

**Time and Date**

2.00 pm on Tuesday, 9th June, 2026

Place

Committee Room 3 - Council House, Earl Street, Coventry

Public business

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 10)
 - (a) To agree the Minutes from the meeting of Cabinet held on 17 March, 2026.
 - (b) Matters arising
4. **Approval of the Draft Local Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Reform Plan Setting out how Coventry Local Area Partnership will deliver the National SEND Reform** (Pages 11 - 56)

Report of the Director of Children's & Education Services

Note: In accordance with Paragraph 11.3 of Part 3E of the Constitution, Councillor R Singh, Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee, has been invited to attend the meeting for this item of business to agree the need for urgency such that call-in arrangements will not apply.

The reason for urgency being the timescales involved, as the Local SEND Reform Plan must be submitted to the Department for Education by 19 June 2026.
5. **Outstanding Issues**

There are no outstanding issues
6. **Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.**

Julie Newman, Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities, Council House, Coventry

Monday, 1 June 2026

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Michelle Salmon / Suzanne Bennett, Governance Services, Email: michelle.salmon@coventry.gov.uk / suzanne.bennett@coventry.gov.uk

Membership: Councillors N Akhtar, L Bigham, R Brown, K Caan, G Duggins (Chair), P Hetherington, AS Khan, L Kelly (Deputy Chair), J McNicholas, M Mutton

Non Voting Deputy Cabinet Members: Councillors P Akhtar, G Hayre

Non Voting Opposition Members: Councillors J Beechey, J Blundell, J Gardiner, E M Reeves)

By invitation: Councillor R Singh, Chair of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Public Access

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**Michelle Salmon / Suzanne Bennett, Governance Services,
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suzanne.bennett@coventry.gov.uk**

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held at
2.00 pm on Tuesday, 17 March 2026

Present:

Cabinet Members: Councillor G Duggins (Chair)
Councillor A S Khan (Deputy Chair)
Councillor N Akhtar
Councillor R Brown
Councillor K Caan
Councillor P Hetherton
Councillor J O'Boyle
Councillor K Sandhu
Councillor P Seaman

Non-Voting Deputy
Cabinet Members: Councillor S Agboola
Councillor P Akhtar
Councillor G Hayre
Councillor S Nazir

Non-Voting Opposition
Members: Councillor J Gardiner
Councillor E Reeves
Councillor G Ridley

Other Non-Voting
Members: Councillor R Lakha
Councillor G Lloyd

Employees (by Service):

Chief Executive Julie Nugent (Chief Executive)

Adult Services and
Housing P Fahy (Director for Care, Health and Housing)

Childrens Services and
Education R Sugars, C Webb

City Services M Adams (Director for City Services), M O'Connell

Communications Carl Holloway (Director for Policy and Communications),
N Hart

Finance and Resources B Hastie (Director for Finance and Resources)

Law and Governance O Aremu, A Chowns, J Ibbs, L Knight

Regeneration and
Economy J Hunt, D Nuttall, R Palmer, D Pipe, B Willers

Public Business

71. Declarations of Interest

Councillors N Akhtar, R Brown, K Caan, G Hayre, and G Hayre declared disclosable pecuniary interests in the matter referred to in Minute 73 below, headed “Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy 2026-31”. They left the meeting during the consideration of this matter.

72. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th February 2026 were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

73. Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy 2026-31

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities, which sought approval of the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy 2026-2031.

On the 27th October 2025, the Renters Rights Act received royal assent, with the aim of improving the experience of private renting. The Act introduces a suite of new powers for the Council that would come into force on the 1st May 2026, unpinned by new powers designated to be effective, consistent and proportionate enforcement framework. The Government has also extended councils’ powers to collect and retain revenue for future enforcement work from financial penalties against landlords who flout the rules.

In order for the Council to use these powers it must have published a policy setting out how it will implement these powers in relation to properties in the Private Rented Sector (PRS). The Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy was appended to the report and set out the Council’s strengthened approach to enforcing housing standards across the PRS and Social Housing (SH). It incorporates updated legislation, particularly the Renters’ Rights Act 2025, and aims to ensure all rented homes meet statutory minimum standards to protect residents’ health and wellbeing. The report summarised the key updates under a number of headings, including:

- Clear legal framework
- Proportionate enforcement approach
- Civil penalties framework
- Safeguarding and vulnerability
- Clear expectations for landlords and tenants
- Monitoring and review.

The Policy must be approved and published to allow the Council to implement the new powers. Once approved, the Policy would take immediate effect, enabling the Council to use the powers introduced on 27th December 2025 and prepare to use the remaining powers which have a fixed implementation dates of 1st May 2026. The Cabinet noted that during the period between the publishing of the new Policy

and 1st May 2026, the Council will need to maintain the use of existing powers prior to the introduction of the Renters Rights Act 2025 and, as such, the Council would carry out any such enforcement in accordance with the existing Policy on Enforcing Standards in Private Sector Housing 2020.

The Cabinet agreed to:

1. Consider the requirements of the Renters Rights Act 2025 and approve the proposed Coventry Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy 2026-2031
2. Authorise the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer) to accept any future monies associated with New Burdens funding and income from the PRS Database once these have been confirmed by Government.
3. Authorise the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities to amend the scheme of delegations to include any new powers and duties arising as a result of the Renters Rights Act 2025.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet recommend that the policy be reviewed by full Council for approval.

74. Coventry One Strategic Plan and Education Capital Programme 2025 - 2029

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Children and Education Services, that set out the Coventry One Strategic Plan and Education Capital Programme 2025-29.

The Cabinet noted that the report had also been considered by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee at its meeting held on 12th March 2026 (their Minute 61/25 refers). A briefing note was circulated confirming that the Committee supported the recommendations within the report had no further comments or recommendations for the Cabinet.

Under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996, the Council has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places and fair, appropriate access to education. It is the Council's role to plan, commission and organise school places in a way that raises standards and manages supply and demand.

The Coventry One Strategic Plan, which was appended to the report, sets out pupil forecasts for primary and secondary schools and Special Education Needs (SEND), across education planning areas in response to pupil cohorts across the city. It was proposed that the Strategy would be a flexible plan, which would be able to adapt to shifting mechanisms of parental preference, unforeseen changes in supply and demand of school places and future birth rates. To do this, officers regularly review school place planning, and the One Strategic Plan would be monitored and updated annually, with a presentation to Cabinet.

There is commitment through a statement of intent to collaborate and work in partnership to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people in Coventry; ensure the sustainability of Coventry schools; and to enable the Council to meet its statutory obligations. The options within the Strategic Plan have been discussed at Coventry Education Partnership meetings, which include

academy trust CEOs, headteachers and education colleagues from across the city.

The Strategy outlined within the One Strategic Plan was in line with the Department for Education (DfE) statutory requirements to:

- Spend capital funding efficiently
- Safeguard the quality of places in the system
- Utilise spare capacity in the estate where it exists.

Capital allocations to meet projected shortfalls in provision were provided by the DfE to all Local Authorities based on data provided in the annual School Capacity return (SCAP). Demand for places, minus the supply of places, is multiplied by a cost per pupil place to inform the final allocation. This return informs the DfE of the expected change in pupil numbers over the medium term, the current capacity of schools to meet those numbers and the planned changes to that capacity. Funding was also secured via S106 contributions from housing developers in response to new housing estates. The proposed programme of work was fully funded utilising existing resources as set out within the education capital programme.

From the 2021/22 academic year, there had been a large increase in the number of pupils moving into the city in-year. The impact of this in-year movement has been that more places were required in schools than originally forecast, using up spare capacity and causing sufficiency pressures in some year groups. In response, a review and update of pupil forecast methodology has taken place and additional school expansions identified. Since September 2024, in-year growth has decreased, and a range of growth expectations continue to be factored to inform forecasts and ensure sufficient supply of school places.

Since the 2021/22 academic year, bulge classes have been introduced at nine primary schools across the city in years 1 to 5. This increase in demand has also required expansions in secondary schools, particularly in years 7 and 8. These measures have helped address immediate pressures on school capacity, however, further expansion will be necessary to ensure sufficient school places are available to meet future forecast demand. Ongoing planning and funding would be essential to maintain access to quality education as the pupil population changes.

RESOLVED that, the Cabinet:

- 1. Note that there were no additional comments or recommendations from the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee.**
- 2. Authorise the programme of work outlined within the proposed Coventry One Strategic Plan for Primary, Secondary and Special Educational Needs Education as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.**
- 3. Delegate authority to the Director of Children and Education Services to agree the most appropriate procurement route for works to be delivered and awarded.**

75. **Coventry: City of Movement Strategy 2026-2031**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Care, Health and Housing, that set out the proposed Coventry: City of Movement Strategy 2026-2023.

The Cabinet noted that the report had also been considered by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee at its meeting held on 12th March 2026 (their Minute 62/25 refers). A briefing note was circulate indicating that the Committee had recommended that the Cabinet ensures that the City of Movement Strategy explicitly recognises and reflects the needs of all age groups, and that the Strategy is fully inclusive for residents of all ages.

A co-produced joint Coventry: City of Movement Strategy had been developed, led internally by the Sport, Physical Activity and Wellbeing Team. The Strategy is intended to enable the Council and its partners to progress further following the Coventry Sports Strategy 2014-2024 and the Physical Activity Framework 2019-2024, through creating a greater joined up system between health, sport, physical activity and movement, with the concept of 'movement' at its core.

It was noted that over 70 organisations across Coventry were involved in the development of the strategy alongside a survey of residents that elicited 1,398 responses, gathering insight on local people's current movement habits, the barriers preventing them from being more active and their requirements which would contribute to making Coventry a City of Movement. This input was supplemented by public health data and insights along with the findings of other relevant needs assessments (Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy and Needs Assessment and the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy) to develop the following three strategic themes:

- Active System: Connecting better
- Active People: Movement for everyone
- Active Place: A place of movement

The adoption of the Strategy will also support planning decisions and inform future S106 investments in the city, linked to key sites identified in the Coventry Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy and Playing pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy. It also enables infrastructure investment decisions to be locally led, based on the priorities identified through public consultation for natural and built environments, to make Coventry 'A Place of Movement'.

RESOLVED that, the Cabinet:

1. **Note and accept the additional recommendation from the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee to ensure that the City of Movement Strategy explicitly recognises and reflects the needs of all age groups, and that the Strategy is fully inclusive for residents of all ages.**
2. **Approve the adoption of the Coventry: City of Movement Strategy attached as Appendix 1 to the report.**
3. **Delegate authority to the Director of Care, Health and Housing, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Health and**

Sport, to take all necessary, incidental or ancillary actions deemed appropriate to proceed with the implementation of the Coventry: City of Movement Strategy.

- 4. Delegate authority to the Director of Care, Health and Housing, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport, to make variations as required to the City of Movement Strategy and associated place partnership Delivery Plan.**

76. Transport Capital Programme 2026/27

The Cabinet considered a report of the Interim Director of City Services, that set out the Highways and Transport capital programme for 2026/27.

The Coventry Transport Strategy was approved by Council in December 2022. It is a 15-year Strategy which set out plans to fundamentally change the city's transport system, including by investing in significant improvements to public transport, walking and cycling and by accelerating the transition to zero emission vehicles.

The report submitted included the details of the Highways and Transport capital programme for 2026/27, which included a £2.5m programme of Local Network Improvements, an £11.3m programme of Highway Maintenance, a £5.8m programme of Active Travel schemes and a £1.5m programme of new electric vehicle charge point installation. These programmes form part of the Council's wider commitment to deliver the changes set out in the Coventry Transport Strategy.

Funding sources for these programmes included the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS), tranche 5 of the Active Travel Fund (ATF5), the Active Travel Integrated Settlement (ATIS) and the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (LEVI).

The appendices to the report included the Local Network Improvement Programme scheme list; the description of Highways Maintenance Schemes; and the Highways Maintenance Programme scheme list.

RESOLVED that, the Cabinet:

- 1. Approve delivery of the 2026/27 programmes of Local Network Improvement schemes and Highways Maintenance schemes as set out in Appendices 1 to 3 of the report.**
- 2. Accept £4,116,382 of funding from the Active Travel Investment Scheme and £250,000 from the Walk Wheel Cycle Trust and to approve the delivery of the schemes listed in sections 2.29 to 2.31 of the report.**
- 3. Review the latest updates on various other capital schemes also to be delivered during 2026/27.**

77. **Coventry Climate Adaptation & Resilience Plan (2026 - 2030)**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director for Regeneration and Economy, that set out the Coventry Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan 2026-2030.

The report indicated that the impact of more extreme weather is being experienced both in the UK and globally, with the last year recorded as the hottest on record, and more frequent incidents of flooding and stronger storms. Coventry can expect to face further significant changes in the weather over the coming years, with an increasing incidence of extreme weather events. The Met Office projections show that the region will face warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers, with declining levels of annual rainfall leading to lower levels of water availability. It was acknowledged that this has the potential to impact on residents, businesses, services, infrastructure and the natural environment. Some of the key risks highlighted related to food security, flooding of key infrastructure, homes and businesses and the impact of reduced water supplies, alongside public health risks due to high temperatures and poor air quality.

