

Meeting the needs of Special Educational Needs and Disability learners

July 2025 People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

National overview of the SEND system

- More children and young people than ever before are being identified as having SEND
- The number of children and young people with EHCPs has risen by 140% since 2014
- The increase in the identification of SEND appears to have been greater in England than in other large European nations
- More children and young people than ever before require specialist provision
- The rise in numbers of children and young people with EHCPs has been accompanied by a similarly steep increase in the number of pupils placed in special schools
- More money than ever before is being invested in SEND, but it is significantly less than what is actually being spent
- Outcomes of children and young people with SEND and families' day-to-day experiences of the system have not improved

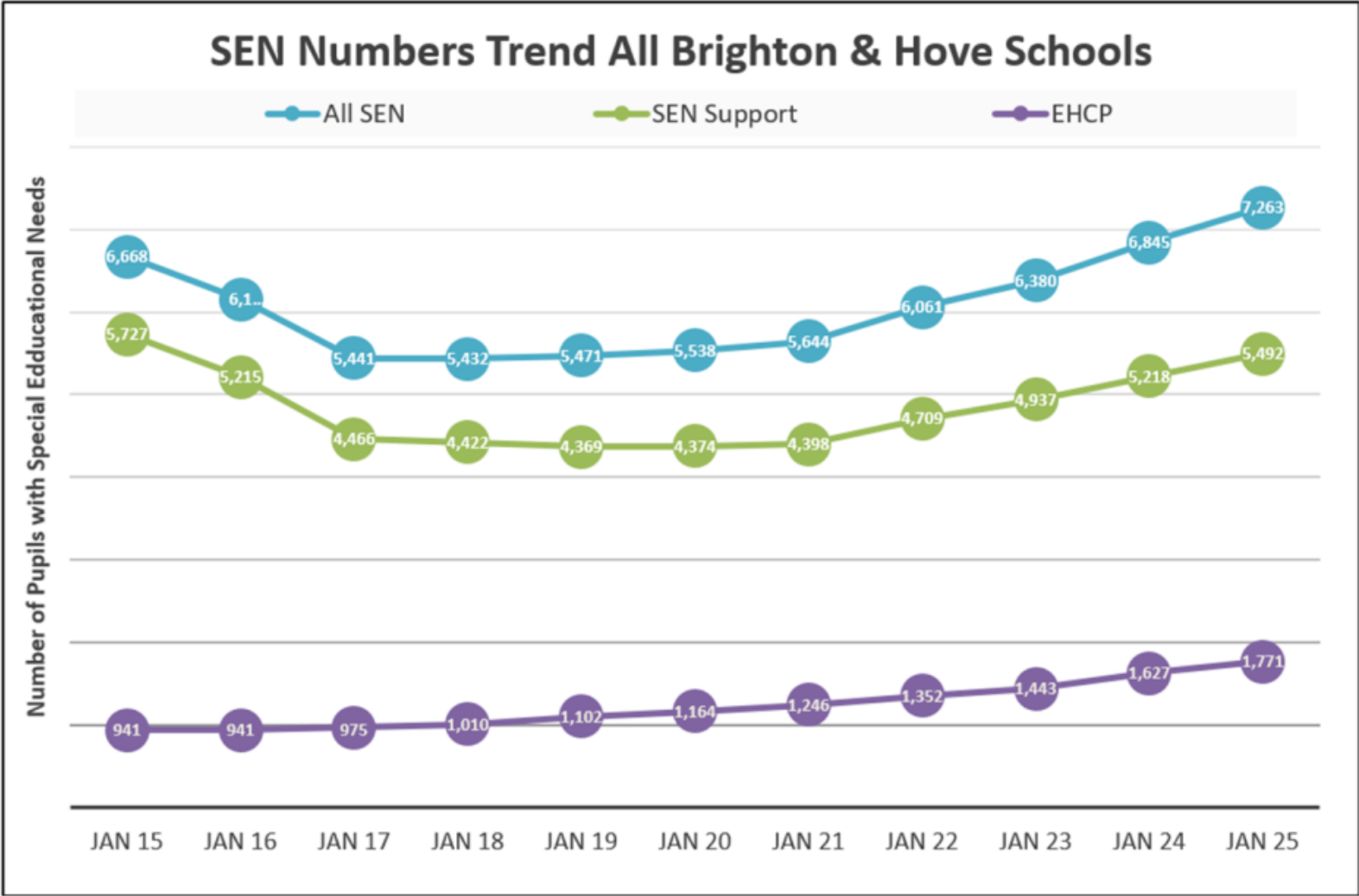
SEND overview and context in BHCC

As per national trends, B&H continues to see a large rise in the prevalence of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) across our child population

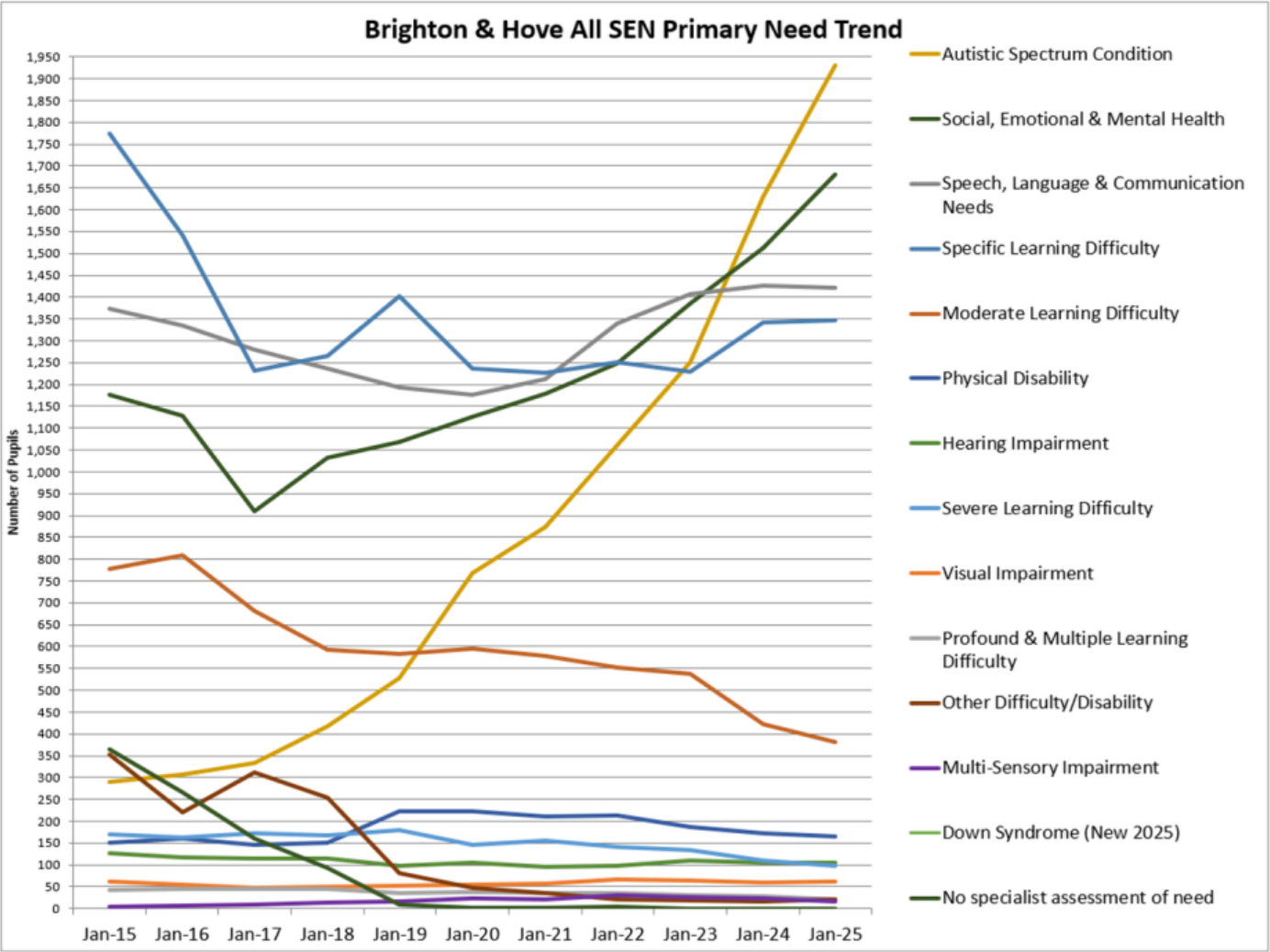
- 5.8% of Brighton and Hove pupils have an Education, Health and care Plan (national 5.3%)
- 18% of Brighton and Hove pupils are receiving SEND Support (14.2% national)
- The primary need of Brighton and Hove pupils receiving SEND Support is for Social Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH)
- The primary need of Brighton and Hove pupils with an EHCP is for autism.

