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# Halton SEND Sufficiency Strategy Phase Two: 2025-2030



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**NHS**  
Cheshire and Merseyside



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## 1. Foreword

Welcome to Phase Two of our SEND Sufficiency Strategy. We started Phase One of our sufficiency planning work in 2022 with Phase Two being implemented from 2025. With something as complex and evolving as SEND sufficiency planning, the phased approach enabled a manageable implementation allowing focus on priority actions at that time and allowed us to adjust and scale up in a more informed way. It also took into consideration that SEND needs and population trends can shift and this gives us time to monitor impact, reassess data and allowed flexibility to adapt to new challenges or opportunities. This phased approach also assisted resource management i.e. financial and staffing resources, secure additional funding (e.g. from DfE or local budgets) between phases and to build capacity gradually across schools and services. Learning from Phase One has informed Phase Two.

This Phase Two Sufficiency Strategy continues our work to ensure inclusion and high standards of achievement for Halton's children and young people with SEND, it will continue to improve, shape, further develop and forecast our future SEND needs/provision across the Borough to ensure that all children and young people in Halton can access the right educational provision at the right time and in the right place, across all stages of their education.

This Strategy and its accompanying action plan were developed through co-production, with active engagement from key stakeholders, It has been informed by robust analysis of SEND datasets allowing robust forecasting of future educational needs and to ensure that future Education, Health and Care Plans offer good value for money across the borough, it should be read alongside the following key documents:

Data and intelligence has been drawn together from across the system to provide the most accurate possible picture of the current supply and demand of specialist education placements.

- Halton Children and Young People's Partnership Plan
- Halton SEND Strategy
- Halton Education Strategy (under development)
- Halton Alternative Provision Strategy
- Joint Commissioning Strategy
- Childcare Sufficiency Assessment





## 2. Phase One Achievements

In delivering Phase One of our SEND Sufficiency Strategy, Halton have successfully achieved the following:

- Secured £1m grant funding via the Department of Education under the 'Delivering Better Value' (DBV) programme to build resilience across all educational settings to support and include learners with Social, Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) Needs.
- Added 36 new specialist secondary SEMH places at The Raise Academy for academic year 2024/5, with a further 12 places scheduled for 2025/26, which will provide 48 places.

Following the initial announcement of the High Needs Provision Capital Funding allocation, SEND colleagues engaged with primary, secondary, and special schools across Halton to identify priorities for expanding SEND provision, guided by the SEND Sufficiency Strategy at the time. This consultation led to a series of capital projects across mainstream and special schools, summarised as follows:



### Special School Enhancements

- **Cavendish:** Two new classrooms for pupils with SLD, PMLD, and ASC (with SLC).
- **Brookfields at Hallwood Park:** 40-place satellite provision via 4 new classrooms for pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties and ASD.
- **Ashley:** Plans approved for a four classroom extension for circa 40 pupils with ASC, due to be open September 2026".
- **All Special Schools:** Capacity assessments completed to explore future expansion.



### Mainstream Primary School Resource Provisions

- **Astmoor:** 8-place KS1 and 8-place KS2 SEMH provisions.
- **Kingsway:** 10-place KS1 and 9-place KS2 ASC provisions.
- **Oakfield:** 10-place KS1 and 10-place KS2 SLCN provisions.
- **St Basil's:** Early Years/KS1 Assessment and Reception/KS1 SEN Resource Provisions.
- **The Brow:** Suitability improvements to existing provision.
- **Victoria Road:** 8-place KS1 and 8-place KS2 SEMH provisions.
- **Westfield:** 8-place KS1 and 8-place KS2 SLCN provisions.
- **Woodside:** 8 place KS1 SEMH provision (KS2 already in place).



### Mainstream Secondary School Resource Provisions

- **Saints Peter & Paul:** 8-place KS3 and 8-place KS4 ASC units.



The above capital works were funded from circa £5.9M High Needs Provision Capital Allocation awarded to Halton by the Department for Education.

**Having successfully achieved all of the above, we are now ready to progress to Phase Two - SEND Sufficiency Strategy**

### 3. Legislative Context

It is important to remind ourselves of the legislative guidance and regulations that that we are required to comply with. Halton Borough Council has a statutory duty under Section 14 of the Education Act (1996) to ensure there are enough school places for all children in the borough. This responsibility spans from early years and childcare through to mainstream education up to age 19 and includes provision for children and young people with SEND up to age 25.

The Government's vision for children and young people with SEND is the same as for all children and young people - that they achieve well and lead happy and fulfilled lives. The [Children and Families Act 2014](#) places important statutory responsibilities on local authorities for supporting children and young people. This is a vital role that LAs retain in our increasingly school-led education system and one that requires long-term strategic planning, informed by detailed local knowledge enhanced through consultation with parents and carers, and good relationships with local schools. LAs must ensure there are sufficient good school places for all pupils, including those with SEND.

The [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#) (2015) also place further responsibilities on local authorities, by emphasising that every child deserves an education that meets their specific needs, encourages high standards, and supports them in reaching their full potential.