The Council have worked with consultants and partner organisations to develop an Adaption and Resilience Plan for Coventry to better understand key risks and vulnerabilities. An action Plan has been developed in response to this and, whilst the Council has a key role to play in its implementation, a citywide partnership approach has been taken, which include key actions for partner organisations. It was recognised that not all climate risks could be mitigated and in some areas there would be a need to adapt to changes already happening to increase preparedness and impact. The report set out the findings of the Plan, which was proposed to be adopted to support future policy development and business, service and resilience planning and delivery.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet:

- 1. Approve the adoption of the Coventry Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan set out in Appendix 1 of the report, to ensure that this is a key consideration as part of Council policy development, service delivery and business continuity planning.**
- 2. Endorse that the Council continues to work in collaboration with partners (through the city's Climate Change Board), wider stakeholders, businesses and communities to support delivery of the Climate Adaptation and Resilience Action Plan. This includes seeking solutions and the necessary resources to address the identified risks from the increasing incidence from extreme weather events for the health and wellbeing of the population, the environment and the local economy.**

78. **Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

79. **Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.**

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 2.43 pm)



09 June 2026

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Equalities

Director approving submission of the report:

Director of Children's & Education Services

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Approval of the Draft Local Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Reform Plan
Setting out how Coventry Local Area Partnership will deliver the National SEND Reforms.

Is this a key decision?

Yes – the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on residents or businesses in two or more electoral wards in the City.

Executive summary:

On 23rd February 2026, the government published its Schools White Paper, articulating a comprehensive and ambitious vision for the education system. The objective is to ensure that every child and young person is afforded the opportunity to achieve and thrive. This ambition is underpinned by a substantial national investment exceeding £7 billion over the next three years, which will promote inclusive practice within mainstream schools, facilitate access to expert support (including Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, and Occupational Therapists) without the necessity of statutory assessments, and provide new school places for children and young people with special educational needs & disability (SEND) in both mainstream and special settings. Implementation of these reforms will commence from the 2026/27 financial year.

Each local area partnership is commissioned to develop and submit a Local SEND Reform Plan by the 19th June 2026, underpinned by a Local Partnership Maturity Assessment. These documents must outline proposals for improvement and consolidation of the local SEND system, prioritising inclusive practice and early intervention. The plan is designed as the central delivery and accountability framework for transforming SEND provision across

local area partnerships. It is expected that local authorities act as the system 'convener', taking the lead in bringing together Integrated Care Boards (ICBs), multi-academy trusts (MATs), schools, early years settings, health partners, and other stakeholders. The plan requires sign off from the Chief Executives of the City Council and ICB, and the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer). The Local SEND Reform Plan and Local Partnership Maturity Assessment are included at Appendices A and B.

Educational provision for pupils with SEND is funded from the High Needs Block (HNB) within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), which supports pupils with complex needs and disabilities and is used alongside local authority core (general) funding resource to meet SEND statutory duties. Due to significant national demand increase since the implementation of reforms in 2014 the national High Needs Block deficit is estimated to reach £14bn by March 2028 posing a significant financial risk to local authorities. The DfE estimated that many local authorities had deficits exceeding or close to their level of reserves as of March 26. Coventry does not have a High Needs Block deficit as of 31st March 2026.

Alongside the reforms the government have introduced the High Needs Stability Grant, which will help to address SEND financial pressures covering 90% of local authorities HNB related DSG deficits accrued up to the end of 31st March 2026 subject to each local authority securing approval of their local area's plan. Coventry will not receive an allocation of High Needs Stability Grant, due to not being in deficit. However, it is expected that our ability to access future government financial support mechanisms, should they be needed to help manage deficits accrued up to the end of 31st March 2028, will be contingent on us having an approved plan and demonstrating sufficient progress to the Department for Education (DfE). The government has confirmed that from 2028/29 future funding implications will be managed within overall government spending, so where the system is being managed effectively local authorities will not need to use general funds.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the draft Local SEND Reform Plan as attached as at Appendix 1 to this report.
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Children's and Education Services to make amendments to the Plan and submit it ahead of the deadline for submission on the 19th June 2026, following final sign off from the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer).

List of Appendices included:

The following appendices are attached to the report:

Appendix 1 – Draft Local SEND Reform Plan
Appendix 2 – Local Partnership Maturity Assessment

Background papers:

[05 - Coventry One Strategic Plan and Education Capital Programme 2025 - 2029.pdf](#)

Other useful documents

[SEND Reform: Putting Children and Young People First](#)

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Approval of the Draft Local Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Reform Plan Setting out how Coventry Local Area Partnership will deliver the National SEND Reforms.

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1. Since the reforms introduced in 2014 the national SEND system has been under sustained pressure, and this has led to overstretched services, and unsustainable financial positions. Despite these challenges, it is recognised that many local area partnerships have shown leadership and innovation, improving local services. The government's commitment is to collaborate and scale what works, investing in inclusive and sustainable systems. Each local area must take full responsibility for robust action plans that demonstrate ownership, ambition, and accountability.
- 1.2. The Local SEND Reform Plan is expected to be revised annually as reforms are rolled out over a 3-year period initially. Delivery occurs within the current statutory framework, and no implementation of policies under consultation or awaiting legislative change is required in this first iteration. The plan must build on existing foundations and lay the groundwork for reform.

- 1.3. The 3 key components / expectations of the first iteration of the reform and local plan are:

Inclusive Mainstream System: Most children and young people with SEND should thrive in mainstream settings via high-quality teaching, inclusive practice, and targeted support. Multidisciplinary professional support will be commissioned efficiently at a group level.

Specialist Support: Specialist settings continue to serve those requiring individualised approaches or curricula not available in mainstream education.

Efficient Local Delivery: Investment in health, care, and education will support joined-up, place-based provision. This includes delivery of additional support called Experts at Hand. Collaboration with ICBs will commission multi-disciplinary support across all settings, easing pressure on school transport and ensuring children access education closer to home.

- 1.4. The Department for Education (DfE) will evaluate the submitted Local SEND Reform Plans to monitor ongoing performance throughout the reform period. In instances where acute performance concerns exist, officials will apply heightened scrutiny to ensure all available actions are undertaken for effective implementation of reforms. Throughout the development and implementation of these plans, continuous support and challenge will be provided by government officials, SEND Advisers, and Financial Advisers. Regular progress updates will be required including the potential to revoke the licence to deliver SEND services in cases of persistent failure.

Coventry Context

- 1.5. In line with the national position Coventry has also seen significant demand increase over the last 10 years. The number of children and young people with Education,

Health & Care (EHC) Plans has more than doubled and currently there are over 4,000 children and young people with EHC plans.

- 1.6. Coventry's HNB DSG allocation for the 2026/27 financial year is £81.5M and expenditure is projected to be £90.6M. This projected in-year overspend will be funded from our positive DSG reserve balance (which totalled £16.1M as of 31st March 2025).
- 1.7. Despite now facing financial challenge Coventry is well-placed to deliver on the Reforms as a result of well-established partnership working in place across the local area and work that is already in place, which aligns with the government direction of travel (e.g. continued investment in specialist provision across the city – specialist schools and enhanced resource provision, in the 3rd year of a significant SEND whole city workforce strategy, expanded statutory team supported through core budget resource, and a large SEND Support Service).
- 1.8. To accompany the Reforms the DfE have made funding available in 2026/27 - 2028/29 to the wider system including an Inclusive Mainstream Fund that will be allocated directly to schools to facilitate inclusive provision (on average £19k per primary school and £39k per secondary school). The Local Authority will receive a grant of ca. £3M in 2026/27 rising to an estimated £5.2M (2027/28) and £5.9M (2028/29) to deliver on SEND Reform including Experts at Hand, which is intended to be a new route for mainstream schools to access expert advice from education and health professionals. This allocation also includes up to 20% (£600K in 2026/27) to support transformation and administration. The DfE provides High Needs Capital Funding to local authorities to support the creation of inclusion specialist bases in mainstream settings to increase local capacity, and to consider these as a central part of their local sufficiency planning. The funding is intended to increase capacity across the 0–25 age range and can also be used to expand existing special schools and improve facilities for post-16 learners with SEND.
- 1.9. Allocations are made directly to local authorities using a national formula that takes account of factors such as the number of children and young people in the area, population growth, and existing levels of need. Local authorities are responsible for determining how best to use their allocation in line with their SEND sufficiency strategy and local priorities.
- 1.10. In the 2025/26 financial year, Coventry received an allocation of £5.2M; and in the 2026/27 financial year a further allocation of £5.1M. This funding is planned to be utilised to deliver specialist bases at primary and secondary schools and to support access and suitability within mainstream schools. The One Strategic Plan for Education sets out the capital strategy, including utilising basic need capital allocations to subsidise the High Needs Capital Allocations to deliver the school SEND sufficiency requirements.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1. Submission of the Local SEND Reform plan is a government requirement, so no other options are under consideration.

- 2.2. Producing and delivering a co-produced Local Area Partnership plan is a major requirement and involves considerable additional work. This includes providing updated 3-year pupil number forecasts using revised methodology and aligning this with financial forecasts, as well as designing how we will deliver the Expert at Hand offer. This requirement has been exacerbated by short timescales between receiving the plan and guidance (9th March) and expected submission of the plan (19th June), and delays to the operational guidance (e.g. Experts at Hand operational guidance is not expected until after submission of the plan). The DfE have been very clear that despite the deadline date the plan is iterative and will continue to change over time.
- 2.3. As a result of short timescales, we will continue to work on the plan up to the submission date, and there are some areas of the plan (particularly forecasts) that have not been included as they are still under development. The plan included at appendix A sets out vision, goals and the direction of travel. Further updates and information can be provided as required.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1. The SEND Reform Plan has been developed through co-production and is grounded in an established understanding of Coventry's local SEND system. That understanding has been built over time with children and young people, parents and carers, schools and settings, and partners across education, health and care, and is reflected in the local area's SEND Self-Evaluation Framework (SEF) that is refreshed on an annual basis and our SEND Maturity Assessment (included at appendix B).
- 3.2. In addition, direct co-production activity has informed the development of the Reform Plan itself. Two workshops have been held to date, led by the Council and involving representatives from the Parent Carer Forum (PCF), education settings, the ICB, and Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust. Early drafts of the plan have also been shared electronically with stakeholders, and feedback has been used to strengthen the plan. Feedback from parents and carers has resulted in a stronger emphasis on co-production as a central theme throughout the plan and a greater focus on support for children who are not attending school full time.
- 3.3. The draft plan will now be considered through wider partnership arrangements, including the Headteachers' Inclusion Group, the Special School Group and the Specialist Base Group. Further focused workshops are also planned to test and strengthen key elements of the plan, including specific reform models such as Experts at Hand. This work will commence before the plan is finalised but will continue afterwards.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1. The SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) Partnership Board will have overall responsibility for delivery of the plan. Bringing together senior leaders from across the local area partnership, the Board will provide strategic oversight, challenge and decision-making to ensure delivery remains on track. The Board meets 6 times a year, on a half-termly basis, and will oversee progress against milestones, risks and priorities across the full programme.

- 4.2. Supporting this structure, a Reform Delivery Group will be established to maintain grip on the programme and ensure delivery is actively managed between Board meetings. The group will monitor implementation in detail, track progress against actions and milestones, identify slippage or emerging risks, and coordinate corrective action where needed. This will provide a clear line of sight from day-to-day programme management through to strategic oversight by the SEND and AP Partnership Board.
- 4.3. The plan will be implemented over a three-year period from 2026 to 2029. A first draft will be shared with Coventry's link Department for Education adviser on 19 May 2026, with the final version submitted to the Department for Education on 19 June 2026. Once agreed, progress against the plan will be reported to the Department for Education on a quarterly basis.

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Resources and Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities

5.1. Financial Implications

Alongside the White Paper and SEND Reforms consultation the government has announced some new funding streams. The Inclusive Mainstream Fund and Inclusive Early Years Fund will be allocated to education settings either directly by the DfE or via the local authority. The local authority will receive an indicative allocation of £3M in 2026/27 from the Experts at Hand (EAH) and SEND Transformation Fund. Of this at least 80% must be spent on direct delivery of EAH, no more than 10% can be spent on administration costs associated with EAH and no more than 10% can be spent on local authority transformation costs linked to SEND Reforms. Our allocation is unconfirmed in future years; however, based on overall funding at a national level it is estimated to be ca. £5.2M in 2027/28 and ca. £5.9M in 2028/29.

Unlike many local authorities Coventry does not have a High Needs Block (HNB) deficit as of 31st March 2026. However, due to significant national demand increase since the implementation of reforms in 2014 the national High Needs Block deficit is estimated to reach £14bn by March 2028 when the current statutory override mechanism will end posing a significant financial risk to local authorities. In response the government has introduced the High Needs Stability Grant which will provide funding equivalent to 90% of deficits accrued up to 31st March 2026. Coventry will not receive an allocation of High Needs Stability Grant, due to not being in deficit.

Local authorities are required to provide a range of supplementary financial information when submitting their SEND Reform Plan. This includes, but not limited to, information on HNB DSG expenditure, both historic data and expenditure projections through to 2027/28. Following our original submission this information will need to be updated quarterly. There is a risk that the projected cost of meeting the educational needs of children and young people with SEND between now and the end of 2027/28 will exceed the combined level of funding received from the DfE and our existing DSG reserve balance. Currently, the potential impact on Coventry's financial position is unclear. This is because 2027/28 High Needs Block allocations have not been published by the DfE, and whilst the government has confirmed a financial support mechanism will operate for future deficits, they have not confirmed whether funding will continue to be based on 90% consistent with High Needs Stability Grant or a

different proportion. It is expected that our ability to access any future financial support mechanisms, should they be needed, will be contingent on the Local SEND Reform Plan being approved and the DfE being satisfied with progress on an ongoing basis. In the short to medium term there is a likelihood that all or part of any future HNB deficits will need to be met from the general fund.

The government has confirmed that from 2028/29 future funding implications will be managed within overall government spending, so where the system is being managed effectively local authorities will not need to use general funds.