2 outstanding special schools – HillPark and DownsView
Pupil Referral Unit for ages 7 to 16 - both - judged 'Good'

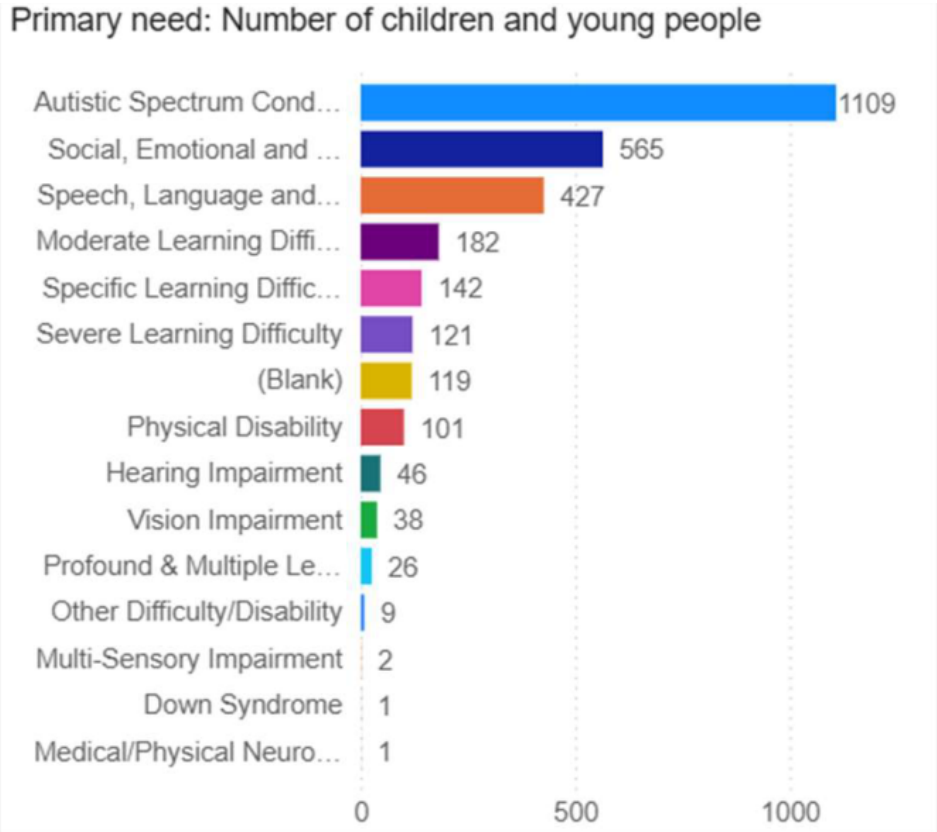
SEND overview and context - schools



SEND overview and context – Jan 25



Total number of EHCPs – all ages (up to age 25)