Significant reforms to childcare removes barriers to work for nearly half a million parents with a child under 3 in England not working due to caring responsibilities, reducing discrimination against women, and benefitting the wider economy in the process. The funded hours sit alongside the existing funded hours: 15 hours for the most disadvantaged 2 year olds, universal 15 hours for all 3 and 4 year olds and the extended 30 hours for eligible 3 and 4 year olds. The funded hours will be introduced in phases and is dependent on the parent/carer meeting eligibility criteria. [National Wraparound Childcare Programme Handbook](#)

Across England and Wales there is a growing SEND Sufficiency Challenge. Over the past decade, the number of EHCPs have more than doubled and the supply of specialist placements is vastly outstripped by the number of families whose child is assessed as needing one. This is in turn placing vast financial pressures on Local Authorities who are required to pay much higher fees to fulfil their statutory duties often at the direction of tribunals. As it stands, SEND represents a genuine existential threat to the financial sustainability of local government.

Meanwhile, many local schools willing to work with SEND children are not able to access additional resources they require to meet their needs appropriately. Regrettably, the SEND system reforms introduced over a decade ago have not resulted in improved outcomes or employment opportunities for many SEND children.

The County Councils Network (CCN) and Local Government Association (LGA) commissioned the Isos Partnership to produce an independent report, [Towards an effective and financially sustainable approach to SEND in England](#). The report takes a holistic overview of the widespread and systemic challenges within the SEND system, many of which are linked to sufficiency. This Strategy has also been informed by those key findings/recommendations.

## 4. Halton: Where we are now

### Population/Cohorts

**66**

State-funded schools in Halton including

\*one all-through school



**3** Nursery



**50\*** Primary



**8\*** Secondary



**5** Special



**1** Pupil Referral Unit

**18,463**

pupils  
Being educated in  
Halton's state-funded  
schools, of which  
**491 are in Special Schools**  
January Pupil Census 2024-25



Halton has a population of  
**38,461**  
children and  
young people  
aged 0-25 years  
Office of National Statistics 2024



In Halton's state-funded schools **1,107**  
children and young people have an EHCP  
and **2,938** children and young people  
with SEN Support are educated  
Special Educational Needs in England 2024



Approximately **1712**  
children and  
young people  
with an EHCP  
across the 0-25  
age range SEN2 2025



In Halton **89.4%** of 16-17 olds  
participate in education and training  
**5.4%** of 16-17 year olds  
undertake an apprenticeship  
NCCIS Local Authority monthly returns  
February 2025



A greater proportion of young people in  
Halton (**10.6%**) aged 16-17 years old  
are not participating in either education or  
training, which is higher than both the  
national and regional average  
NCCIS Local Authority monthly returns  
February 2025



An increasing proportion of children and  
young people with EHCPs are educated  
in mainstream schools, up to  
**41.9%** in 2023-24  
Education, Health and Care Plan  
in England 2024



**99%**

of Halton children are offered  
their first choice Secondary  
school place  
School place preference data return 2025

In the past year, an additional  
**166** special places have  
been delivered within Special  
schools and Resource Provision in  
Halton



Halton was awarded **£1m** grant funding  
from the Department for Education (DfE) to  
implement the agreed 'Delivering Better  
Value' (DBV) SEND improvement plans to  
build resilience across all educational settings  
DfE, DBV Programme

## Education Provision



\*Includes one all-through school

Halton's current number of commissioned places in resource provision and maintained special schools is 757. This is made of 30 resource provision and units (across 13 primary and 2 secondary schools); and 5 special schools. However, the current specialist places needed is 893, leaving Halton with a difference of 136 places. Currently, the difference is being covered through Non-Maintained Independent Special Schools (NMIS) Out of Borough placements.



## Data

Data and intelligence has been drawn together from across the system to provide the most accurate possible picture of the current supply and demand of specialist education placements.

Number of statements of SEN/EHC plans, 2017 to 2024									
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Halton (H)	599	688	771	904	1,034	1,189	1,319	1,524	1712*
England (E)	287,290	319,819	353,995	390,109	430,697	473,255	517,026	575,963	**
NWR	38,465	42,711	47,353	52,875	58,455	64,506	71,970	82,819	**
SN10	11,487	12,661	14,146	15,322	16,212	17,227	18,938	20,947	**
LCR	7,215	8,001	9,108	10,852	12,348	13,735	16,274	18,757	**

Nationally, Halton ranks 36th in terms of EHCP issuance rates among all local authorities in England. The demand for places is particularly strong for children with autism, speech language and communication needs or SEMH. This plan explores how Halton could meet this increasing demand.