5.2. Legal Implications

The SEND White Paper does not immediately change the current legislative framework as defined within the Children and Families Act 2014 (CFA 2014). The White Paper set out proposals for a 12-week consultation period which is open for submissions until 18 May 2026. The legislative framework as defined within Part 3 CFA 2014 remains unchanged and in full force and the Local Authority must continue to meet its current statutory duties contained therein. Whilst amendments to the CFA 2014 are anticipated, it is unlikely they will be in force before 2028.

6. Other implications

6.1. How will this contribute to the One Coventry Plan?

The proposals make a strong contribution to the Council Plan vision of working together to improve our city and the lives of those who live, work and study here by setting out a partnership-led programme of reform for children and young people with SEND. The plan is rooted in closer working between the Council, schools, health partners, families and children and young people, with co-production, shared governance and clearer accountability at its core.

Its main contribution is to improve outcomes and tackle inequalities within our communities through earlier intervention, stronger inclusion in mainstream settings, better access to specialist support, improved attendance and participation, and a greater proportion of children and young people being supported successfully in local provision close to home. In doing so, the proposals seek to reduce inequality in educational experience and life chances for a group of children and families who often face poorer outcomes and greater barriers to support.

The proposals support the enabling priority of the Council's role as a partner, enabler and leader, with the Council acting as the convening body that brings partners together around a shared reform programme, jointly owned outcomes and a transparent governance framework. This includes stronger use of data, lived experience and joint commissioning to drive system-wide improvement rather than isolated service change.

The proposals make a supporting contribution to economic prosperity by improving children and young people's engagement in education, attendance and preparation for adulthood, which are important foundations for longer-term independence and participation in the city's economy.

The proposals also support continued financial sustainability of the Council by focusing on earlier help, stronger local capacity and better value for money. Expanding local provision and reducing reliance on high-cost non-local placements is intended to improve outcomes while reducing pressure on transport, placement and high-needs spend over time.

The proposals also make a modest contribution to climate change objectives by helping more children and young people access provision closer to home, reducing the need for longer journeys.

6.2. How is risk being managed?

The principal risks relate to workforce capacity, partner alignment and data quality, which could affect delivery of the programme and the continuity of support for children and young people if not kept under effective review. These risks will be managed through strengthened governance, clear accountability and regular oversight of performance across the partnership. No specific health and safety issues have been identified. The risks do not currently require inclusion on the corporate risk register, but this position will be kept under review as implementation progresses. From a financial perspective in the short to medium term there is a likelihood that all of part of any future High Needs Block deficits will need to be met from the general fund. An approved SEND Reform Plan should enable access to any future government financial support mechanism if necessary.

6.3. What is the impact on the organisation?

The main implications are for staffing and workforce capacity, as delivery of the reforms will require additional specialist and programme resource, particularly to support implementation of the Experts at Hand model and wider system reform. These pressures are recognised within the plan and will be supported, in part, through the grant funding that accompanies the reforms. No material implications are identified at this stage in relation to the Council's ICT, accommodation, assets or corporate parenting responsibilities, beyond those already reflected in the programme's wider capital and delivery planning.

6.4. Equalities / EIA?

The proposals have been developed with due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty and are expected to have a positive impact primarily on disabled children and young people with SEND, as well as on families who may experience disadvantage, barriers to access and unequal educational outcomes. The plan is intended to improve inclusion, strengthen access to local provision, reduce avoidable escalation, improve attendance and participation, and support children and young people with SEND to achieve, belong and thrive in their local communities.

The proposals also recognise that some groups may face additional barriers, including children and young people with complex needs, those educated outside school, and families who may be less well connected to services or underrepresented in traditional

engagement routes. There is also potential for differential impact where access to information, support or provision is less consistent across communities or settings.

These risks will be mitigated through co-production, targeted engagement, improved communication and digital access, stronger oversight of pathways and provision, and a continued focus on reducing variation in experience and outcomes across the city. This approach is intended to ensure that the benefits of reform are experienced as fairly and consistently as possible by those groups most affected.

6.5. Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment?

The proposals make a modest contribution to climate change objectives by helping more children and young people access provision closer to home, reducing the need for longer journeys.

Opportunities should be identified to improve the energy efficiency and climate resilience of existing buildings as part of any planned refurbishment. As part of this consideration should be given to using the capital programme to leverage additional grant funding to support decarbonisation projects on existing schools. The Council's Strategic Energy Partnership with E.ON will endeavour to support this programme through seeking to introduce more solar PV and Air Source Heat Pumps across Coventry schools

6.6. Implications for partner organisations?

The proposals will have a positive impact on partner organisations by strengthening joint working, shared accountability and clearer routes for engagement across the Council, health, schools, post-16 providers, the Parent Carer Forum and voluntary and community organisations. The plan places particular emphasis on co-production and partnership governance, which should support more consistent collaboration, clearer roles and a stronger local offer for children and young people with SEND. No specific adverse implications are identified at this stage for community safety or local neighbourhoods.

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Coventry Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Reform plan

May 2026 | v1.4

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Partnership Signatories

Role	Name	Signature	Email contact	Date
Chief Executive, Coventry City Council				
Section 151 Officer, Coventry City Council				
Chief Executive, ICB				

Partnership Leaders

Role	Name	Signature	Email contact	Date
CCC, DCS				
CWPT, TBC				
ICB, TBC				
PCF, TBC				
Schools Partnership, TBC				

Local Authority:

Integrated Care Board:

Senior Responsible Officer:

Last Updated:

Coventry City Council
Coventry and Warwickshire
Sukriti Sen
15th May 2026

Executive Summary

Over the next three years, Coventry will build on strong foundations—education partnerships, a well-established early intervention approach and a Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) surplus position—to deliver a highly inclusive, partnership-led 0–25 SEND system. This will mean greater co-production, clearer pathways and accountability, improved outcomes and high-quality local provision for all. In this plan, **CYP** refers to children and young people.

Build a 0–25 system where CYP receive support to achieve and thrive through more inclusive settings and stronger local partnerships

Coventry has strong foundations for inclusion and partnership working through an established education partnership and school networks, including SEND. Many CYP are supported successfully at SEN Support through early intervention and a well-embedded graduated response. However, ordinarily available provision is not yet consistent across phases, and access to early specialist input—particularly health-related support—remains variable. We will co-produce a shared definition of inclusion, clarify thresholds and pathways, and strengthen accountability through refreshed governance (SEND & AP Partnership Board, SEND Reform Delivery Group and themed workspaces). We will know we are succeeding when families experience clear routes to support, fewer transfers between services, and—where possible—CYP are educated successfully close to home.

Improve capacity and capability of the mainstream and specialist workforce to identify and meet need

Education-led workforce foundations are strong, with established Special Education Needs Co-ordinators (SENCO) networks and a structured training offer that supports early identification and intervention. Education, Health & Care (EHC) Plan timeliness has historically been strong, dipped in 2025 and has improved in 2026 following substantial investment in team capacity; sustaining this improvement is a core priority. We will build on strong SEND traded services and local specialist provision to deliver the Experts at Hand operating model—bringing specialist expertise earlier, building on the excellent workforce strategy already in place, strengthening the graduated response and reducing avoidable escalation (including preventable moves into AP and Education Other Than at School (EOTAS)). In parallel, we will agree a joint commissioning approach and a therapy delivery model including speech & language therapists (SaLT) and Occupational Therapists (OT) that supports EHC Plan Section F delivery as well as earlier help. Success will be shown through wider reach of specialist advice in mainstream, more consistent practice across the city, and reduced reliance on reactive, casework-only approaches.

Improve confidence of children, families and stakeholders in reform and readiness of the system

We recognise confidence in the system is inconsistent and that co-production is not yet embedded consistently in decision-making. Suspensions and exclusions of CYP with SEND increased in 2025 and 2026, EOTAS has risen significantly in the past year, and there are a small number of CYP with complex needs where we struggle to secure placement sufficiency. Improving inclusion, engagement and access to education is therefore

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Shared priority. Coventry has an established AP framework, which provides a strong platform to strengthen pathways, provide early intervention and support reintegration. We will strengthen co-production through clearer routes for gathering views, regular touchpoints and transparent “we said / we did” feedback. We will align the SEND Reform Programme with the roll-out of the Family First Partnership Programme (FFPP) so families experience one joined-up front door, clear lead professional/keyworker roles, consistent communications and effective information sharing. We will implement and embed our Belonging and Inclusion Strategy, including behaviour pathways, alongside stronger assurance for reduced timetables and EOTAS (clear pathways, review points and escalation). Progress will be evidenced through improved qualitative feedback, fewer avoidable disputes, and increased confidence in pathways and support while waiting.

Stabilise finances and improve value for money

Strong leadership and management, an increasing high needs block allocation, and investment in early intervention and local partnerships mean Coventry is not in an overall DSG deficit position and has not utilised a Schools Block to High Needs Block transfer. Historically, the proportion of CYP with SEND educated locally has been high; while local placements are increasing, non-local placements have also risen over the past three years. Reversing this trend is a priority for outcomes, value for money and future financial sustainability. We will strengthen the local offer by expanding inclusion bases (including improving mainstream estates through targeted adaptations) and increasing local special school capacity to support CYP with the most complex needs. This will be informed by a strategic programme of work with Special School Head Teachers and the Open Thinking Partnership, ensuring our approach is co-produced and rooted in shared system leadership. Alongside this we will prioritise local capacity using a small, quality-assured independent offer where needs cannot be met locally. We will know we have achieved our three-year vision when headline metrics show sustained improvement in local placement numbers, attendance/exclusions and family experience, and clear impact of reform and capital investment on placement patterns, EOTAS and transport dependency.

Section 1 – Vision and Goals

By **2029**, Coventry will deliver a SEND system where **CYP achieve, belong and thrive in their local communities**, supported by confident families, inclusive mainstream and specialist settings and a sustainable local offer. This means that:

Goal 1: CYP with SEND achieve, belong and thrive in their local communities

CYP with SEND will experience positive outcomes and a strong sense of belonging and recognition that they matter. The majority will be supported successfully in **inclusive local early years settings, schools and colleges**, with improved attendance, participation and progress across all phases.

This will be evidenced by:

- Increase in the proportion of CYP with EHC Plans educated in local mainstream settings.
- Improvement in attendance for CYP with SEND across early years, school and post-16.
- Increase in participation for CYP with SEND (e.g., sustained engagement in learning and wider school/college life).
- Increase in CYP reporting they feel safe, included and able to learn, measured at least annually through codesigned feedback tools.
- Improved attainment and progress for CYP with SEND (teacher assessment/qualifications achieved), and improved post-16 destinations.

Goal 2: Families have confidence in the SEND system because it is transparent, responsive and shaped by lived experience

Families will have confidence in the SEND system because their experience of using it is positive and straightforward, and because they can see the outcomes it helps them achieve. Co-production with parents, carers and CYP will be embedded, with transparent decision-making and clear feedback on how lived experience shapes services.

This will be evidenced by:

- Co-production strategy published and refreshed annually, with a forward engagement timetable agreed at least termly.
- Quarterly co-production audit trail (case studies/decision logs) showing increasing shared decisions and joint sign-off with Parent Carer Forum (PCF) and CYP.
- “We said, we did” updates published on the local offer website at least termly, linking feedback to decisions and measurable service changes.
- Year-on-year increase in family confidence and clarity on how to access support, measured through a codesigned survey/feedback tool.

Goal 3: Mainstream settings are confident, capable and supported to meet a wider range of needs early

Mainstream settings will be confident, capable and supported to meet CYP needs earlier and know where to seek support where needs are more complex. A fully embedded **Experts at Hand** offer and consistent ordinarily available provision will enable earlier identification and support, reducing avoidable escalation of need.

This will be evidenced by:

- Increase in the proportion of early years settings, schools and colleges accessing Experts at Hand, with equitable reach across localities.
- Ordinarily available provision standards implemented across settings, with termly assurance showing increasing consistency.
- Reduction in average waiting time to first specialist contact for targeted health services (including therapies).
- Increase in families reporting confidence and clarity on how to access support (agreed survey/feedback tool).
- Increase in school/SENCO self-assessment confidence in inclusive practice, supported by timely access to advice.
- Improved evidence of belonging and inclusion in Ofsted inspection findings, with reducing variation between settings.

Goal 4: A sustainable, high-quality local SEND and AP offer that offers value for money and local provision

Coventry will have a sustainable, high-quality and timely local SEND offer that provides good value local provision. Investment will be increasingly focused on strengthening local capacity, reducing dependence on independent, out-of-area and alternative provision, and supporting a more sustainable financial position.

This will be evidenced by:

- Increase in local specialist capacity delivered (number of Specialist Bases opened and additional places in specialist settings).

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- Stabilisation (and then reduction) in DSG high needs cost pressures, with invest-to-save savings tracked and reported at least quarterly.
- Year-on-year reduction in average travel distance/time for CYP with SEND and fewer long-distance placements.
- Increase in CYP receiving targeted health support, alongside a reduction in avoidable specialist referrals and urgent escalations.

Goal 5: A skilled, accountable and collaborative partnership drives continuous improvement

A skilled, accountable and collaborative partnership will drive continuous improvement. Strong system leadership, effective partnership working, a stable and skilled workforce, and intelligent use of data and lived experience will underpin shared accountability and sustained improvement across education, health and care.

This will be evidenced by:

- Sustained partner representation and attendance at SEND governance forums, monitored and reported at least termly.
- Increase in the proportion of the education workforce completing priority SEND training aligned to the shared workforce strategy.
- Improved recruitment and retention in specialist roles (e.g. Educational Psychology (EP), SaLT, OT), and the schools' workforce, shown by reducing vacancies and turnover.
- Single shared SEND performance framework, with headline metrics tracked through governance.
- Termly sharing of inclusive practice through agreed networks (e.g., Inclusion Group/Specialist Bases), with increasing take-up by settings.

