SEND services.
- Fifth — and probably most significantly — Ofsted and CQC have repeatedly stated that with the new area SEND inspections, they want to focus more on how well services work *“to improve the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.”*

What are inspectors looking for?

- The inspection handbook says that the area SEND inspection teams will be evaluating local area performance against two main criteria:
- **The impact of the local area partnership's SEND arrangements on the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND:** Inspectors here will be looking at things like how well the local area identifies need, meets need, and prepares children and young people for next steps - and also how children and young people with SEND and their families are involved at an individual level.
- **How local area partners work together to plan, evaluate and develop the SEND system:** This is more standard inspection stuff, basically checking how well local leaders and systems work. It includes things like looking at leaders' ambitions, strategies, commissioning, joint working, and whether leaders meaningfully engage and work with children and young people with SEND and their families.

What will inspection outcomes look like?

The new area SEND inspections won't use the standard Ofsted grading system of 'outstanding' through to 'inadequate.' Instead, there will be three possible outcomes, each fairly wordy:

- The local area partnership's SEND arrangements typically lead to positive experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The local area partnership is taking action where improvements are needed.
- The local area partnership's arrangements lead to inconsistent experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The local area partnership must work jointly to make improvements.
- There are widespread and/or systemic failings leading to significant concerns about the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND, which the local area partnership must address urgently.

Our new SEND strategy

July 2022 – a wordy document, mainly focused on education, that didn't clearly explain our priorities across the local area, or who and what we were going to do about them.



December 2022 - a new SEND strategy, developed by extensive multi-agency working to identify our priorities from a thorough self-evaluation across all area services. Key priorities link heavily to Ofsted's focus on EHCP processes, joint working, commissioning and AP, and form the basis of a complex, yet clear action plan.



January 2023 – ready for consultation for new SEND Strategy.



SEND

Our Priorities



Our Vision

Our vision is for all children with SEND to **thrive**, have appropriate provision, feel positive about their next steps and believe in themselves.

We put families at the heart of everything we do.



Link to Inclusion Strategy

We know that the Inclusion Strategy will play a significant role in improving the quality of provision for children and young people with SEND and as such this strategy and the Inclusion Strategy have been developed alongside each other. In our Inclusion Strategy we have set out a vision where we promote the development of strong foundations that:

- Ensure early identification and early intervention are focussing on whole setting inclusive practice and early intervention
- Ensures high quality support services and interventions are available at the earliest opportunity to support children, young people, whole setting development and system change
- Enables and promotes everyone to work collaboratively with a shared vision and responsibility to support, challenge and hold each other to account to support children and young people in Gateshead.

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Our Context



Of the **27,158** children and young people in education settings across Gateshead.....

4478 have **Special Educational Needs & Disabilities**



Education, Health and Care Plans INCREASED

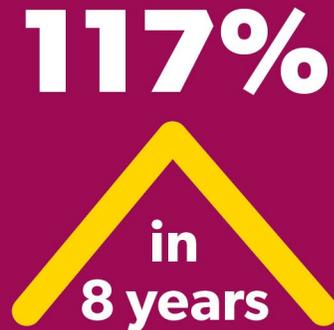
Over the **previous 8 years** the number of new

Education, Health and Care Plans

being issued to children and young people in an

eight-year period

in Gateshead **increased** by 117%.



Referrals INCREASED

The number of children **referred** to the Council's Pre-school Education, Health and Care Panel has **increased** since 2013.

2013-14
93



Of the 306 referrals made...

237 children were **seen by the Council's Early Years Assessment and Intervention Team (EYAIT)**

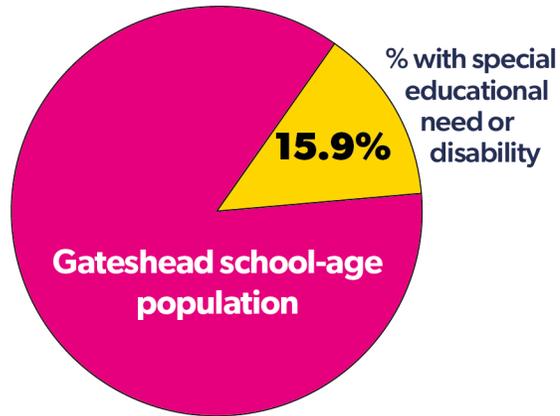
286 children were **seen by the Children's Development Team/ Outpatients**

6 of these being **overseen** by the **Early Years SENDCO**.