### Breakdown by primary needs and key stages for each year starting from 2024/25

Specialist Provision (Resource Provision, specialist setting and EOTAS)													
Key Stage	ASD	HI	MLD	MSI	OTH	PD	PMLD	SEMH	SLCN	SLD	SPLD	VI	Total
Reception	19	0	8	0	0	0	1	2	13	0	0	0	43
KS1	57	0	1	1	0	1	0	4	60	1	0	1	126
KS2	86	5	9	1	1	11	0	44	61	8	1	2	229
KS3	74	2	13	0	0	4	1	52	69	1	1	2	219
KS4	60	3	19	0	0	6	1	63	32	3	1	1	189
KS5	42	2	4	0	0	3	1	12	9	1	0	1	75
Post-NC	7	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>893</b>
Mainstream (Excluding Resource Provision)													
Key Stage	ASD	HI	MLD	MSI	OTH	PD	PMLD	SEMH	SLCN	SLD	SPLD	VI	Total
Early year (Reception Inclusive)	18	0	23	1	0	1	0	3	35	0	0	0	81
KS1	22	1	5	0	3	2	0	8	35	0	0	0	76
KS2	34	3	26	1	0	9	0	57	43	3	2	0	178
KS3	32	2	13	2	2	4	0	44	31	0	5	2	137
KS4	16	3	12	0	1	0	0	26	14	0	3	0	75
KS5	37	3	8	0	1	11	0	37	20	2	2	1	122
Post-NC	23	1	7	0	0	2	0	4	6	0	0	0	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>712</b>
PRU(The Bridge)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	12
Others (Except EOTAS)	6	3	4	0	0	0	0	20	6	0	1	0	40
NEET	10	0	2	0	1	1	0	38	2	0	0	1	55
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1712</b>

Nationally, spending on high needs has continued to rise, with High Needs Block allocations now exceeding previous expenditure levels. In Halton, 38% of this funding is directed toward special school places and top-up support for children and young people with EHCPs. This financial pressure is mirrored across local authorities, and despite a modest budget increase this year, both local and national forecasts indicate that the net deficit is expected to grow over the next three to four years.

The data tells us that in recent years there has been rapid growth in the demand for specialist education placements. Increasingly, more placements are being made in education settings outside of the Borough which include a combination of specialist resource provisions, special schools and on independent, non-maintained special schools (NMISS), these settings are usually far from a child's home and extremely costly.

### SEND in Halton's Schools – EHCPs and SEN Support



### Breakdown of education placements costs, January 2025

Types of Placement	Primary	Secondary	Post 16	Post 19
Number in mainstream	488	238		
Average yearly cost per pupil, Including Element 1, 2 & 3	£14,195	£5,578		
Number in maintained special	176	262		
Average yearly cost per pupil, Including Element 1, 2 & 3	£15,296	£20,470		
Number in maintained special (Sixth Form/Post 16)			51	
Number in independent (NMISS)	27	98	11	
Average yearly cost per pupil	£69,936	£63,319	£72,643	
Number in mainstream Further Education Institutions			122	43
Average yearly cost per student Elements 2 & 3			£11,753	£12,963
Number in Post 16-19 Independent Specialist Provision (Funded by ESFA)			6	11
Average yearly cost per student Elements 2 & 3			£41,780	£48,429



## Funding

### How is SEND Provision funded?

All pupils/students attract an amount of funding (typically around £5,500 per pupil/ student); schools and colleges are funded to provide additional support costing up to £6,000 from their core funding.

c.£5.5k Up to £6k

Where pupils/students require additional support costing over £6,000, mainstream schools and colleges will apply to the Local Authority for top-up funding from their high needs budget. This may run alongside an EHC assessment but does not have to.

c.£5.5k £6k Top-up

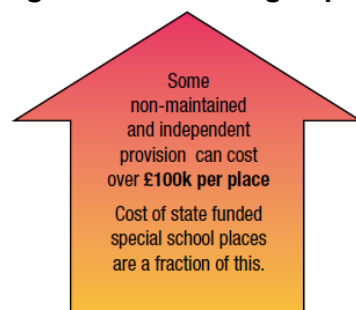
Pupils/students will only be placed in specialist provision (e.g. special schools) if they have complex needs. Special schools receive £10,000 per place funding (£4,000 + £6,000). Specialist colleges receive slightly more per place. The Local Authority determines how much top-up funding is needed.

c.£10k per place Top-up

Halton has received circa £7,189,039 High Needs Provision Capital Allocation Funding from the Department for Education. For the period April 2021 to April 2024 it received £5,991,967, which allowed for the completion/progression of the capital works described under Phase One. The anticipated balance, together with a further allocation from the DfE in April 2025 of £1,197,073 will fund the Phase Two capital works.

Expenditure has supported new and/or additional provision in both mainstream and special schools. Any capital projects agreed will be funded through High Needs Provision Capital funding. This will be subject to capital funding being agreed over the period of the Strategy. It is expected that there will be revenue savings as a result of the delivery of the SEND Sufficiency Strategy based on the difference in unit costs between in-Borough provision, within our own schools, and independent sector provision. The savings will continue to reduce, pressures on the Dedicated Schools Grant.

### High Needs Funding Implications for Non-Maintained Independent Special Schools (NMISS) Expenditure



The average costs are based on analysis carried out in 2017. These figures have continued to increase in the independent sector.

Due to capacity pressures within Halton provision, the Local Authority has found itself in a position where it has had to place children in NMISS. As of January 2025, there were 136 children and young people in Halton who attended registered Non-maintained independent special schools.