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Section 2 – Strategy

Where the local area partnership expects to be in the next 3 years

Local Blueprint 2026-2029	Where we are now	Where we will be in the next 3 years
<p>Building Block 1 Strengthening inclusion across education settings</p>	<p>Overall self-assessment: Developing (with elements of Maturing)</p> <p>Coventry has strong foundations for inclusion, including effective identification, a well-embedded graduated response, and a high proportion of children supported successfully at SEN Support. There is evidence of maturing practice in parts of the system, particularly where schools are making effective use of adaptive provision.</p> <p>However, the matrix also highlights inconsistency across settings and phases, and that ordinarily available provision is not yet embedded universally. As a result, inclusion is developing but not yet reliably consistent across the whole system.</p>	<p>By 2029, our local SEND system will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed a shared definition of inclusion across all partners and build it into governance and quality assurance, so decisions and expectations are consistent and the impact on outcomes is clear. • Set clear, city-wide ordinarily available provision standards as a non-negotiable baseline, support settings to deliver them, and use quality assurance to show support is consistent and escalation reduces. • Identify where inclusion is not working well and take timely action with the appropriate support and challenge. • Build staff confidence and skills through a joined-up workforce development and experts at hand offer with practical follow-up (coaching and peer support) to embed change. • Have an established Experts at Hand offer that helps settings get the right advice early and strengthen their graduated response. • Expand the support base offer ensuring it is welcoming and high quality to children and families, with shared standards and strong take-up from schools. • Use data and lived experience together to understand what is and isn't working, and to focus support where it will make the biggest difference. • Have smooth transitions between phases and setting so CYP feel ready and supported. • Help CYP with SEND achieve stronger attainment, benchmarking well against peers in other localities and those without SEND.
<p>Building Block 2 Access to specialist support and local placements</p>	<p>Overall self-assessment: Developing</p> <p>The maturity assessment indicates Coventry has a strong and improving understanding of specialist</p>	<p>By 2029, our local SEND system will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the needs of most CYP through mainstream and special schools, increasing the proportion accessing local provision.

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	<p>provision and place planning, with maturing practice in alternative provision, local special schools, and sufficiency planning. These help system leaders to understand demand, cost pressures, and quality issues well.</p> <p>However, access to early, universal and targeted specialist support (particularly health-related input) is less consistent, and reliance on specialist and high-cost provision remains significant. Overall, access to specialist support is developing, with clear foundations but not yet fully rebalanced toward early intervention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver at least 100 additional Specialist Base places, alongside strong inclusive practice, so they are welcoming for CYP and families. • Use Best Start in Life and FFPP to provide a well-accessed early family help offer for families of CYP with SEND. • Deliver at least 184 additional local special school places for CYP with complex learning needs and Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH). • Provide the right mix of specialist places across the city so families can access suitable provision closer to home. • Have clear, inclusive pathways and communication that builds on Coventry's Family Valued Principles, especially where CYP do not fit a "standard" offer. • Ensure CYP can access timely mental health support, with clear pathways into specialist services (including Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services) and the right provision (mainstream, AP, or specialist) when they cannot attend their usual setting. • Provide clear assessment and diagnosis pathways via the Digital Local Offer, with timely health assessments (including speech and language, mental health and eating disorders) and diagnosis where needed. • Improve access to SaLT and OT interventions (including without an EHC plan where appropriate) and ensure EHC plan-specified provision is delivered reliably and consistently for CYP. • Strengthen early intervention so needs are identified and met earlier, reducing avoidable escalation. • Align the AP Graduated Model of Support to the Targeted (Outreach), Targeted Plus (Intervention) and Specialist (Transitional) framework, with sufficient flexible capacity for SEMH, Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) and medical needs. • LA and health services work to a shared plan for each child or young person, share information, and are clear on responsibilities, especially at key transition points for CYP.
<p>Building Block 3 System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production</p>	<p>Overall self-assessment: Developing</p> <p>The maturity assessment shows strong system leadership, effective partnership structures, and improving use of data to inform decision-making. Leadership and collaboration are assessed as securely developing, with some elements</p>	<p>By 2029, our local SEND system will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a shared understanding across all partners of what good co-production means in practice. • Ensure CYP, parents/carers and professionals routinely work together (through our PCF, CYP Groups, SEND Information & Advice Support Service (SENDIASS) and governance programme), so lived experience shapes

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	<p>approaching maturing.</p> <p>However, co-production with parents, carers and children and young people is less embedded, with engagement not yet consistent across all strategic and operational decisions. As a result, this building block remains developing overall, with strong leadership but more work needed to ensure coproduction is fully embedded.</p>	<p>priorities, pathways and practice and families can see what has changed as a result.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use targeted engagement with specific family communities (including Elective Home Education (EHE)) and with faith and community groups, using trusted routes and accessible formats. • Use clear feedback loops and a shared communications approach, with an improved digital Local Offer that clearly sets out what support is available, provides a single and accessible way for families to share feedback, and publishes regular updates on what we have changed as a result ('we said / we did'). • Have governance that supports joined-up, data-informed co-production and shared accountability, including clear decision records and follow-through on actions. • Have clear accountability when things do not go to plan, with agreed escalation routes and a governance-led improvement cycle that results in timely course-correction and sustained changes in practice. • Services are jointly commissioned, using what families tell us is effective and what our data shows, so that support meets needs and improves outcomes for CYP with SEND.
<p>Building Block 4 Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours</p>	<p>Overall self-assessment: Emerging → Developing</p> <p>The maturity assessment identifies growing awareness of inclusive values and behaviours, and examples of good practice across settings and networks.</p> <p>However, inclusive culture is not yet consistently embedded or reinforced across the system, and expectations are not yet strong enough to ensure predictable inclusive behaviours in all settings. The system is moving from emerging into developing, but inclusive culture is not yet universal.</p>	<p>By 2029, our local SEND system will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make inclusion a felt experience for CYP so they feel safe, understood, and able to learn, with early, stigma-free adjustments—supported by timely advice and coaching through workforce development and Experts at Hand. • Extend our 'Family Valued' approach to put relationships and relational practice at the centre of support, so CYP and families know who is alongside them, what will happen next, and how to get help if things are not working. • Listen and respond to CYP in accessible ways, so their views shape support and they can see what has changed. • Build a consistent culture of belonging that supports strong engagement in education, with shared expectations and day-to-day practice so CYP can access a full-time offer where this is right for them. • Reduce missing education and reduced timetables without a clear plan and review, using rapid specialist input through Experts at Hand to support settings and prevent avoidable escalation. • Strengthen engagement with CYP and families who are EHE or EOTAS, using trusted routes and regular touchpoints, and implement a clear, co-produced inclusion vision with consistent review and reintegration support where appropriate.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce EHE/EOTAS driven by unmet need, while maintaining high-quality options where these arrangements are the best fit and reflect the child and family’s preference. • Reduce waiting times to secure suitable placements and support for CYP with complex SEND, including those new to the city, and help more CYP learn close to home reducing out-of-city placements and average journey times.
<p>Enabler 1 Capital</p>	<p>Current position: Developing (with maturing elements)</p> <p>The maturity assessment shows that Coventry has strong foundations in SEND and AP sufficiency and capital planning, with a clear understanding of current and projected demand. This is now supported by demonstrable delivery of inclusive capital investment, particularly through the expansion of Specialist Bases in mainstream settings.</p> <p>Since 2024, Coventry has opened three new primary Specialist Bases and one secondary Specialist Base (the first of its type), with a further three primary and one secondary Specialist Base in delivery for completion by early 2027. A Specialist Base Partnership Group, working jointly with schools, is in place to oversee delivery and quality. This reflects a clear shift from strategy to implementation and shows increasingly mature use of capital to strengthen local, inclusive provision.</p> <p>However, the maturity assessment highlights that capital investment is not yet fully embedded as a system-wide lever for inclusion and reform. While specialist base delivery is progressing well, the impact of capital investment on placement patterns, transport dependency and reliance on high-cost provision is not yet consistently evaluated or articulated, and wider mainstream adaptations</p>	<p>By 2029, our local SEND system will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed a small-grants capital plan for setting to make minor practical adaptations to support with inclusion. • Deliver a Specialist Base strategy for local authority-led provision that matches need and geography and is linked to five-year demand projections. • Deliver our Special School Partnership Programme with Open Thinking Partnership and local special schools to improve outcomes and experience and strengthen value for money. • Increase capacity in special schools for SEMH and broad-spectrum needs, so more children can be supported locally. • Have a co-produced plan to support children with the most complex SEND within the city, including the right special school places and support pathways. • Demonstrate how all elements of our capital plan, work together to provide a cohesive city-wide offer, that maximises positive outcomes, families’ confidence in local settings and delivers excellent value. • Demonstrate how capital investment is changing placement patterns, reducing transport dependency and lowering reliance on high-cost out-of-area provision. • Ensure the AP capital investment plan supports early intervention capacity, ensuring appropriate short-term and transitional provision, and reducing reliance on long-term placements across primary and secondary

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	beyond specialist base settings remain developing.	
<p>Enabler 2 Workforce</p>	<p>Current position: Developing (with maturing elements)</p> <p>The maturity assessment shows that Coventry has a clear SEND workforce strategy and a strong education-led workforce foundation, with good access to SEND-specific training, SENCO networks and professional development. Specialist education services demonstrate maturing practice, supported by regular supervision, CPD and quality assurance, and there is increasing alignment between workforce development and SEND reform priorities, particularly inclusion and early intervention.</p> <p>However, the maturity assessment highlights that workforce planning and deployment across education, health and care are not yet fully integrated. Capacity and consistency within health-commissioned services, particularly therapies, remain variable, limiting equitable access to early specialist support. While training activity is well established, system-wide consistency of practice and impact is not yet assured, and specialist expertise is still largely deployed through service-based models rather than system-wide, group-level approaches.</p>	<p>By 2029, our local SEND system will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a shared, joined-up workforce plan across the local authority and health, so capacity is planned and deployed around need (not organisational boundaries). • Have a stable and well-supported specialist workforce (including EP, SaLT and OT), with clear routes for settings to access advice early and consistently. • Continue to invest in the Workforce Strategy ensuring no overlap with National training to build mainstream confidence and capability through coordinated training, coaching and networks, with clear expectations for inclusive practice. • Collaborate with experts by experience (CYP and families) to co-design and strengthen inclusive practice in schools, including practical tools, training input and feedback on what is making a difference. • Agree a “Working Together” charter that sets out how experts by experience and professionals will work together to bring about change including how we co-design improvements, test what works, share feedback, and use this to strengthen inclusive practice in schools. • Use Experts at Hand to spread specialist expertise across the system (early help, strategic problem-solving with settings, and practice development), In the longer term seeing a potential shift from individual casework approach. • Embed the Experts at Hand learning and operating model into business-as-usual, with clear ownership, governance and resourcing so that benefits and continuity are sustained beyond time-limited programme funding. • Have consistent quality assurance across services (including therapies), with learning used to improve practice and reduce variation.
<p>Enabler 3 Data and Digital</p>	<p>Current position: Developing</p> <p>Coventry has established core SEND data systems and dashboards and uses quantitative data to inform place planning, commissioning and performance oversight. There is good understanding of levels of need, historic trends and</p>	<p>By 2029, our local SEND system will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a shared set of outcome-focused measures and leading indicators, used routinely across the partnership to guide decisions and improvement. • Bring education, health and care data together so we have a single, consistent view of demand, delivery, quality and outcomes. • Use data in a more helpful way, moving from describing what is happening to understanding why, and what needs to change next.

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	<p>demand drivers, particularly in relation to EHCP growth, placement patterns and sufficiency. Data is increasingly used to support challenge and decision-making at partnership level.</p> <p>However, the maturity assessment also highlights that data, and digital arrangements are not yet fully integrated across education, health and care, and that analysis remains largely descriptive, rather than consistently diagnostic or predictive. While qualitative data and lived experience are gathered, these are not yet systematically combined with quantitative data to inform strategy and improvement. Shared, outcome-focused metrics are still being developed and agreed across the partnership, rather than embedded as a single, routine performance framework.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine lived experience with quantitative data as standard (e.g., surveys and feedback loops alongside dashboards) so we can target action and track what improves. • Have reliable, timely data with clear ownership and data quality checks, so reporting is trusted and useful. • Improve digital processes for key SEND pathways so families and professionals experience clearer information, fewer handoffs and faster responses.
<p>Success measures <i>Drawing on metrics from the accompanying data template</i></p>	<p>Building Block 1 We will know inclusive participation and belonging is improving if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attendance for pupils with SEND improves; • suspensions/exclusions reduce; and • parent/carer and CYP survey responses show that CYP feel they belong and are supported well in their setting. • Reduced demand for specialist settings. <p>We will know early inclusion capacity and confidence is strengthening if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the reach of the Experts at Hand offer increases; • the rate of growth in EHC needs assessment requests slows; and • SENCO confidence improves (timely advice is available) alongside improved parent confidence that support can be accessed without needing an EHC plan. <p>Building Block 2 We will know local access and placement stability is improving if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proportion of CYP with EHC plans educated locally increases (and non-local placements reduce). • placement stability improves (fewer unplanned moves); and • parent/carer and CYP feedback indicates provision is suitable and closer to home. <p>We will know therapy and diagnostic access is strengthening if:</p>	

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- waiting times reduce and the proportion of EHC plans where SaLT/OT provision is delivered as specified (Section F) increases;
- access to SaLT/OT outside the EHC plan process improves (through Experts at Hand/targeted routes); and
- parent and SENCO feedback confirms routes to support are clear and timely.