60 As of September 2022, there were **60 children aged 0-4 with an EHCP**. Of these, **33** are in **mainstream**, **3** are in **independent early years settings** and **24** are in **specialist placements**.

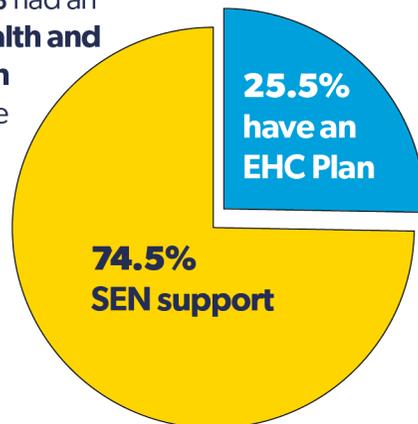
Gateshead school-age pupils with ...

... SEND



In January 2022, a total of **4478** Gateshead pupils were reported by schools to have a special educational need or disability.

Of these, **25.5%** had an **Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan** and **74.5%** were categorised as 'SEN Support'.



... an EHC Plan

(This data also includes Jewish and Emmanuel College)

The number of statutory school-age pupils with an EHC Plan has **INCREASED** from

2015 **843** 2022 **1241**

4.1% of all school places in Gateshead

Gateshead has a slightly high proportion of school age pupils with an EHC Plan compared with regional and national figures.

Gateshead is the highest within the region and is above the national average.

Top 5 areas of need

Over the past 3 years, the top five areas of need reported by schools via School Census have been:

- 1 Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)** – **INCREASED** from **627** in 2015 to **1103** in 2022
- 2 Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)** – **INCREASED** from **655** in 2015 to **839** in 2022
- 3 Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)** – **INCREASED** from **481** in 2015 to **776** in 2022
- 4 Autism Spectrum (ASC Autism)** – **INCREASED** from **293** in 2015 to **744** in 2022
- 5 Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD)** – **INCREASED** from **329** in 2015 to **369** in 2022 but has significantly decreased since 2019

Pupils at SEN Support

The number of school-age pupils requiring **SEN Support** has **slightly increased** from **3,400** in 2015 to **3,618** in January 2022, which equates to 11.9% of all pupils in Gateshead.

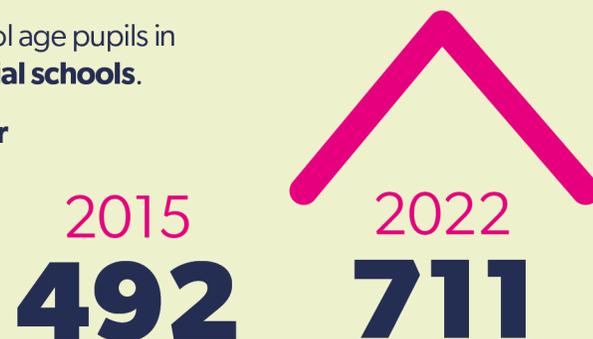
This is slightly below the regional and national figures.

Special school pupils

The number of school-age pupils being taught in special schools in Gateshead has risen from 492 in 2015 to 711 in 2022.

This equates to **2.23%** of all school age pupils in Gateshead being **taught in special schools**.

Gateshead currently has a **higher** proportion of school age pupils being taught in special schools as a percentage of the whole school population, **compared with regional and national** figures.



ARMS provision

ARMS are schools which specialise in a particular area of learning need.

Children in ARMS usually have an Education, Health and Care Plan and are generally taught in **smaller classes** with a **higher level of support** than a normal mainstream school but will have **opportunities to mix with children in the mainstream school**.

The **ARMS provisions** have been **INCREASED** this year to accommodate more children with additional needs. This will relieve pressure on the special schools and allow more children to be included in a mainstream provision

In Gateshead as of January 2022, there were....