The total cost for these placements as of January 2025 was circa £8.9m. This equates to an average cost of circa £65,386.82 per pupil placement. This can be compared to the average placement costs for children and young people across other educational settings detailed below.

The number of children and young people in independent placements in January 2024 is 8.0% of our overall number of EHCPs. This is a slight decrease from January 2023 at 8.2% and January 2022 at 9.0%. In January 2024, the regional average was 5.23% and nationally 5.17%.

## 5. Where we will be 2029/2030

Detailed forecasting enables us to track growth trends across all types of SEND, age ranges, and educational sectors. One of the most significant insights is the projected increase in the number of children and young people with EHCPs.

### Projection – Number EHCP by Primary Needs and Key Stages (2029/30)

Specialist Provision (Resource Bases, specialist settings and EOTAS)														Notes		
Key Stage	ASD	HI	MLD	MSI	OTH	PD	PML D	SEM H	SLC N	SLD	SPLD	VI	Projected 2029-30 TOTAL		2024-25 TOTAL	Change
Early Years	35	0	15	0	0	0	2	4	24	0	0	0	80	43	37	Large increase to EYS and KS1 requests from previous 5 years
KS1	92	0	2	2	0	2	0	7	97	2	0	2	206	126	80	
KS2	139	8	15	2	2	18	0	72	98	13	2	3	372	229	143	
KS3	111	3	20	0	0	6	2	79	104	2	2	3	332	219	113	
KS4	91	5	29	0	0	9	2	96	49	5	2	2	290	189	101	
KS5	42	2	4	0	0	3	1	12	9	1	0	1	75	75	0	Steady KS4 for 5 years but following years will increase Steady for 5 years but following years will increase
Post-NC	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	12	-10	
Specialist Total	512	18	85	4	2	38	7	270	381	23	6	11	1357	893	464	A 52% overall increase in the numbers of Plans accessing specialist provision is expected by 2029-30
Mainstream Provision (Ecludes resource bases)																
Early Years	31	0	39	2	0	2	0	5	61	0	0	0	140	81	59	Steady KS4 for 5 years but following years will increase Steady for 5 years but following years will increase
KS1	36	2	8	0	5	3	0	13	57	0	0	0	124	76	48	
KS2	56	5	43	2	0	15	0	93	70	5	3	0	292	178	114	
KS3	50	3	20	3	3	6	0	69	48	0	8	3	213	137	76	
KS4	23	4	18	0	1	0	0	38	20	0	4	0	108	75	33	
KS5	37	3	8	0	1	11	0	37	20	2	2	1	122	122	0	Steady KS4 for 5 years but following years will increase Steady for 5 years but following years will increase
Post-NC	7	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	13	43	-30	
Mainstream Total	240	17	138	7	10	38	0	256	278	7	17	4	1012	712	300	A 42% overall increase in the number of Plans accessing mainstream provision is expected by 2029-30
Other provision (excluding EOTAS)																
PRU (The bridge)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	17	0	0	0	0	18	12	6	It is difficult to project numbers for these children as the placement type is specific to each child's individual case
Other	6	3	4	0	0	0	0	20	6	0	1	0	40	40	0	
NEET	10	0	2	0	1	1	0	38	2	0	0	1	55	55	0	
Other Total	16	3	7	0	1	1	0	75	8	0	1	1	113	107	6	An overall increase in EHC Plans of almost 45% is expected by 2029-30, with the majority being within the early years and primary key stages. This will then follow through to future years, seeing projected increases within KS3, KS4 and KS5.
TOTAL EHC Plans	768	38	230	11	13	77	7	601	667	30	24	16	2482	1712	770	

#### Forecasting increase by Primary Need

##### Main considerations

ASD will increase by 41%

MLD will increase by 48%

SEMH will increase by 40%

SLCN will increase by 53%

The number of children with EHCPs funded by the LA will rise from 1712 in 2023/24 to 2482 by 2029/30, an increase of 770.

The majority of placements for children with an EHCP in Halton are in mainstream schools and academies. Key factors have been identified as:

1. Increased younger cohort, driving growth
2. Increased primary need of SLCN, MLD and SEMH
3. Increased EHCP's being issued
4. Suitable provision or places to meet need and demand

Projections should be treated with caution. The forecasts will be kept under regular review to factor in the prevailing situations and factors at the time

## 6. What will we need? What we will do, and why.

This strategy aims to ensure more children and young people with SEND can be educated in appropriate provision close to home, it emphasises the need to continue to support mainstream settings to help them meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. We will procure provision that offers value for money, secure provision when and where it is needed and commission a range of provision that is robust; resilient; flexible; and creative; and which matches the range of needs of our pupils. Wherever possible we will aim is to support children within a mainstream setting.