We will know specialist pathways for SEMH and AP are more effective if:

- Fewer CYP enter alternative provision via crisis routes, shown by a reduction in permanent exclusions and Sixth Day (Tier 4) placements being used as the first response.
- More CYP access early, preventative AP interventions sooner, shown by increased use of Coventry Alternative Provision (CAP) Tier 1–3 pathways (universal, targeted and time limited support) before difficulties escalate.
- A higher proportion of CYP successfully stabilise and sustain reintegration, demonstrated through improved attendance and SEMH outcomes during/after intervention and reduced escalation following return to mainstream.
- Families report clearer pathways and better reintegration planning.

Building Block 3

We will know system confidence and responsiveness is strengthening if:

- Multi-agency as well as PCF / CYP coproduction.
- partnership actions agreed through governance groups are delivered to timescale and repeated issues reduce;
- our multi-agency audit programme shows improving consistency in decision-making, pathways and follow-through; and
- a routine 360° feedback approach shows improved confidence and experience across CYP, parents/carers, schools/settings, and professionals.

Building Block 4

We will know inclusive culture and access to education is becoming consistent across Coventry if:

- reduced timetables and EOTAS reduce in volume and duration, with a higher proportion having a clear plan and review points (and more timely reintegration to suitable education where appropriate);
- variation between settings reduces, shown by a narrowing spread in suspensions/exclusions for pupils with SEND across schools; and
- Access to inclusive places is more equitable, shown by a more even distribution across settings of CYP with EHCPs educated outside their catchment area (so responsibility for inclusion is shared, not concentrated).
- Reduction in not in education, employment and training (NEET) and Not Known at Post 16.

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What is the local area partnership's strategy for delivering on the above?

Our strategy focuses, not only on what we want to achieve but on **how** we will deliver change, by putting co-production at the centre of decision-making and strengthening governance so we have clear grip, pace and accountability across the partnership.

We will agree a small number of high-impact priorities with the PCF and with CYP, and we will formalise how their input shapes plans, service design and delivery. This includes clearer routes for gathering views, regular touchpoints, and feedback loops so families and CYP can see what we have heard, what decisions we have taken, and what has changed as a result. A shared communications approach will support this, so people know what to expect and where to go for help.

We will refresh our governance, so delivery is coordinated and transparent. A new Reform Delivery Group (RDG) will oversee implementation, manage dependencies and remove barriers, using a simple delivery rhythm (clear actions, owners, timescales and reporting). This will enable the SEND and AP Board to focus more on strategic oversight and clinical support and challenge. We will use data alongside lived experience to track progress and adapt quickly, with headline indicators including parent and CYP confidence, the proportion of CYP educated locally, and attendance and attainment for CYP with EHC plans.

Please upload a completed copy of the Local Partnership Maturity Assessment Tool. (Refer to Appendix 2)

What is the local area partnership roadmap for the next 3 years? TBC

Local roadmap for the next 3 years	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Building Block 1 <i>Strengthening inclusion across education settings</i>			
Building Block 2 <i>Access to specialist support and local placements</i>			
Building Block 3			•

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Partnership

<i>System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production</i>			
Building Block 4 <i>Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours</i>			
Enabler 1 <i>Capital</i>			
Enabler 2 <i>Workforce</i>			
Enabler 3 <i>Data/digital systems</i>			
Success measures			

1. What will the local area partnership deliver in the first year? TBC

Please outline the key workstreams, milestones and trajectory your local area partnership will deliver and achieve in 2026-27 as well as how you plan to spend the investment allocation that will help fund this year's delivery. Please share key milestones and anticipated dates, success measures, cost breakdown and category. These should incorporate the core minimum requirements, be mapped to the building blocks above and should reflect a more detailed trajectory to the narrative, milestones and target metrics outlined in the 2026-27 column above.

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2026-27 Local delivery plan	Q2		Q3		Q4	
Workstream outline – mapped to building block Outcome - what you want to achieve with this workstream Success measures – how you measure progress drawing on metrics from the accompanying data template	Milestones per workstream What key milestones will enable you achieve your targeted trajectory	Target trajectory per workstream Where do you expect your data to be?	Milestones per workstream What key milestones will enable you achieve your targeted trajectory	Target trajectory per workstream Where do you expect your data to be?	Milestones per workstream What key milestones will enable you achieve your targeted trajectory	Target trajectory per workstream Where do you expect your data to be?
Workspace 1 Quality Assurance, Data and Digital Outcome Strengthen system assurance and intelligence across SEND and AP, ensuring that reform delivery and decision making are informed by robust quality assurance, reliable data and effective digital processes. Success Measure The partnership has trusted, routine reporting that is used to understand variation and drive improvement (not just describe performance). Multi-agency assurance and lived experience evidence are brought together to inform decisions, with clear examples of course-correction and learning. Responsible Person Head of SEND and Designated Clinical Officer						

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<p>Workspace 2 Commissioning and Workforce Development</p> <p>Outcome <i>Strengthen system capacity and capability to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND, through improved commissioning and workforce development.</i></p> <p>Success Measure <i>Settings can access earlier specialist advice and support through Experts at Hand, underpinned by increasing and better-deployed specialist capacity (EP/SaLT/OT) and clearer routes for therapy access and Section F delivery. Evidence of reach, consistency and feedback is used to refine the offer.</i></p> <p>Responsible Person <i>Head of SEND and SEND Joint Commissioning Lead</i></p>						
<p>Workspace 3 Capital and Sufficiency</p> <p>Outcome <i>Ensure a sustainable, planned approach to meeting current and future demand for SEND and Alternative Provision.</i></p> <p>Success Measure <i>Sufficiency decisions are based on robust demand analysis and are delivered through a clear, managed pipeline (including Specialist Bases), with readiness grip and benefits tracking. Evidence is used to adjust plans and reduce reliance on out-of-city provision over time.</i></p>						

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Responsible Person <i>Head of SEND and Education Capital Lead</i>					
Projected Investment Spend per quarter <i>Please specify funding source for each category</i> <i>Example categories:</i> Programme oversight/additional leadership capacity. Workforce Recruitment Workforce training and development Data/Digital					
Total Spend					

How will the local area partnership deliver the first-year plan?

To ensure sufficient capacity and capability to implement this plan, the local area will strengthen both governance and programme infrastructure. We will implement a revised governance structure, with a Reform Delivery Group (RDG) providing day-to-day grip, pace and problem-solving across workstreams, and enabling the SEND Board to focus on strategic oversight, system challenge and decisions on prioritisation. Corporate functions will be engaged through this governance, including a dedicated finance link on the SEND Board to support financial compliance, value-for-money decision making and alignment between reform activity and available resources.

We are increasing programme capacity within both the Local Authority and the ICB through a dedicated programme manager post for the reforms, supported by a clear delivery rhythm: a single integrated plan, defined owners and milestones, routine highlight reporting, and escalation routes to unblock delivery quickly. We will also refresh our approach to co-production to ensure it is central to implementation (not an add-on), by setting clear expectations for when co-production is required, how decisions are recorded, and how we will demonstrate impact through consistent “we said / we did” feedback loops.

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and strengthen data and analytics capability, we will extend the role of the Quality Assurance Group to include stronger oversight of data governance and digital systems, including agreed definitions, owners and data quality checks so reporting is trusted and timely. We will implement a local area dashboard that brings together education, health and care intelligence on demand, delivery, quality and outcomes, aligned to the measures in this plan. A clear reporting cadence will be established and used consistently across SEND Board, school groups and organisational performance management forums, so insights inform decisions on prioritisation, resource deployment and course-correction throughout the year.

Other funding **Local Authorities**.

Coventry has not made a Schools Block to High Needs Block transfer in 2026/27. The LA is not in an overall DSG deficit position and has continued to deliver high-quality support for CYP through strong local partnerships and a sustained focus on early intervention.

Capital Strategy

Coventry's high needs capital strategy is designed to strengthen inclusion and reduce reliance on out-of-city placements by growing a well-planned continuum of provision:

- inclusive mainstream (with improved estate and workforce capacity),
- inclusion bases,
- in-city special school capacity for children with the most complex needs, and
- a small, quality-assured independent offer used only where needs cannot be met within city provision.

As part of the Reform, this approach will be driven by our Capital and Sufficiency Workspace, with benefits and evaluation overseen through our Quality Assurance, Data and Digital arrangements, so that investment decisions are routinely tested against impact on placement patterns, travel and outcomes.

Expansion of inclusion bases is our primary capital lever to ensure that CYP who need an inclusion base place can access one, and that this is distributed equitably across the city. We currently have 10 Specialist Bases open (providing 87 places in primary and Secondary). Over the programme period, we will deliver at least an additional 100 Specialist Base places focused on Autism/complex communication and cognition and learning, reflecting forecast growth in these cohorts and our parallel approach for SEMH (see below).

Our Specialist Base Gateway process – which has been co-produced with our Inclusion Base Partnership – assesses:

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- schools' inclusive vision and self-assessment against agreed quality standards;
- geography and population need, to improve local availability of places; and
- capital feasibility and deliverability.

This ensures a fair and transparent pipeline while maintaining strong expectations for inclusive practice and reintegration.

Alongside Specialist Base expansion, we will continue to increase in-city special school capacity. By 2029 we will increase special school places for SEMH by 100 and broad-spectrum needs by 85, building on investment already made. Our next phase of special school investment will focus primarily on children with **highly complex needs**, where the level of specialist environment, staffing and multi-agency input required cannot currently be met through specialist provision within the city. This work will be undertaken in partnership with our established Special Schools Partnership Group.

This is complemented by our existing SEMH approach, which combines expanded SEMH specialist capacity with a strengthened alternative provision (AP) pathway, to support earlier intervention and timely reintegration where appropriate. We will also consult on whether further broad-spectrum capacity is required beyond 2027, based on updated demand modelling and placement trends.

To improve the suitability of the mainstream estate (including innovation such as assistive technology), we will implement a small-grants programme for schools to fund practical adaptations that enable inclusive practice, including breakout spaces, sensory rooms and assistive technology. The local authority will provide planning and commissioning support for larger or more complex projects where required.

These capital improvements will be aligned with our Experts at Hand ("team around the school") model so that estates changes and workforce practice development reinforce each other and provide earlier support in mainstream.

To reduce long travel and reliance on out-of-city provision, we will prioritise local capacity first (Specialist Bases and in-city special) but, where independent provision is required, work with a small number of trusted providers who demonstrate strong outcomes, value for money and reasonable proximity to Coventry.

For post-16, we have established a Post-16 SEND Partnership Group to co-produce the local response (including any capital requirements for FE settings, to be confirmed), ensuring routes and places support preparation for adulthood. Across all strands we will track impact through agreed measures (including in-city placement rates, access to inclusion base places and travel distance/time) and use this evidence to refine the capital programme year-on-year.

System partner and stakeholder engagement, and co-production.

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Partnership

We will engage system partners and stakeholders through a refreshed governance 'spine': the SEND and AP Partnership Board (strategic decisions), the Reform Delivery Group (RDG) (programme delivery and escalation) and themed workspaces (or co-design and implementation). Partnership groups connect into this spine through:

- **Representation** (partners sit on Board/RDG/workspaces);
- **Co-production** (priority reform elements designed with children, young people and families and partners);
- **Consultation** (technical elements led by a nominated organisation with structured input from relevant groups).

This approach meets the core minimum requirements by ensuring CYP, parents/carers, education settings and health partners are involved early, influence decisions, and receive feedback on how their input has been used. In the context of changing roles and responsibilities set out in the Schools White Paper, we will use the RDG as the main interface with education partners to agree shared expectations and manage transition. We would welcome DfE support at summer term sessions with education leaders and Parent Carer Forum leaders to accelerate shared understanding and commitment.

How partners connect:

Engagement and co-production with CYP and families is coordinated by the SEND Engagement Lead, whilst the LA's Head of SEND coordinates engagement with settings and organisations. Issues and actions are routed through relevant workspaces and the RDG.

CYP: We will use existing youth voice routes (including Strong Voices Coventry) and broaden engagement across mainstream settings, community provision and elective home education. The SEND and AP Partnership Board includes a standing item on CYP voice, with opportunities for direct input where requested.

Parents and carers: Coventry's Parent Carer Forum (PCF) is positioned to provide strategic input and challenge. Co-production is embedded through regular liaison with the SEND Engagement Lead, Head of SEND and Designated Clinical Officer (DCO), and through PCF representation on the SEND and AP Partnership Board; actions are tracked and feedback provided on how PCF input has informed decisions.

Early years: Early years contributes through strategic representation on the SEND and AP Partnership Board and an operational lead in the RDG, with involvement in relevant workspaces (inclusion, pathways, workforce and data). Existing early years networks across provider types will be used to test proposals and feed system intelligence into the RDG.

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Schools: We engage all school types (maintained schools, academies/MATs, primary, secondary and all-through, special schools, PRUs and other LA-maintained settings) through the mainstream Inclusion Group, the Special Schools Partnership Group and (since 2025) the Inclusion Base Partnership Group delivering our school-led Inclusion Base Strategy and support for school-led adaptive provision. These groups interface into the reform programme through the RDG, providing routes for shared problem-solving, escalation and decision-making, including on specialist capacity (places in special schools).