The current position in Brighton and Hove

- The graph shows how the needs of the SEND population has changed over the past 10 years. This brings into sharp focus where the increases have been, both at SEND support and for children and young people with an EHCP.
- In January 2015 there were just under 300 children and young people in our schools with a primary need of autism. In January 2025, there were over 1900 children with a primary need of autism. This is an increase of over 84%.
- In January 2015 there were just over 1150 children and young people in our schools with a primary need of Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH). In January 2025, there were just over 1650 children and young people in our schools with a primary need of SEMH. This is an increase of over 30%.
- With the exception of speech and language needs which has risen slightly, all other needs groups have remained constant or have decreased.
- The increase in need has also had an impact upon our Home to School Transport spend which has significantly increased over the last 5 years.

What we currently provide

Name of School	Needs they support	Number of places	Age of children/ young people that attend	Ofsted Rating
Hill Park School	Severe Learning Disabilities and Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities:	216	Age 4 – 16	Outstanding
Downsview School	Severe Learning Disabilities and Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities:	224	Age 4 – 16	Outstanding
Downsview Link College	Severe Learning Disabilities and Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities:	42	Age 16 - 19	Requires Improvement

What we currently provide

Name of School	Needs they support	Number of places	Age of children/ young people that attend	Ofsted Rating
Pupil Referral Unit Key Stage 2 (7 to 11 Years) and KS 3 and 4 (Secondary Provision)	Social, Emotional and Mental Health	106	Age 7 to 16	Good
Connected Hub	Social, Emotional and Mental Health	36	Age 15 - 16	Good
St George's House (Satellite of Ropemakers Academy)	Social, Emotional and Mental Health	20	Age 14 - 16	Ropemakers Academy - Good
Bevendean	Deaf facility	12	Age 3 – 11	Good

What we currently provide

Name of School	Needs they support	Number of places	Age of children/ young people that attend	Ofsted Rating
The Hive	Autism Specialist Provision	32 places (2023) up to 64 places (Sept 2025)	Age 11 - 16	Under HillPark - Outstanding
Cullum Centre and KS5 – Hove Park Secondary School	Autism Specialist Provision	28	Age 11 - 19	Under Hove Park - Good
SWAN Centre - BACA	Autism Specialist Provision	22	Age 11 - 16	Under BACA - Good
West Blatchington Primary School ASC Facility	Autism Specialist Provision	18	Age 4 - 11	Good

What we currently provide

Name of School	Needs they support	Number of places	Age of children/ young people that attend	Ofsted Rating
Carden - unit	Speech and Language	22	Age 5-11	Good
Longhill – special facility	Severe specific learning difficulty	11	Age 11 - 16	Requires Improvement

Our Ofsted and CQC inspection 2023

Inspection outcome - The local area partnership's arrangements typically lead to positive experiences and outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The local area partnership is taking action where improvements are needed.

Leaders should improve their strategic approach to preparation for adulthood, so that all young people receive the right help and support they need to lead successful lives.

Leaders across the partnership should identify the steps that they will take to collectively monitor and measure the impact of their strategy and actions. These plans should be made clear to children, young people and their families with SEND in Brighton and Hove

Leaders must continue to develop their oversight and commissioning arrangements of suitable alternative provision so that there is sufficient provision that meets children and young people's SEN.

Some of the key actions taken since the inspection

In line with our priorities in the SEND Strategy we have undertaken the following:

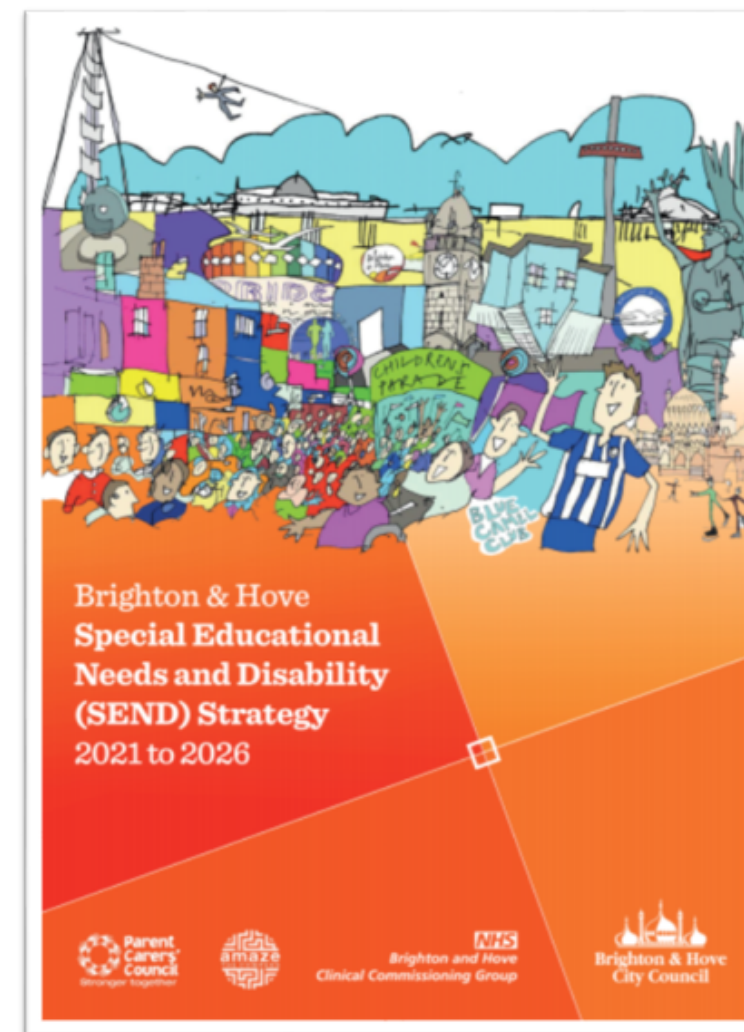
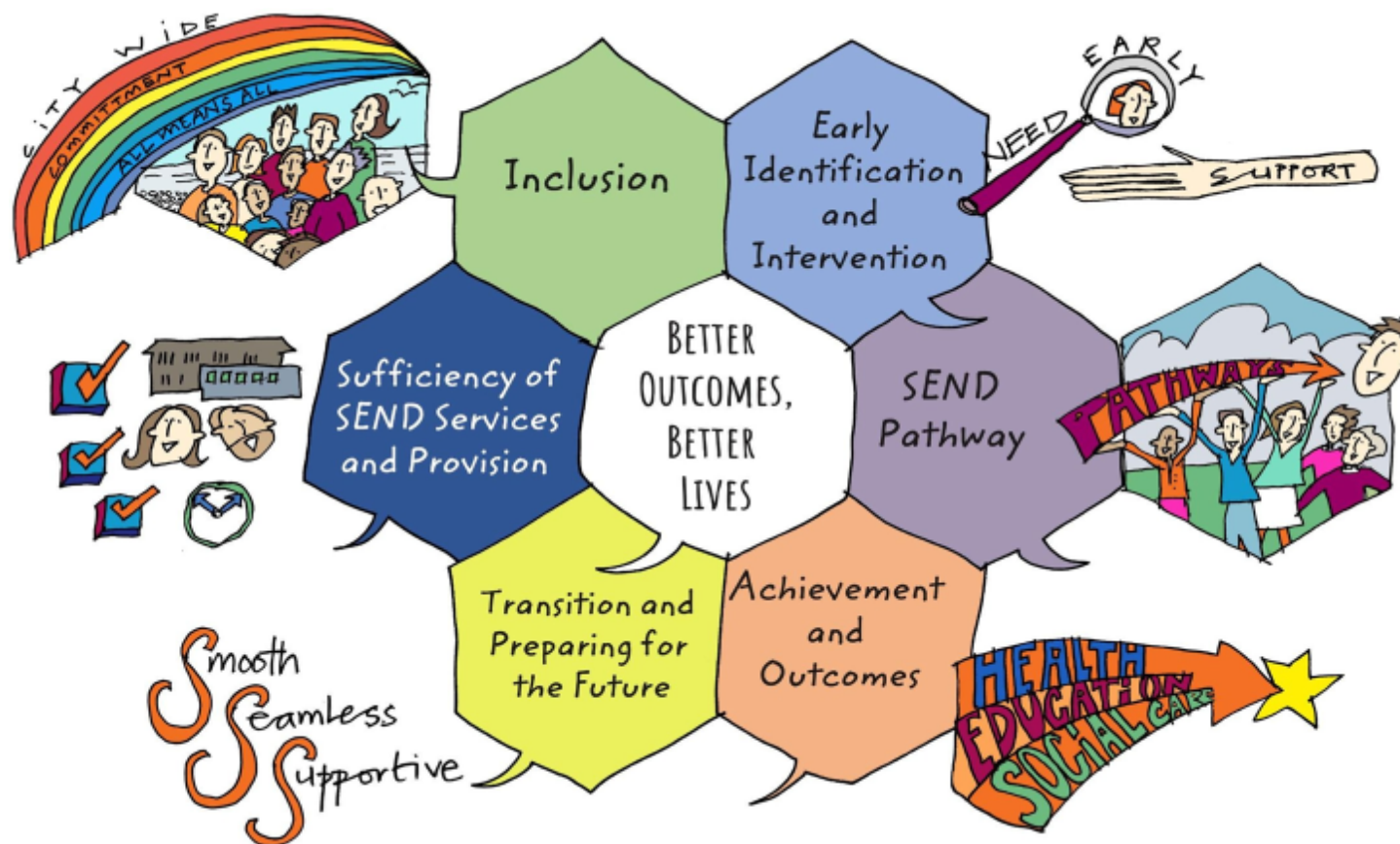
- Co-produced the Principles of belonging with stakeholders across the system
- Co-produced Preparation for Adulthood Pathway
- Strategic joint work across LA and NHS on Autism projects in co-production with our Parent and Carer Forum PaCC and Brighton and Hove Inclusion Support Service on PINS project, Autism in Schools and training for Local Authority Staff