### Summary of Specialist Provision, Current and Future Places Required

Year	No. of places Required	Current Commissioned Places	Additional Specialist Places
2024/25	996	893	103
2025/26	1109	893	216
2026/27	1206	893	313
2027/28	1290	893	397
2028/29	1353	893	460
2029/30	1425	893	532

There is a need to increase actual capacity. With any available balance from the previous High Needs Provision Capital Allocation, together with the £1,197,073 allocation awarded earlier this year, there is likely to be circa £1.7m available to progress with Phase Two of the SEND Sufficiency Strategy. The Local Authority will invite expressions of interest from schools for the development of SEN units or Specially Resourced Provisions to meet currently and projected SEND need.

### Additional Places Required in Mainstream Schools

Key Stage	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	Total
Early Years/Reception	13	15	11	10	10	9	68
KS1	9	10	10	9	6	4	48
KS2	21	23	24	19	14	12	113
KS3	14	16	12	10	11	9	72
KS4	8	9	7	6	6	0	36
Post 16	2	2	0	1	0	1	6
Yealy Total	67	75	64	55	47	35	343
Cumulative Total	67	142	206	261	308	343	

We will work with schools to grow so that they can accept the rise in children and young people with SLCN, MLD and SEMH. For the duration of this strategy we will consider projects such as:

- Extensions and remodelling
- Creation of satellite provision, or relocation
- De-amalgamation of sites
- Development of SEN units and Specially Resourced Provision at mainstream sites
- Age range change
- Change of designation

We are not only developing our physical provision, we are also concentrating on developing capacity and resources to improve confidence and competence across the whole system. Whilst there is undoubtedly a need to increase provision/places, there are a range of other mechanisms that can be targeted. By improving support within early years and mainstream schools we can reduce the need for specialist provision. Running through all of this will be our commitment to develop the workforce to enable these changes to be successfully achieved.

Early identification, diagnosis and receiving early help in SEND provides the opportunity to address emerging difficulties before they escalate i.e. suspensions, exclusions, specialist provision, alternative provision, electively home educated any of which may ultimately lead to an EHCP which could perhaps have been avoided had the right support been available and provided at the right time. By providing a focus on this area, it can reduce the number of EHCP's issued in the long term and the number of specialist places required in the future.



As part of our graduated model for families, Halton's family hub network includes seven local family hubs (3 in Runcorn, 4 in Widnes), along with online resources and community services which support children and families across the borough. The network is a one-stop shop, offering advice and support from a range of partners to families in Halton with children aged 0-19 (25 if the child has SEND). The Hub's provide support to parents and carers so they are able to nurture their babies and children, improving health and education outcomes for all. We will continue to grow and develop the Family Hubs.



Designated Top-Up Funding is a critical part of the High Needs Block within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in England. It provides additional, individually targeted financial support for pupils with complex SEND, especially when their needs exceed what schools can cover through their core budgets. It bridges the gap between standard provision and complex needs, supports inclusion by enabling CYP to remain in mainstream settings, and empowers schools to tailor support without needing immediate specialist placement. Typically it pays for additional support and resources that go beyond what a mainstream school is expected to provide from its core budget. We will take stock of its usage and review to ensure that it supports our sufficiency planning.



One such initiative will be the development of Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision (OAIP) guidance. The majority of children are supported via SEND support without the need for an EHCP. We will develop guidance to strengthen the support process for children and education provision in Halton. The term 'ordinarily available' is deliberately used, we want the provision to be ordinarily available in every education setting so this becomes the culture of the ordinary in Halton. It is a powerful step toward embedding inclusive practices across all education settings in Halton. By making support for children with SEND part of the everyday culture, we're aiming to create environments where every child can thrive, regardless of their needs. The development of guidance around OAIP will help standardise and strengthen SEND support across all settings.



Our Speech and Language provision is under review with a new contract and model being developed. Children with Speech, Language and Communication (SLCN) needs experience challenges in: Literacy: Social interaction: Emotional wellbeing and Academic achievement. SLCN is a known risk factor for poor life chances, especially when not identified early, it impacts on the need for other specialist support and their long term outcomes.

Our SEND School Transport Policy is under review, and being able to provide local education provision will result in a reduction in the numbers of pupils with SEND travelling long distances and impacting on travel time to reach school, it will also reduce public expenditure on transport. It will support children and young people to gain the skill needed to travel independently.

A new, updated Alternative Provision (AP) Strategy will ensure the sufficiency of specialist/AP provision to support students who are unable to attend mainstream education. This will aim to support reintegration, to help students return to inclusive mainstream education when possible and reduce reliance on high cost out of borough AP provision, reducing budget pressure on High Needs Budget.

Where some parents and carers feel that current provision does not always meet their child's needs, some families opt for elective home education as a last resort. By increasing inclusive and supportive provision it is anticipated that it will lead to a reduction in the numbers being electively home educated. Children and young people will be visible to professionals and be able to access their peer group and learn to communicate, collaborate, and build friendships.



In the context of SEND sufficiency, Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) is a critical strategic priority that ensures Halton has the right services, pathways, and support in place for young people with SEND to transition successfully into adult life.

We want to raise aspirations and expectations and encourage thinking about what the future might look like for children from an early age.