FE and post-16 (including out-of-area): In Summer 2026 we established a Post-16 Partnership Group (colleges, adult education and supported internship providers) to shape our post-16 offer. The group interfaces with the RDG to agree priorities, resolve barriers and drive reform for young people aged 16+ and are represented on the SEND and AP Board.

Alternative provision: We will engage AP leaders and providers through established AP governance (including Primary and Secondary AP Working Groups/Multi-Agency Panels) and through representation in the governance spine (AP workspace and the RDG). This will be complemented by targeted co-production on priorities such as early intervention, placement pathways and reintegration, and consultation on commissioning and practice standards as national arrangements evolve.

Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	RAG	Mitigation	Residual RAG
There is insufficient specialist capacity (EP/SaLT/OT) to deliver the Experts at Hand model at scale leading to long waits and inconsistent support to settings, and an underspend of grant funding.	High	High	Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the existing SEND Workforce Development Strategy as a basis from which to build, ensuring that high quality training is available, free at the point of contact to settings, from early in the programme. • Confirm a blended specialist outreach delivery model using including assistant therapists and psychologists, specialist teachers and multi-therapy assistants. • Ensure that within these models, quality clinical supervision builds expertise and ensures that the offer adds value for settings. • Work across the local area partnership, with specialist settings and AP providers to draw on outreach support from skilled staff in settings. • Build in a network supervision model, which maximises use of professional time across settings. 	Amber

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<p>grant funding for Experts at Hand does not continue after three years, there is a risk of workforce and system instability (loss of capacity, reduced early support to settings and variable access), which would weaken inclusive practice and continuity of support for children and young people.</p>	High	Medium	Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Experts at Hand as an evolution of Coventry’s strong traded specialist SEND services and SEND networks (not a parallel offer), with clear interfaces and agreed service standards. • Agree a sustainability and transition-to-BAU plan from year 1 (ownership, core components, workforce model, costs and decision points), overseen through the Commissioning & Workforce Workspace and SEND & AP Partnership Board. • Build capacity through approaches that can be sustained (training/coaching, network support, outreach from mainstream/special/AP partnerships, group and whole-setting interventions), reducing dependency on time-limited posts. • Use evaluation and performance evidence (reach, impact and value for money) to inform commissioning decisions and secure ongoing funding, including options for blended funding and continued traded elements where appropriate. 	Amber
<p>Partners do not align decision-making and resource deployment (education, health and care), causing delays in key dependencies (therapy model, pathways, commissioning decisions) and undermining pace and credibility of reform.</p>	High	Medium	Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresh governance and terms of reference to clarify decision rights and escalation across a revised governance structure. • Establish a Reform Delivery Group to maintain grip on plan delivery and ensure key decisions are escalated to SEND Board with the information needed for the board to take strategic decisions. • Secure representation from senior leads at SEND Board and operational Leads at RDG. • Appoint a SEND Reform Programme Manager to ensure coordination and information flow throughout the system. • Ensure that key decisions are taken jointly by SEND Board and that project work is coproduced, ensuring system wide ownership. 	Green
<p>Data and evaluation are not strong enough to evidence impact (e.g., on placement patterns, exclusions, attendance, therapy delivery, family confidence), reducing ability to review, prioritise, plan, and revise the Local Area Plan.</p>	High	Medium	Amber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend Quality Assurance Group oversight of data governance (definitions, owners, data quality checks) and refresh membership to include expertise from setting and service leads. • Agree a single partnership performance view which is shared across all SEND Workspaces and partnership groups. • Implement benefits/evaluation approach for capital and inclusion base expansion; 	Green

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coproduce a survey for parents, carers and young people, to allow lived experience to be considered alongside quantitative metrics;	
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Dependencies

Family Co-production & Communications & Take-up, Trust and Reduced Dispute

The local area has prioritised co-production, particularly with families and young people, as a core component of the SEND Reform Programme. However, the programme arrives at a time when family confidence in the system is under pressure. System leaders will need to engage openly and sensitively with families at all levels, maintain clear feedback loops (“we said / we did”), and respond consistently to concerns to rebuild trust and ensure reforms have the intended impact.

Clinical Commissioning Model & Experts at Hand Delivery

Recruitment for the Experts at Hand programme, statutory advice for EHC needs assessments, and delivery of EHCP Section F will draw on the same limited pool of professionals. A coordinated, joint commissioning approach is therefore needed to ensure specialist capacity is deployed in line with local SEND priorities.

ICB Reorganisation & Strategic Commissioning Capacity & Continuity

The ICB is undergoing restructuring as part of a national review of ICB arrangements, which will overlap with the early phase of this SEND Reform Programme. Delivery of reforms (including therapy pathways and the Experts at Hand offer) depends on maintaining strategic commissioning, contract management and transformation capacity, with clear decision-making routes and continuity of key roles. The partnership will therefore agree interim arrangements to ensure SEND commissioning and mobilisation milestones remain on track.

Workforce Supply & Expansion of Inclusion Bases

The Local Area has expanded the number of places available within inclusion bases. Recruitment to these roles has drawn, in part, from special schools, creating a risk of reduced capacity in the specialist sector. Delivery of further expansion therefore depends on a coordinated workforce approach that grows overall capacity (rather than shifting it), including joint recruitment/retention actions, targeted training and clear pathways into specialist roles for teachers and teaching assistants.

Capital Delivery Milestones & Operational Readiness

A significant strand of the SEND Reform Programme relies on the timely delivery of capital projects to increase places within inclusion bases and special schools within the city. Delays to the capital programme would have a knock-on impact on overall programme delivery. In addition, opening new provision depends on operational readiness (workforce recruitment, admissions and thresholds, timetables, policies, and alignment to pathways and the therapy delivery model). The sufficiency workspace within the revised governance structure will maintain grip on both capital milestones and readiness actions, with risks escalated through the RDG/SEND Board.

Family First Partnerships Programme & Alignment with SEND Reforms Programme

Delivery of the Family First Partnerships Programme will run alongside SEND reforms and, together, will change how families experience services within the city. These programmes need to align so families experience one joined-up system, including consistent front-door arrangements (referral routes and thresholds), clear lead professional/keyworker roles, joined-up communications, and effective information sharing across partners. A SEND Engagement Lead has been appointed to work across both programmes, ensuring alignment of approach and messaging.

Section 3 – Monitoring and Evaluation

How will the local area partnership know delivery is on track?

Coventry's monitoring and evaluation approach builds on established performance management within the Council and partner organisations and will be strengthened through the SEND Reform Programme to provide a single, shared view of progress, impact and lived experience. At present, core SEND performance metrics are gathered and managed within individual organisations. SEND performance is overseen through the Council's monthly performance board (chaired through the corporate performance framework and overseen by the Director of Children's Services), with parallel performance and quality processes operating within providers and the ICB. Alongside this, a cross-agency Quality Assurance (QA) group operates a shared QA framework with a focus on customer experience, the quality of EHC Plans and key service performance indicators; this is reported into the SEND & AP Partnership Board. The Council also maintains a SEND performance dashboard, which is shared with the SEND Board and with education partnerships to support system conversations and targeted improvement activity.

During 2026–29 we will move to a more integrated local area approach. Work is already underway to create a shared local area dashboard by bringing together health performance data with Council data, so we can track demand, delivery, quality and outcomes across education, health and care in one place. This shared dashboard will align to the success measures set out in this plan, including leading indicators (such as the reach of the Experts at Hand offer, growth in EHC needs assessment requests, reduced timetables/EOTAS volume and duration, and therapy delivery measures) and outcome indicators (including attendance, suspensions/exclusions, placement patterns and stability, and confidence/experience measures). We will agree clear definitions, data owners and data quality checks so that reporting is trusted and timely, and so that partners can use the same evidence base for prioritisation and resource decisions.

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We will strengthen how lived experience is gathered and used alongside quantitative performance. Working with the Parent Carer Forum (PCF) and with CYP, we will co-produce and implement a small set of standardised surveys and feedback tools to gather consistent qualitative information about experience, confidence, and whether support is helping CYP to achieve and belong. This will enable a clearer “line of sight” between what families and CYP are telling us, the actions we take, and what changes as a result (including a routine “we said / we did” feedback loop). The revised QA approach will focus more on integrating qualitative and quantitative data and moving from describing what is happening to understanding why it is happening, including identifying variation by cohort, locality and setting and testing what actions make the biggest difference.

Work will be coordinated through a strengthened Quality Assurance, Data and Digital Workspace, which will link directly with the PCF and with the young people’s forum and will oversee the shared QA framework, data governance and evaluation activity. The reporting structure will align to the metrics and milestones set out in the Reform Plan: the Workspace will provide routine insight and any agreed deep-dives; this will be summarised and escalated through the Reform Delivery Group (RDG) to maintain grip on delivery and to agree corrective actions where milestones slip or indicators deteriorate; and the SEND & AP Partnership Board will use this information for strategic evaluation, decision-making and course-correction (including prioritisation, commissioning intent and changes to approach). This ensures that monitoring and evaluation are not separate activities, but an embedded improvement cycle that supports pace, accountability and sustained impact across the partnership.

Reporting to DfE

Please use the attached data template to upload your initial data return to DfE.

Section 4 – Governance

How will the local area partnership ensure delivery of plans remain on track?

Governance Mechanism	Purpose/ Responsibilities	Membership	Cadence	Decision Rights	Escalation Route
SEND and AP Partnership Board	Strategic oversight of SEND & AP; approves priorities and tracks delivery against outcomes, finance and risk.	Chaired by LA DCS/DfE SRO. Membership: LA SEND lead/SRO, education leaders (mainstream, special, AP), ICB SEND/commissioning lead, provider trusts (therapies), social care lead, finance lead, PCF rep, CYP participation rep.	Half-termly	Agree priorities, resource alignment, commissioning intent, key pathways/standards; sign-off escalation actions; hold partners to account.	Health and Wellbeing Board
Reform Delivery Group	Tactical delivery grip: integrates workstreams, manages	Chaired by SEND Reform Programme Manager / LA SEND	Half-termly	Operational decisions within agreed plan;	SEND and AP Partnership Board

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	dependencies/risks, monitors milestones and unblocks issues.	lead. Membership: workstream/workspace leads, ICB commissioning/therapy lead, education reps, social care, data/QA lead, finance link, PCF rep, CYP rep.		recommend decisions to Board; agree corrective actions, issue escalation, and resource deployment within delegated limits.	
Quality Assurance, Data and Digital Workspace	Assurance and intelligence: Quality Assurance (QA) framework, data governance, dashboard/reporting, evaluation and learning; tracks impact and variation.	Chaired by QA/Data lead. Membership: LA performance/data, ICB analytics, service leads (SEND, therapies), school reps, AP rep, social care, PCF rep, CYP rep.	Half-termyly	Agree QA tools/standards, data definitions and reporting cadence; commission deep-dives; recommend improvement actions and escalations.	SEND and AP Partnership Board
Commissioning and Workforce Workspace	Joint commissioning and workforce: therapy model, Experts at Hand resourcing, workforce plan, training/CPD and service standards.	Chaired by LA/ICB commissioning lead. Membership: ICB commissioning, therapy provider leads, LA SEND lead, workforce lead/HR, EP/SaLT/OT leads, school reps (SENCO/special), AP rep, PCF rep.	Half-termyly	Design recommendations on commissioning/workforce; agree draft pathways and service specs for Board approval; track delivery of agreed actions.	SEND and AP Partnership Board
Capital and Sufficiency Workspace	Sufficiency and capital: demand modelling, place planning, capital programme delivery, readiness, and impact on placement patterns.	Chaired by sufficiency/capital lead (role). Membership: LA sufficiency/capital, finance, school place planning, special/AP reps, ICB rep (for therapy/readiness links), commissioning link, transport (as needed), PCF rep.	Half-termyly	Recommend sufficiency options and capital priorities; agree delivery plans/readiness actions; escalate risks (cost, delay, capacity).	SEND and AP Partnership Board

Section 5 – Central Government Support

To maximise the impact of Coventry’s SEND Reform Programme, we would welcome targeted central government support in the following areas:

- Support to broker and accelerate system-wide solutions for SaLT/OT and diagnostic capacity, aligned to our Experts at Hand model and to reliable delivery of therapy specified in EHC plan Section F, so families experience timely access and consistent provision.
- Workforce support for scarce specialist roles (EP/SaLT/OT and specialist teachers), including regional pipeline and recruitment support, and early clarity on sustainability options beyond the three-year grant so we can transition Experts at Hand into business-as-usual as an evolution of our strong traded specialist SEND services, networks and school partnerships.

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- Practical guidance and templates to evidence the impact of high needs capital on inclusion and value for money (e.g., placement patterns, travel/transport dependency, and reduced reliance on out-of-city placements), and support to remove barriers that could slow delivery and mobilisation of inclusion base and mainstream adaptation programmes.
- DfE-facilitated sessions with education leaders and PCF leaders to accelerate a shared definition of inclusion, shared expectations for ordinarily available provision, and mutual accountability—building on Coventry’s strong education partnerships and SEND networks and supporting improvements in attendance, exclusions and reduced timetables/EOTAS.
- Tools and benchmarking packs to strengthen our evaluation and diagnostic use of data (combining lived experience and quantitative measures), including outcome measures for Experts at Hand, inclusion bases and AP pathways, enabling faster course-correction and clearer evidence of impact.

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Appendix B

SEND & AP PARTNERSHIP SELF-ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT CONTEXT - please add any relevant information about how you have completed the tool, including any limiting factors in arriving at a shared assessment.

Joint Drafting (CCC, CWPT, ICB, PCF) 03/03/2026 and 06/03/2026 Review and Revision 20/4/2026; Draft 2. Circulated 20/4/2026; Approval by SEND and AP Partnership Board 18 May 2026

STATUS - use this box for version control (e.g. DATE, v1.0) and to record any formal decisions/agreements about the assessment.