Embed a graduated approach through:

- Co-producing Ordinarily Available Provision with internal and external stakeholders
- Implementation of 3 Tier Alternative Provision (AP) model across city schools with new Tier 1 and 2 interventions in schools
- AP Commissioner and AP Lead in post:
- AP Steering Group
- AP QA framework in place
- AP Directory under continuous development
- Implementation of additional specialist provision: The Hive, St George's House, Year 7 and 8 at the PRU

SEND Strategy 2021 – 2026

The six priorities

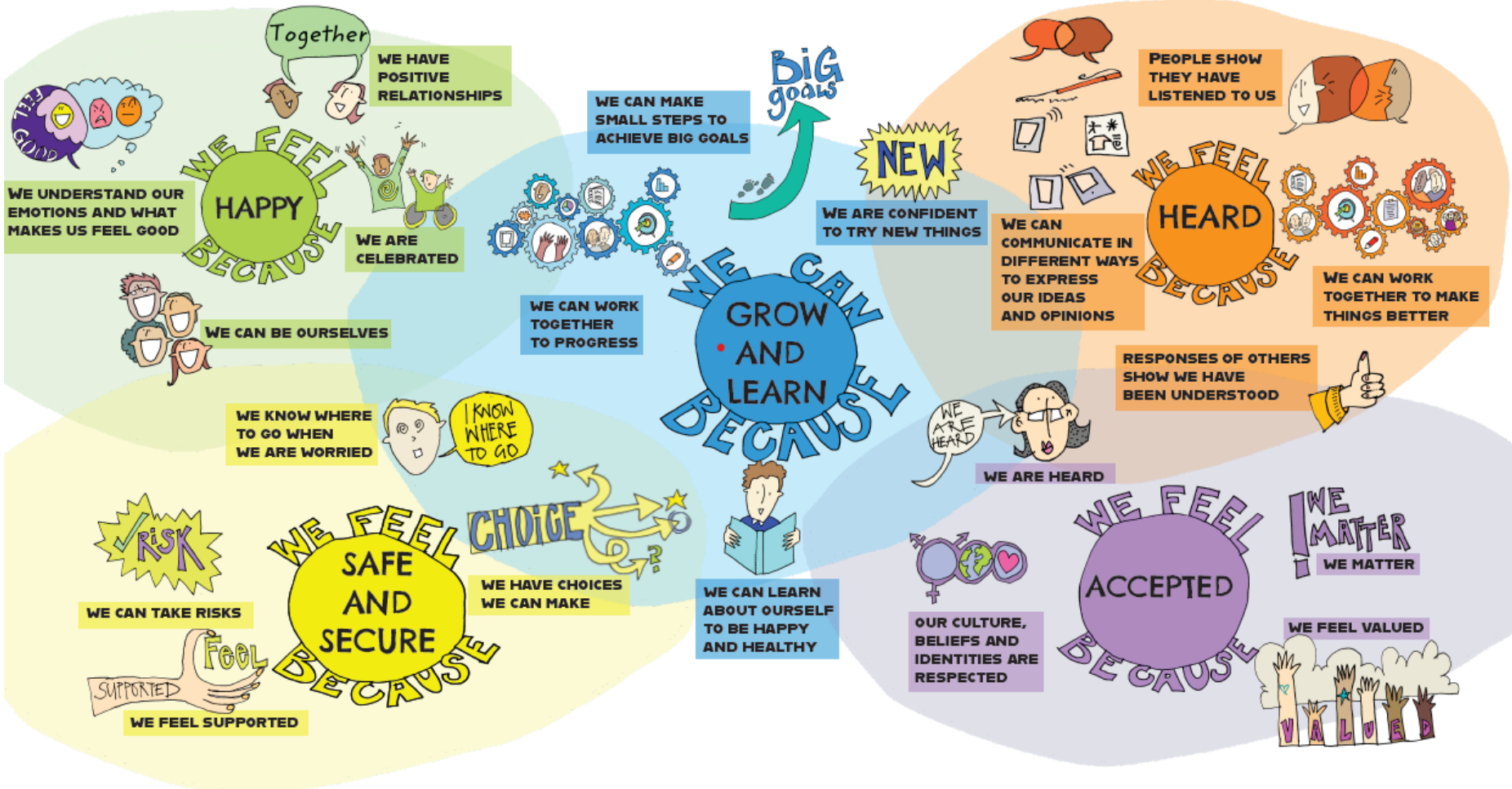


Approach in Brighton & Hove

PRINCIPLES OF BELONGING AN INCLUSION CHARTER FOR BRIGHTON AND HOVE.



In Brighton and Hove, we follow our co-produced Principles of Belonging for all our children and young people so they feel happy, safe and secure, accepted and heard so they can grow and learn.



DfE SEND and AP Change Programme

- The SEND Change Programme is a national programme to test some of the changes the Government wants to make to the system for supporting children and young people with SEND. It is being delivered by “Change Programme Partnerships” in each of the nine regions of England, each led by at least one named local authority.
- Brighton and Hove are in the South East Partnership led by Portsmouth, and partnered with East and West Sussex. The next phase of the programme is focussing on:
 - More joined up provision,
 - Early identification and prevention,
 - a consistent offer in all of our schools,
 - making sure mainstream school staff are properly trained to meet the needs of the children and young people they have in their school, and
 - better use of the resources we have.