We will re-establish our Preparing for Adulthood Strategic Board, with collaborative working across relevant services to provide consistent transition planning, joint commission services where appropriate and source, secure and increase the number of appropriate placements for young people 16 – 25 with SEND in Halton.

Cavendish Connect Cafe

SEND sufficiency refers to our ability to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND through appropriate provision, PfA is a core component of this, especially for those aged 14–25

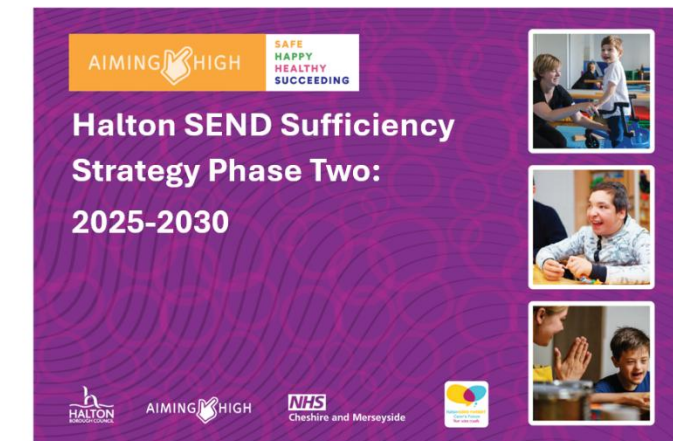
## 7. Priorities

PRIORITY ISSUES	PRIORITY ISSUES
1 Safely reduce the number of children needing to be looked after by the Local Authority and improve safeguarding.	6 Improve attendance at school, college and in Early Years settings including sufficiency of places.
2 Improve the stability of care placements.	7 Improve professional practice including the quality of children and families social work.
3 Improve SEND provision.	8 Reduce childhood obesity.
4 Increase number of children attending schools graded good or outstanding and improve attainment outcomes at all Key Stages.	9 Improve access to positive opportunities.
5 Improve pastoral and behaviour support and reduce the need for children to be excluded.	10 Improve Mental Health provision.
	11 Strengthen the voice of children and young people.
	12 Improve pathways into meaningful employment with training and both Further and Higher Education.



[Halton Children Young People's Partnership Plan 2024-27](#), is aimed at communicating our agreed vision for all those that support children and young people in Halton. It provides an analysis of what the challenges are that our community faces, what we, as a community, feel should be the top priorities that we all need to work on together. It is therefore aimed at supporting leaders of public services, politicians, government, schools, colleges, early years settings and governors so that together we can all pull in a common direction.

The priorities we've identified through the SEND Sufficiency Strategy will complement and reinforce those within the Children and Young People Plan, ensuring coherence across our strategic frameworks



## SEND Sufficiency Priorities

1

Expanding SEND provision in Mainstream schools (Resource Provision)

2

Early Years and Early Intervention

3

Reviewing our Designated Top Up (DTUF) Funding

4

Preparing for Adulthood

## 8. Governance

The Halton SEND Strategic Improvement Board oversees the broader SEND Strategy and Improvement Plans and will ensure that the Sufficiency Plan remains responsive to changing needs. Effective governance involves collaboration between the Council, health services, education providers, and parent/carer forums. Our governance framework is designed to provide strategic oversight, accountability, and collaborative decision-making across all relevant stakeholders. Partnership working and coproduction will remain vital for the success of this Strategy.

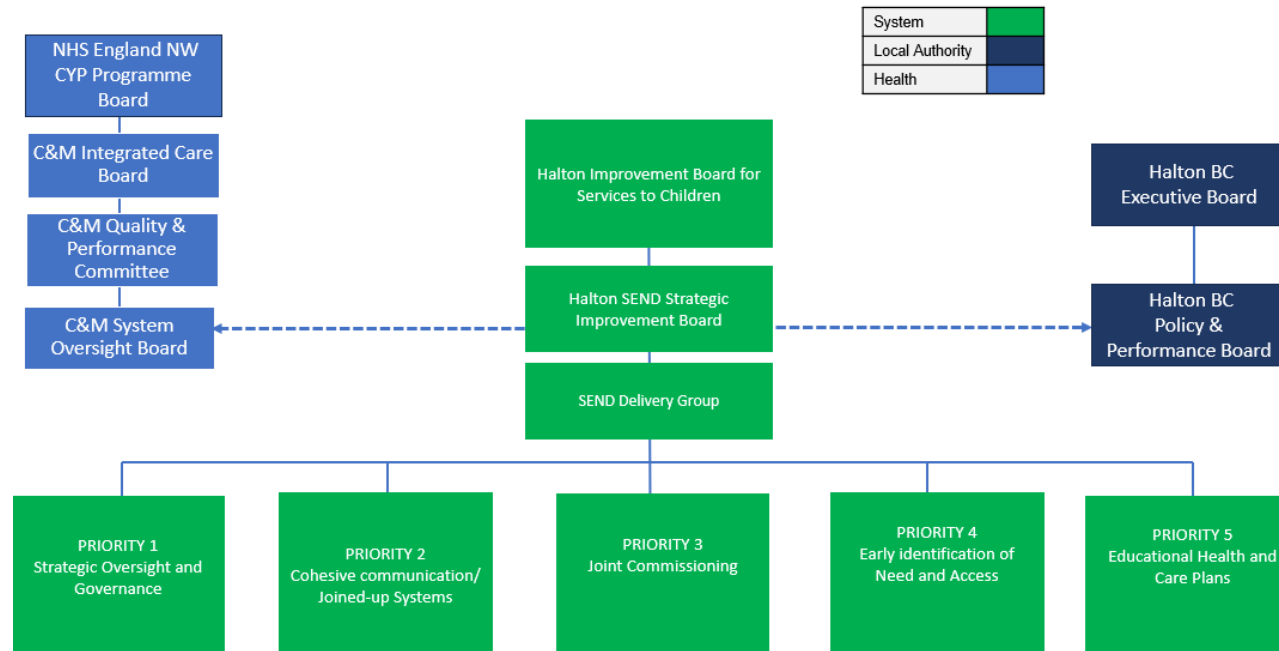
The Halton SEND Strategic Improvement Board will ensure that the strategy remains responsive to local needs, is informed by data and lived experience, and aligns with the broader objectives of the SEND Strategy and the Children and Young People Plan.