20/4/2026 V2.0

Pillar 1: Co-production with parents and carers and children and young people

0 - NOT YET EMERGING	1 - EMERGING	2 - DEVELOPING	3 - MATURING	ASSESSMENT	DATE COMPLETED	STRENGTHS/SUCCESSES/IN PROGRESS	GAPS/ISSUES TO ADDRESS	FOCUS AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT
Parental representatives are not involved in SEND and AP partnership meetings. The Parent Carer Forum (PCF) is not formalised or in early stages, without wider parental representation evident. PCF Chair is not involved in SEND strategic partnership board meetings. Views of CYP and parents/carers not gathered. Very little evidence of the partnership engaging with parents/carers in co-production.	There is limited parental engagement in the SEND and AP partnership meetings. The area has a PCF that has a formalised structure but is not always supported to actively engage with local partners or is a recent newly formed forum. The PCF strategic leads of the local PCF do not regularly attend partnership board meetings and there is limited engagement. There is an awareness of the principles of co-production and parents, carers and children and young people are beginning to be involved in discussions about services. The partnership is beginning to engage with parents/carers but a clear approach of co-production has not yet been fully embedded as best practice. Relations with families / PCF are not entirely positive and key groups of parents are vocal in their concerns.	The area has an active, effective, and sustainable PCF. Local SEND and AP youth forums or user groups are engaged with throughout planning and delivery. The partnership is developing practice to co-produce with parents and children and young people. Some aspects of service planning and review cycles actively seek input, but participation is not yet universal or embedded.	The area has an active PCF which meets regularly with the system partners. Strong feedback mechanisms ensure that children, young people and families know how their views influence decisions. There is strong evidence that their views shape services and outcomes. Co-production is a core feature of planning, delivery and review. Parents, carers and children and young people are equal partners, with clear and regular opportunities to influence strategic priorities, service design and quality assurance. The partnership has embedded practices to co-produce with parents and children and young people.	2 - DEVELOPING	20/04/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent Carer Forum (PCF) representatives attend SEND and AP Partnership Board, and have made a sustained and embedded contribution; the PCF have also contributed to strategic activities such as the PINS project and establishing a sensory library. There are clear examples of effective co-production at an individual level, with SEND professionals, schools and families working collaboratively to develop and review personalised support plans. Meaningful engagement with children and young people is evident, particularly within special school settings. Initiatives such as AmbaSENDors demonstrate strong practice, although the approach is not yet consistently embedded within mainstream provision. Examples of effective co-production practice exist within schools; however, a more systematic understanding of practice across the local area is required to enable consistency and the sharing of learning at scale. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared principles for co-production are not yet consistently articulated across the partnership. There is a need to agree and formalise these through a clear co-production charter or memorandum of understanding to support consistent practice. Opportunities for families to influence system level improvement are not yet sufficiently systematic. More regular and accessible touchpoints are required to enable families to share experiences, identify challenges and contribute to improvement activity. Feedback loops to families and children and young people require strengthening. A clear "we said – we did" mechanism within the Local Offer is needed to demonstrate how engagement informs SEND reform delivery and system change. Partnership workspaces are not yet fully accessible to parents and carers. Further joint work is required to improve accessibility and enable meaningful co-production of strategy and delivery of the SEND reform Plan. Engagement with children and young people is not yet sufficiently regular or embedded in strategic development. More structured and systematic approaches are required to ensure their views consistently inform priorities and decision-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree, publish and embed a co-production charter (shared principles and expectations) across the partnership. Establish regular, accessible routes for families and CYP to influence the Local Offer and wider SEND reforms. Strengthen "you said – we did" feedback so families can see how engagement leads to changes in the Local Offer and service delivery. Embed co-production in governance, with clear roles, decision points and assurance reporting.

Pillar 2: Effective system leadership and governance

0 - NOT YET EMERGING	1 - EMERGING	2 - DEVELOPING	3 - MATURING	ASSESSMENT	DATE COMPLETED	STRENGTHS/SUCCESSES/IN PROGRESS	GAPS/ISSUES TO ADDRESS	PRIORITIES & SUPPORT NEEDS
Key leaders lack requisite knowledge and skills, either with vacant posts or with interim staff, resulting in ineffective practice. Local governance structures are not fully established and local partners are unclear where and how decisions are made about SEND and AP provision and services. No clear communication strategy and limited sharing of data performance measures.	Leaders are in place and starting to influence strategic direction and build partnerships. Partners are working with initial governance structures and developing clarity on where strategic decisions are made. Opportunities exist to further engage stakeholders in operational and strategic planning. Communication is identified as an area for improvement. Accountability is supported by existing processes and compliance measures. The partnership is focused on strengthening outcome measures and building shared understanding of system performance.	Leaders have developed structures and forums for decision-making which are established and increasingly understood, with partners contributing meaningfully to discussions. Feedback pathways between operational and strategic levels are being implemented. Communication channels exist but need strengthening in parts of the system. An outcomes-based approach is developing, with agreed shared outcomes and initial steps to use data for evaluation. Partners are starting to communicate openly about progress, and feedback is more routinely discussed.	Leadership is effective, and well-defined and embedded governance ensures decisions are collectively made at appropriate levels. All partners have clarity on their roles and can easily influence both operational and strategic planning. Processes are continually reviewed for improvement. Commissioning is well understood and integrated across the partnership. Robust, transparent systems for measuring and reporting outcomes are fully embedded. Success is judged by impact on CYP and families, and services are continually improved in response to honest evaluations involving all partners. Decision-making is both aspirational and innovative.	2 - DEVELOPING	20/04/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance arrangements are well-established and inclusive, with leaders demonstrating a strong understanding of the local SEND system. These structures are used effectively to provide appropriate support and constructive challenge across the partnership. Schools are confident and experienced in commissioning specialist SEND support, supported by clear local frameworks, including the Coventry Alternative Provision Framework and traded service agreements. Data, including the views and experiences of children, young people and families, is routinely shared through partnership governance and networks and is used to inform strategic discussion and decision-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration across the West Midlands is established; however, there is scope to strengthen this further through more systematic and structured peer review arrangements. Strategic and operational governance arrangements require clearer mapping and realignment to ensure they are fully aligned to, and effectively support, delivery of the SEND reform programme. These arrangements also need to be more consistently understood and embedded across the partnership. A clear and coherent communications strategy is required to support the delivery of SEND reforms, ensuring consistent messaging, shared understanding of priorities and effective engagement across education, health and care partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Realign strategic and operational governance so it is consistent with SEND reform principles, with clear decision-making, accountability and escalation routes. Ensure that representation and strategic engagement from health providers is sustained. Implement a partnership communications and engagement strategy to ensure consistent messaging, shared understanding of priorities and evidence of reach and impact. Strengthen strategic oversight of delivery against outcomes for children and young people.

Pillar 3: Accurate understanding of needs and experiences of children and young people through effective use of quantitative and qualitative data

0 - NOT YET EMERGING	1 - EMERGING	2 - DEVELOPING	3 - MATURING	ASSESSMENT	DATE COMPLETED	STRENGTHS/SUCCESSES/IN PROGRESS.	GAPS/ISSUES TO ADDRESS.	PRIORITIES & SUPPORT NEEDS.
There is limited evidence of using data effectively to inform commissioning of services based on the needs profile of children in the local area. Data analysis is simple and descriptive. Qualitative data is not collected. The LA Self Evaluation does not accurately reflect provision and / or is incomplete, or has not been shared.	Data gathering methods are being established or updated and provide an initial understanding of needs and gaps. Planning is supported by available quantitative data, with opportunities to develop more comprehensive use of family and CYP perspectives. Commissioning is underway within each sector, with some early cross-agency conversations. Providers are engaged with current sufficiency, and there is scope for increasing dialogue and alignment to proactively meet future needs.	Partners collaborate to gather both quantitative and qualitative evidence of needs. There is a growing sophistication in analysing current provision against future demand, and plans are underway to address identified weaknesses and gaps. Partners are working together more actively, consulting providers and starting to coordinate commissioning processes. Efforts are made to co-produce solutions and align plans across agencies, with some shared ownership and responsibility.	A robust and comprehensive evidence base underpins strategic planning. Rich quantitative and qualitative data is routinely collected, shared, and used to monitor trends and inform sufficiency planning. Joint commissioning across the partnership ensures that services are in place to meet the range of needs and achieve positive outcomes for CYP with SEND.	2 – DEVELOPING	20/04/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The local area has a SEND-specific Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), including a dedicated data supplement that is refreshed bi-annually. This provides a strong evidence base to inform self evaluation, priority setting and strategic planning across the partnership. Qualitative insight is routinely gathered from children, young people and families through individual services, with a clear focus on SEND. This is complemented by a structured programme of multi-agency audits, the findings of which are shared with and scrutinised by the SEND Partnership Board to support system learning and improvement. A cross agency Quality Assurance Group is established, with responsibility for coordinating data collection, analysis and assurance activity across the local area. This is underpinned by a shared Quality Assurance Framework, supporting consistency, transparency and robust oversight. The local authority has an established and systematic approach to assessing demand and capacity for placements, working proactively with providers to increase local availability where required. The resulting five year demand projection directly informs the local area's sufficiency strategy and longer term planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Local Offer is currently being refreshed following the transition to a new online platform. Further work is required to ensure the offer is clear, accessible, up to date and effectively promotes available support and pathways across education, health and care. Data analysis requires further development, so that qualitative and quantitative intelligence from across the partnership is more effectively integrated. This will support more concise reporting, stronger insight into impact, and clearer alignment between evidence, self evaluation and strategic planning. Stronger joint working is required to support effective place planning, including closer collaboration between education and health on specialist workforce planning to ensure the timely and sustainable development of new inclusion bases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh and quality-assure the digital SEND Local Offer so it is clear, accessible, up to date and routinely reviewed. Integrate qualitative and quantitative intelligence across partners to strengthen insight, evaluation of impact and commissioning decisions. Review contracting arrangements between the ICB and health providers to ensure that data is requested, gathered and analysed in a way which supports the development of the SEND Local Offer. Refresh the SEND Data Supplement from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment - ensuring it is shared with SEND Board and informs planning. Review the way in which we gather the views of children and families.

Pillar 4: High quality service delivery at universal, targeted and specialist levels to promote inclusion

0 - NOT YET EMERGING	1 - EMERGING	2 - DEVELOPING	3 - MATURING	ASSESSMENT	DATE COMPLETED	STRENGTHS/SUCCESSES/IN PROGRESS.	GAPS/ISSUES TO ADDRESS.	PRIORITIES & SUPPORT NEEDS.
No consistent guidance or support for schools to identify needs; inclusive practices are minimal and fragmented. Limited or no targeted interventions in place; AP is poorly integrated and rarely considered as part of the continuum of support. Statutory decision-making is inconsistent and delayed; quality assurance processes are absent or ineffective; specialist provision planning is reactive rather than strategic.	There is some guidance and support in place to support schools in identifying needs, but provision is inconsistent and AP is not well integrated. Schools and settings are beginning to expand their offer for CYP with SEND, but it remains largely focused on statutory responsibilities. Statutory decision-making is inconsistent and often delayed, with limited evidence of effective quality assurance processes and partnership engagement. SEND sufficiency planning is in development and looking at future projections but provision not able to meet demand.	Support services are developing; schools and settings are improving in identifying needs and accessing provision, including AP, evidenced in improving outcomes for CYP with SEND. Schools and settings are broadening their provision and starting to embed inclusive practices, with growing use of AP, and reducing requests for specialist provision. Processes are becoming more consistent and timely, with evidence of quality assurance and improvement. There is a strategic SEND sufficiency plan in place but recognition of some challenges in implementation.	There are effective arrangements and services in place to support schools and settings to identify needs and put in place appropriate provision, including Alternative Provision, evidenced in positive outcomes for CYP with SEND. Schools and settings are delivering a broad offer for all children and young people with SEND (beyond solely statutory responsibilities) that enables inclusive practice across the system, including Alternative Provision, and a higher% of CYP with EHCPs in mainstream. Decision-making and practice relating to statutory decisions is consistent and timely. SEND sufficiency planning is strategic and partners have confidence in the system's capacity to meet needs for the majority of children.	2 – DEVELOPING	20/04/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a strong early intervention offer within schools, supported by expert SEND services operating through a traded model. As a result, a higher proportion of children and young people with SEND have their needs met at SEN Support without requiring an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) when compared with other local areas across the West Midlands. An effective alternative provision (AP) outreach offer is in place, underpinned by a well-established and robust quality assurance framework that supports consistency and continuous improvement. A comprehensive programme of network support is established across the system, including for SENCOs, headteachers, schools operating enhanced resource provision (ERP), special schools and settings delivering adaptive provision. This supports shared learning, system leadership and inclusive practice. Statutory decision-making processes are subject to regular quality assurance, supporting consistency, transparency and improved outcomes for children and young people. There is a clear strategic approach to embedding SEND within Families First Partnership Programme (FFPP) reforms, led by seconded local headteachers and a dedicated SEND Partnerships Lead within the local authority, ensuring alignment between SEND priorities and wider children's services reform. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although there is a strong local offer that is not diagnosis dependent, there remains a persistent perception among some families and professionals that a formal diagnosis is required to access support. Further work is needed to strengthen communication and engagement to promote the local offer, clarify pathways to support, and reinforce that access is based on identified need rather than diagnosis. The local area's ordinarily available inclusion provision is currently being refreshed, and this work is a key priority to ensure greater clarity, consistency and shared understanding across education, health and care partners. Statutory decision-making processes are not yet sufficiently timely, and further improvement is required to ensure decisions are made within expected timescales and lead to effective outcomes for children and young people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen communication of the neurodivergent support offer and pathways so access is based on need (not diagnosis) and expectations are clear for families and professionals. Update and embed the Ordinarily Available Provision guidance and use it to review and strengthen the Local Offer and consistency in practice. Improve timeliness of EHC needs assessments and increase the proportion completed within statutory timescales, supported by quality assurance and performance oversight. Share learning from the second cycle of the PINS programme (through network groups and within the SEND reform delivery structure) and use this to refresh the SEND training and development offer, ensuring it extends into secondary schools. Review how sufficiency planning is shared with partners, including parents and families. Co-produce an 'Inclusion Charter' for inclusion bases, which is jointly owned by young people, families and settings.