248

young adults

aged 16-19

with an EHC Plan

20

young adults

aged 20-25

with an EHC Plan

Our Priorities

Our strategic approach is to **'Make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives'**. For children with Special Educational needs this means our four priorities are:

1. To have a transparent approach to identify children's needs which is understood by families and professionals, so that the right support is in place at the right time.
2. To actively engage with children, young people and their families so that their vision of 'Our choice, our voice' is heard and supported during strategic planning.
3. For health, social care, and education services to work together to commission the best support for pupils' needs, and to keep all children and young people safe.
4. To ensure that children and young people are well prepared, supported and feel positive about taking their next steps.



Priority 1

To have a transparent approach to identify children's needs which is understood by families and professionals:
Right support,
Right Place,
Right time

Key actions are:



- **Develop** an **Inclusion Support Structure** across Gateshead for all stakeholders so that staff with the relevant expertise can be used to ensure more pupils are able to remain in mainstream provision
- **Review** and **refine our support for schools around exclusions** with the aim of reducing our rate of permanent exclusions
- **Improve** the **Audit and Quality Assurance Process** for EHCPs
- Produce a **Gateshead Quality Provision Toolkit (Ranges)** document
- To build on and develop **information sharing** with all families and professionals
- To **develop and update Annual Training Packages** for all partners working with CYP with SEND

When we get this right, it looks like:

- All CYP Needs are accurately assessed in a timely and effective way
- Children's needs are better met improving their preparation for adulthood and life chances
- Inclusive provision with an understanding of whole school SEND and all staff seeing themselves as leaders and champions of children with SEND
- Streamlined referral processes so that CYP are supported in a timely manner and in the right way



Priority 2

To actively engage with children, young people and their families so that their vision of **“Our Voice, Our Choice”** is heard and supported during strategic planning.

Key actions are:



- To continue to **build on** and **evaluate** the **existing strong parenting offer**
- To continue to **develop approaches to gathering feedback from parents**
- **Expand the Vision Friendly Schools Award**
- To **build on** and **evaluate** the **Learning Disability Three Year Plan** and **Autism Strategy Plan**
- **To build on** the **current offer from SENDIASS** so that even more families are aware of what is available in the local area, and embed a co-produced **Young Person’s Hub** within the Local Offer
- To **build on** and **develop** the **digital inclusion offer** to support **engagement** and **information sharing** with our CYP

When we get this right, it looks like:

- **All children and young people feel safe and heard**
- **All families feel heard** without having to repeat their situation and needs
- **All families know what services are available** to them and **how to access them** - the right services are in place at the right time
- Our workforce across education, health and care are committed to a **“team around the family”** approach, with the right skills etc. to deliver services to our CYP at the right stage of their development
- **All families feel they are respected, valued and empowered** to meet their children’s needs with the right support in their local community

Priority 3

**Health, Social Care
and Education
Services work
together to
commission the
best support and
keep all children
and young people
safe**

Key actions are:



- To develop our **offer of alternative provision**
- To continue to develop the **ARMS provision across Gateshead** to meet the needs of CYP within mainstream settings
- To evaluate, review and build upon **our therapeutic offer** and **timely access** to services
- To support children and young people who experience **anxiety and mental health issues** so that they can attend school regularly
- **Review the Short Breaks scheme** to ensure arrangements are in place to meet needs of CYP who need to access a wide range of provision
- **Use collated data** from the **Gateshead JSNA** to **identify future actions** and **joint commissioning needs**

When we get this right, it looks like:

- **Joint Commissioning** underpins our work and the system works collectively to **meet families' needs as early as possible**
- **Equitable and accessible services** across the borough, informed by lived experiences
- **Partnership working is excellent** - families and professionals have a good understanding of what each service does and how to access it
- **Families are assured that services are working together** to meet needs
- **Effective monitoring** of commissioned provision and ensuring that provision is good value for money



Priority 4

To ensure that children and young people are well prepared, supported and feel positive about taking their next steps

Key actions are:



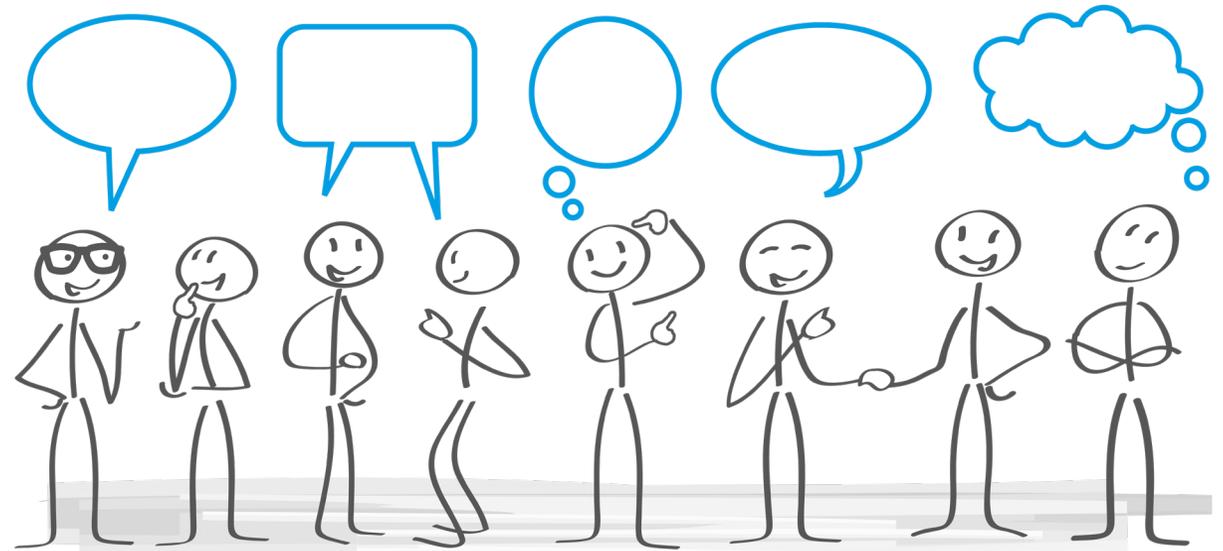
- **Transition processes across education, health and care are in place for all key stages** to ensure that CYP are fully prepared and supported
- **Transitional workplace training packages** to be developed to ensure CYP are fully supported
- A **council based supported internship offer and apprenticeships** for young people with SEND will be developed
- Development of **targeted training** linked to writing for CYP with SEND
- To **address the shortfall in attainment and progress** at KS4 for CYP at SEN support and with an EHCP compared to North East and National Data

When we get this right, it looks like:

- CYP have a **clear pathway** to achieving their goals and know who will help them on this journey.
- **All CYP with SEND feel they are in the right place** - happy, included, heard, valued and trusted by those around them
- All CYP have a **sense of achievement** within **realistic expectations**
- All CYP are **supported by those who know them best** to eliminate barriers and achieve their own potential
- All CYP with SEND are **guided onto clear and flexible pathways** of support built to meet their needs
- All CYP are **supported on pathways to reduce anxiety and build confidence**
- Where multiple partnerships are involved, **solutions are swiftly and effectively implemented** to support Delivering Better Outcomes

Who have we consulted with?

- Parents and Carers
- Children and Young People
- School Leaders
- Teams across Education
- Teams Across Health
- Teams across Social Care



Acronyms

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ARMS	Additionally Resourced Mainstream School
ASC	Autistic Spectrum
CYP	Children and Young People
DCS	Director of Children's Services
EHCP	Education Health and Care Plan
EYAIT	Early Years Assessment and Intervention Team
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
LDD	Learning Disability/Difficulty
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulties
PCF	Parent Carer Forum
Parent/Parental	This term includes Carers
SALT	Speech and Language

SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SENDSCO	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator
SEMH	Social Emotional and Mental Health
SLCN	Speech Language and Communication Needs
SLCN	Speech Language and Communication Needs
SpLD	Specific Learning Difficulty
STAMP	Supporting Treatment and Appropriate Medication in Paediatrics
STOMP	Stopping The Over Medication of Children and Young People

Next Steps

- Public consultation across February followed by analysis of findings
- Final amendments made early March, followed by publication on website

Currently in development, and starting to report into SEND board -

- Project plan with 4 key priority owners
- Working parties/workstreams/actions

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