This strategy will be reviewed annually and again this will be overseen by Halton SEND Strategic Improvement Board, it will also work in conjunction with the Joint Commissioning Strategy and the Alternative Provision Strategy.

Progress against the strategy will be tracked through a set of agreed KPIs and performance monitoring data which will be reported via the scorecard to the Halton SEND Strategic Improvement Board. It will also be measured by reporting on financial costings.

Governing bodies, trustees of schools and academies and school forums will play a key role in ensuring SEND provision is sufficient and inclusive.

### Halton SEND Improvement Accountability & Reporting Governance



## Appendix 1 Action Plan

### Priority 1 – Expanding SEND Provision in Mainstream Schools SEN units and Specially Resourced Provisions

Objective	Action to reach Objective	Expected outcome – measuring success
Increase the number of SEN units and Specially Resourced Provisions across Early Years, Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and Special Schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write to schools to invite them to complete an expression of interest in opening a SEN unit or Specially Resourced Provision.</li> <li>Visits to schools to access work required to adapt current buildings to host a SEN unit or Specially Resourced Provision.</li> <li>Review expressions of interest and identify schools that meet the criteria for having a SEN unit of Specially Resourced Provision on site</li> <li>Progress selected schools and their expressions of interest through EIP Heads of Service, Children's Services SLT, Chief Officers Management Team and Executive Board</li> <li>Inform schools that they have been successful and allow them to tender and finalise quotes</li> <li>Schools to progress with building work</li> <li>Support schools with recruitment of specialist teachers and support staff if requested</li> <li>Establish a working panel for placement of children with EHCP's in SEN units and Specially Resourced Provisions</li> <li>Quality Assure curriculum of SEN units and Specially Resourced Provisions</li> <li>Placement of appropriate EHCP children via 'panel' into SEN units and Specially Resourced Provisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will submit their expressions of interest and engage in further collaboration.</li> <li>Schools will know what adaptations they will need to make to host a SEN unit or Specially Resourced Provision.</li> <li>Identify the expressions of interest that meet the criteria and inform all schools if they have been successful at this point.</li> <li>All relevant boards will approve the expressions of interest based on the criteria the schools have met and the available provision that can be adapted.</li> <li>Schools will finalise their quotes in line with the approximate funding they will receive</li> <li>Buildings and outdoor spaces will be adapted and meet expected standards for SEN units and Specially Resourced Provisions.</li> <li>Recruitment of appropriately qualified and trained staff with appropriate experience.</li> <li>Appoint appropriate professionals to oversee the panel and placement into SEN units and Specially Resourced provisions</li> <li>The curriculum will be appropriate to needs of the children and will be planned for the first half term.</li> <li>Panel will agree the first placement of EHCP children in the SEN units and Specially Resourced Provisions for September 2026.</li> </ul>



## Priority 2 – Early Years and Early Intervention

Objective	Action to reach Objective	Expected outcome- measuring success
Reduce the demand for special school places. It is important that children are assessed as early as possible so that robust packages for support can be put in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit 6 Education Support Practitioners to join our Virtual School and Early Help Team</li> <li>Recruit 3 Early Interventions Officers</li> <li>Continue to embed the Thrive approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They will work closely with schools, families, and partner agencies to identify and address barriers to learning and wellbeing. They will provide timely, targeted support that helps children and young people stay engaged in education and achieve positive outcomes reducing exclusions and non-attendance.</li> <li>Reduction in financial spend (Invest to save)</li> </ul>
SALT – effective timely support at the right time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New contract and model established</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduced suspensions, exclusions and increased attendance.</li> <li>Improved health outcomes</li> <li>Reduced level INMISS and EOTAS</li> <li>Higher level of attainment</li> <li>Reduction in financial spend, (Invest to save)</li> </ul>
Neurodiversity Pathway		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduced suspensions, exclusions and increased attendance.</li> <li>Improved health outcomes</li> <li>Reduced level INMISS and EOTAS</li> <li>Higher level of attainment</li> <li>Reduction in financial spend (Invest to save)</li> </ul>