Pillar 5: Effective Partnership working across education, health and social care

0 - NOT YET EMERGING	1 - EMERGING	2 - DEVELOPING	3 - MATURING	ASSESSMENT	DATE COMPLETED	STRENGTHS/SUCCESSES/IN PROGRESS.	GAPS/ISSUES TO ADDRESS.	PRIORITIES & SUPPORT NEEDS.
<p>Education Providers: Limited evidence of joint planning or collaboration. Schools generally operate in isolation with no shared inclusion strategies. Engagement with local authority is minimal.</p>	<p>Education Providers: All school types are involved in some way and contribute to the local offer, with engagement variable but developing across providers. Collaborative planning processes and networks are being strengthened, and schools are starting to partner with the LA on inclusion strategies.</p>	<p>Education Providers: All settings, including AP, post-16, and early years settings, are represented and most take part in partnership work, with regular consultation on inclusion. Joint processes for planning and provision are developing. Fair access protocols show improving outcomes and growing confidence. SENCO and leader networks are forming, and shared responsibility for inclusion is growing.</p>	<p>Education Providers: All providers are fully represented and actively engage in strategic planning, sharing updates with their settings. Evidence shows collaborative work improves planning, transitions, and inclusion. Fair access protocols are trusted and effective. Strong networks enable clusters of schools to commission, support, and respond to needs.</p>	3 – MATURING	20/04/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong partnerships between the local authority, mainstream and specialist settings are well-established and have contributed to a sustained increase in local capacity to meet need. • A mature workforce development strategy is in place and is increasingly coordinating specialist offers across education, health and care services, supporting greater system coherence and impact. • Relationships across the partnership are strong, respectful and constructive, characterised by appropriate professional challenge and a shared commitment to continuous improvement. • A well-established Early Years offer supports both educational improvement and SEND outreach, contributing positively to early identification, inclusion and Early Years workforce development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place planning discussions are not yet consistently aligned across education and health, resulting in gaps in strategic oversight. Strengthening joint commissioning arrangements is required to ensure clearer links between the increasing number of children and young people with EHCPs and the availability, sufficiency and timeliness of therapeutic provision. • Further development is needed to strengthen collective governance and shared accountability across education and health, to support more effective joint decision-making, clearer ownership of actions and improved system impact. • Representation from all education and care settings on the SEND Partnership Board is not yet consistent, and improving breadth and consistency of representation is necessary to ensure system-wide perspectives inform strategic planning and delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review, refresh and re-launch governance arrangements so they align with SEND reform principles, with clearer shared accountability, representation and oversight of delivery and impact.
<p>Health Services: No established communication or referral pathways between education and health. Health partners are not providing evidence of awareness of SEND responsibilities or participating in planning. There is very little data sharing to inform commissioning.</p>	<p>Health Services: Education providers are aware of relevant NHS services and how to signpost or refer to them, with at least limited contact between education and health partners. Understanding of ICB SEND roles is developing, setting the stage for stronger partnerships and health is seeking to understand more about needs from education.</p>	<p>Health Services: Positive working relationships with NHS and hospital AP are developing, and strategic engagement is increasing. Health providers are aware of designated ICB leads and the executive SEND lead, but board engagement is still limited. Inspections highlight need for further improvement.</p>	<p>Health Services: Partnerships with health are strong and joint commissioning is routine, with clear feedback and resource sharing. Lines of communication with ICB and NHS including health providers are well-established. Inspection reports confirm effective collaboration.</p>	3 – MATURING	20/04/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint commissioning arrangements have been in place for many years. The organisational changes within Health / the ICB require these to be reviewed but there are strong expressions from both parties that Joint commissioning arrangements remain a priority and will be supported going forward. • There are multiple workstreams in place covering a wide variety of issues to establish joint and collective solutions to a number of challenges. • The restructure of the ICB into clusters (and the introduction of a Deputy DCO) is improving commissioning oversight of SEND and contribution to strategic planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational change within the ICBs will require a review of governance and reporting arrangements once in place these will strengthen governance oversight and reporting within Health. • A number of workstreams are continuing to identify optimum referral pathways as part of wider transformation programmes (e.g. ADHD / autism and Speech & Language Therapy). • Combined data dashboards are being explored to ensure consistent understanding of performance and emerging issues across all partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and refresh health governance and reporting so it aligns with SEND reform principles and strengthens oversight of joint commissioning, referral pathways and system performance.
<p>Social Care/Local Authority: No evidence of strategic collaboration with education or health. Providers do not access local care offers. Early intervention models are not in place. There is very little data sharing to inform commissioning.</p>	<p>Social Care / Local Authority: Providers access the local care offer and engage with care teams for individual CYP needs. Strategic collaboration is starting, and the LA is initiating work on early intervention models, such as Families First reforms.</p>	<p>Social Care / Local Authority: Positive working relationships with LA care teams and managers are emerging. Designated social care officer helps embed care priorities. The LA is embedding Family Help and child protection reforms, and strategic coordination is improving.</p>	<p>Social Care / Local Authority: Strong, embedded relationships between education, health and care ensure joint planning and resource sharing. FFP and multi-agency reforms are routine. Children and families receive early support, and joint commissioning is mature.</p>	2 – DEVELOPING	20/04/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's Services is working closely with partner agencies to develop and embed Family Help and to implement the child protection reforms effectively across the system. • Children's Services has strong partnership with education and health colleagues, creating a well-established multi-agency approach across the service that has strengthened local capacity to identify and meet children's needs effectively. • Multi-agency relationships are positive, solution-focused and respectful, with professionals across all sectors demonstrating constructive challenge and a shared commitment to improving outcomes for children and families. • Early Support and Early Years pathways are well developed, enabling earlier identification of need, stronger practices that supports practitioners across health, education and children's services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint planning is not yet fully aligned across Children's Services, education and health. This inconsistency limits shared strategic oversight and makes it harder to plan effectively for the growing number of children and young people requiring EHCPs. Stronger joint commissioning arrangements are needed to develop a shared understanding of how increasing levels of need impact the availability, sufficiency and timeliness of therapeutic and specialist provision. • Collective governance and shared accountability across education, health and Children's Services require further strengthening. More cohesive structures would support clearer ownership of actions, more effective joint decision-making and greater system-wide impact for children and families. • Representation on the SEND Partnership Board is not yet sufficiently consistent across education and care settings. Improving the breadth and stability of representation is essential to ensure Children's Services, alongside partners, can draw on a full range of system perspectives to shape strategic planning and drive improvement across the SEND system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed Family Help and Child Protection reforms consistently across the partnership, with clear governance, workforce readiness and quality assurance to evidence impact on early intervention and safeguarding. • Strengthen joint strategic planning and commissioning with education and health to manage rising EHCP demand and improve timeliness, sufficiency and outcomes. • Use shared data and performance oversight to monitor impact, address variability and drive continuous improvement.

Pillar 6: Skilled and organised workforce across local authority, education settings, health and social care

0 - NOT YET EMERGING	1 - EMERGING	2 - DEVELOPING	3 - MATURING	ASSESSMENT	DATE COMPLETED	STRENGTHS/SUCCESSES/IN PROGRESS.	GAPS/ISSUES TO ADDRESS.	PRIORITIES & SUPPORT NEEDS.
<p>No structured training or development plan for SEND across education, health, and social care. Many staff lack confidence and skills to effectively deliver support for CYP with SEND.</p> <p>No recognition of the need for coordinated training to share best practice.</p>	<p>The LA workforce is beginning to access training and support as a means to building capacity and consistency into supervision, decision-making, casework and managing difficult conversations. Some education settings are beginning to build awareness and skills to support children with SEND, with early-stage training and resource development underway.</p> <p>There is initial recognition of the need for coordinated training across health, education, and social care. Early efforts are being made to identify best practices and include lived experiences.</p>	<p>The LA workforce accesses structured training and support. Supervision practices are being strengthened, leading to improved consistency in decision-making and casework quality. Education settings are developing the skills and confidence to meet the needs of children with SEND, supported by more coordinated training and guidance.</p> <p>Training and development across the SEND system is becoming more proactive and collaborative, with increasing integration of best practice and lived experience into professional learning.</p>	<p>The LA workforce is well-trained, regularly updated, and appropriately supported, managed and supervised. Wider workforce across education settings is skilled in meeting the needs of children with SEND. There is proactive shaping of training and development of all practitioners in the local SEND system, including health and social care, to ensure there is a broad understanding of best practice, incorporating lived experiences into practitioners' professional development.</p>	<p>3 – MATURING</p>	<p>11/03/26</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong leadership stability is in place across key statutory and strategic roles, including the Director of Children's Services (DCS), Strategic Leads, Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) and Local Authority Head of SEND. There is no reliance on agency staff, which has supported continuity, effective decision-making and well-established, trusting relationships across the system. • Capacity pressures have been clearly identified and proactively addressed, including through targeted increases in statutory assessment capacity, supporting improved system resilience and responsiveness. • Robust clinical supervision arrangements are embedded across education, health and care, ensuring consistent professional oversight, high-quality practice and effective multi-agency working. • A comprehensive and increasingly mature SEND Workforce Development Programme is in place, with strong links to schools, early years settings and health partners. The programme makes effective use of local specialist expertise, including educational psychologists, specialist teachers and speech and language therapists, to build system-wide capability and promote inclusive practice. • CWPT has introduced a new 'front door' for mental health services, to ensure that the available workforce are efficiently deployed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are identified capacity pressures within elements of the health workforce and the educational psychology service, which are impacting system responsiveness and sustainability. These pressures are recognised as priority areas for further development. • Workforce development planning requires stronger alignment with health partners, to ensure a fully integrated, system-wide approach to recruitment, retention, training and deployment across education, health and social care. • The absence of a full-time Designated Social Care Officer limits social care leadership capacity within the SEND system. Strengthening this role will further support effective multi-agency decision-making, accountability and practice oversight. • Use data on training delivery to assure engagement is consistent across educational settings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a sustainable local area SEND workforce strategy aligned with the EAH/EHC offer, including recruitment and retention, training, supervision and deployment, with measures to evaluate impact.

Pillar 7: Targeted and judicious use of resources including place planning, sufficiency and use of capital

0 - NOT YET EMERGING	1 - EMERGING	2 - DEVELOPING	3 - MATURING	ASSESSMENT	DATE COMPLETED	STRENGTHS/SUCCESSES/IN PROGRESS.	GAPS/ISSUES TO ADDRESS.	PRIORITIES & SUPPORT NEEDS.
<p>No clear strategy for sufficiency or place planning and capital projects lack alignment with needs. Review and evaluation processes are absent or extremely limited and stakeholder input is not systematically gathered.</p> <p>The Local SEND Reform Plan is incomplete or missing and there are no clear mitigating actions to ensure efficient use of resources or value for money.</p>	<p>Review and evaluation processes are being used periodically, and stakeholder input informs some service adjustments. Processes for regular monitoring and service improvement are taking shape.</p> <p>The Local SEND Reform Plan provides limited information on mitigating actions to improve the efficient use of resources and secure value for money.</p>	<p>Regular reviews are taking place, drawing on broader stakeholder input including schools, families, and young people. Performance is benchmarked against other areas and findings inform targeted improvement plans.</p> <p>The Local SEND Reform Plan provides evidence of efficient use of resources and value for money.</p>	<p>Comprehensive, ongoing monitoring using multiple sources of data and qualitative insights drives continuous improvement. Deep dives into specific issues lead to strategic changes, and effective benchmarking ensures consistent progress toward the best outcomes. There is clear evidence of efficient use of resources and a focus on value for money.</p>	<p>3 – MATURING</p>	<p>11/03/26</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local area has consistently maintained a balanced position within its High Needs funding block and is not currently in an overall deficit. This has been achieved through a targeted and judicious approach to resource allocation, alongside sustained investment in local provision to support inclusion and value for money. • Funding decisions are made transparently and collaboratively, with oversight through the Schools Forum and other established network groups. Partner agencies contribute to strategic decision-making, including the prioritisation of spend in line with shared system objectives. • A five year demand projection for places is in place, providing a clear understanding of future pressures and their potential impact on system capacity and sufficiency planning. • Mainstream provision is prioritised within the local area's SEND strategy, reflecting a clear commitment to inclusion and to meeting needs at the earliest point, wherever possible, within universal and targeted settings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The five year demand projections require wider sharing and active use across the partnership, to ensure they consistently inform strategic decision-making across the local authority, NHS and education and care settings, particularly in relation to capacity, sufficiency and future investment planning. • Further work is required with health partners to strengthen assurance around value for money, ensuring greater consistency, transparency and alignment between health spend and agreed SEND priorities and outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen assurance and value-for-money oversight of commissioning for therapeutic services, including transparent spend, outcomes monitoring and alignment to agreed SEND priorities.