### Priority 3 – Reviewing Designated Top Up Funding

Objective	Action to reach Objective	Expected outcome – measuring success
Develop Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision (OAIP) Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult with all stakeholders (0-25)</li> <li>Develop Draft</li> <li>Share, consult amend to finalise</li> <li>Launch guidance in SEND Conference in November 2025</li> <li>Place on the Halton Local Offer</li> <li>EHCP Panel Monitor impact – EHCP requests, to evidence usage</li> <li>Associate existing KPI's to measure impact (attendance, suspensions, exclusions)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standardises and strengthens SEND support across all settings.</li> <li>Provides clear expectations and practical strategies for teachers, SENCOs, and support staff.</li> <li>Inclusive teaching strategies and reasonable adjustments embedded in everyday practice.</li> <li>Supports all children and young people, including those with SEND by using resources already available to them.</li> <li>It supports children and young people to attend, engage, and thrive in mainstream settings without needing an EHCP</li> <li>Will facilitate early identification of needs of the CYP</li> <li>Reduced suspensions, exclusions and increased attendance.</li> <li>Improved health outcomes</li> <li>Reduced level INMISS and EOTAS</li> <li>Higher level of attainment</li> <li>Reduction in financial spend (Invest to save)</li> </ul>

#### Priority 4 – Preparing for Adulthood

Objective	Action to reach Objective	Expected outcome – measuring success
Ensure EHCP in Yr 9 are reviewed and fit for purpose to support transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality Assurance and EHCP Reviewing Officer to be appointed</li> <li>Develop data dashboard to monitor impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More children in mainstream settings</li> <li>Reduced suspensions, exclusions and increased attendance.</li> <li>Improved health outcomes</li> <li>Reduced level INMISS and EOTAS</li> <li>Higher level of attainment</li> <li>Reduction in financial spend (Invest to save)</li> <li>Will aid schools understanding of Early Identification and OAIP guidance</li> <li>Reduction in EHCP plans due to it no longer being required</li> </ul>
Riverside College to enrol more students on an EHCP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult with college</li> <li>Support agreed intake</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More children with an EHCP enrolled.</li> <li>Reduced suspensions, exclusions and increased attendance.</li> <li>Improved health outcomes</li> <li>Reduced level INMISS and EOTAS</li> <li>Higher level of attainment</li> <li>Reduction in financial spend (Invest to save)</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2 Glossary

Academy	A type of school. Publicly funded independent schools that are free from local authority control. freedoms include setting their own pay and conditions for staff, freedoms concerning the delivery of the curriculum, and the ability to change the length of their terms and school days.
AP	Alternative Provision Education arranged by a local authority or school for pupils of compulsory school age outside of mainstream or special schools. This might be for pupils with behaviour problems, health needs preventing school attendance or those without a school place. It may include full or part time placements in pupil referral units, AP academies, AP free schools or FE colleges; provision in hospital schools and independent schools; and other provision such as home tuition services and voluntary or private sector providers
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental health Service
DCO	Designated Clinical Officer
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan details the education, health and social care needs of a child or young person who has SEN or a disability, and also the support to be provided to a child or young person. It is written by the local authority after an EHC needs assessment of the child or young person has determined that an EHC plan is necessary.
EIP	Education, Inclusion and Provision – Department of Halton Borough Council
EOTAS	Educated other than at school
Independent School	A school that is not maintained by a local authority
INMISS	Independent Non Maintained Special School
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LD	Learning Disabilities/Difficulties
Mainstream School	State school which can meet the needs of most children
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulty
OAIP	Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision
PD	Physical Disability
PfA	Preparing for Adulthood
PMLD	Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit. Resourced or Resource Provision. - Resourced provision within mainstream schools is where pupils are either withdrawn to a resource for specialist input, or teachers from the resource deliver specialist help to the child within the classroom. A resource provision usually has a specialist focus such as hearing impairment or autism spectrum disorder.
SALT	Speech and Language Therapy
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator. In some schools and academies these may be called SENDCO
SEND	Special educational needs and disabilities
SEND Code of Practice	Code of Practice 2015 the Code outlines the working arrangements for the Children and Families Act 2014 SEND measures
SEND Local Area Inspection	Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspect local areas together to see how effectively they fulfil their responsibilities for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
SENDIASS	Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Information Advice & Support Service. Provides information and support to parents/carers whose children have special educational needs.
Short Breaks	An identified package of support to give parent/carers a break from caring. Short breaks can be overnight care for the child/young person with disabilities, daytime activities or a carer. Families may also be receiving support from the Children with Disabilities Service.



SLCN	Speech, Language & Communication Needs
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulties
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
Special School	A school which is specially organised to make special educational provision for pupils with SEN.
Strategy	The plan and actions the organisation intends to take to achieve long-term goals.
Vision	An aspirational description of what an organisation would like to achieve or accomplish in the mid-term or long-term future