DfE vision for inclusive education

The DfE want to shift the focus of local systems towards greater inclusion, using available resources more effectively across partners and between settings to identify and meet needs in mainstream education

To move from...		Towards...
Fragmented local landscape of provision for inclusion across education, health and local authorities	➡	More joined-up provision that responds to local needs and reflects a more consistent national approach
Reliance on statutory assessments and referrals to specialist services to access support	➡	Greater capacity for prevention, early identification and intervention to avoid needs escalating
Lack of confidence among parents and settings that special educational needs can be met within mainstream	➡	Consistent and comprehensive offer of support for inclusion that is valued by settings and has confidence of families
Lack of capacity and support within the mainstream workforce to meet needs inclusively	➡	Upskilling mainstream staff to be able to identify needs and suitable interventions, including by utilising specialist workforce differently
Unsustainable pressure on High Needs funding and conflict between partners about how to prioritise funding	➡	Better use of resources across local areas , with investment in earlier support and targeted intervention

The Hive



A provision of 53 autistic KS3 and 4 students who are mainstream ability with high levels of anxiety and onsite provision trauma. The Hive (part of Hill Park Special School) is our new autism provision for secondary aged children, parents and carers and the young people who attend have all provided very positive feedback on the way their needs are being supported. This provision has expanded from 32 places to 60 in two years.



Student Voice from The Hive



'I feel we're noticed more as smaller numbers. At my old school everyone was crammed in, talking at once and loud, other schools should be aware that not everyone likes noise'

'I feel we're more recognised as individuals, not just as students. Staff worry about our mental health and well-being.'

'There's lots of ignorance about mental health in other settings and what education is best for people. It's understood much better here.'

'I like having a quieter lunch hall and options for places to eat. The Hive does this well, giving people choice over the rooms they're in.'

'The attitudes, support and patience from staff has been amazing'

I love the trips and the opportunities we get to go out'

'The freedom to have sensory breaks when I need them has been important for me'.

SEMH specialist placements

- Our Pupil Referral Unit which received a 'Good' Ofsted judgement last year has adapted to provide long term SEMH placements for our Year 7 and in September Year 8 young people which has helped to ensure those young people who would have gone to Homewood College now have a full-time placements.



- St George's House supports those young people from 14 to 16 years old who have SEMH needs. We have seen some positive outcomes from this relatively new provision as some of the pupils from Homewood transitioned into this new school.

Specialist placements for 16-18 year olds

- Downs View Link College** – for young people who have significant learning difficulties, who are 16 to 19 years old.



- Cullum 6** – this provision provides access to specialist support and a dual placement whilst transitioning over the period of 1 year, to a permanent post 16 placement for year 13 young people. This could be to local colleges, or sixth forms to do a level study.

BESPOKE AND INDIVIDUALISED CULLUM SUPPORT...

POST 16 CULLUM CENTRE

Preparing for adulthood...



Some key developments -Alternative Provision

Alternative Provision (AP) is additional specialist support for a child that can either be delivered in school or more commonly off school site. It is intended to be a temporary intervention to help the child access learning in an environment where they can regulate their emotions and behaviours safely so they can remain or return to mainstream school

Tier 1 (early intervention and prevention):

- 5 primary schools now have Inclusion Intervention Spaces (small group provision for children who need some additional support) with a
- further 6 due to begin in January 2026.
- Feedback from both schools and parents has been very positive and for some
- children they have made accelerated progress in their learning and or social skills.

Tier 2 (more targeted intervention for those young people with SEMH needs)

- 2 Secondary schools have already piloted an Adapted Learning Provisions (ALP) and there will be 3 ALPS in September 2025. We are seeking a 4th school in academic year 25/26.
- ALPs are managed by the school. It is small provision linked to need - Max 9 children.
- The aim is provide early intervention to reduce risk of permanent exclusion.

Parent/Carer Feedback on the adaptive learning provisions

Parent/Carer: "An amazing start to the week and already X feels more positive about himself."

ALP Lead: A secondary student who has not been in a classroom for six years, has attended every ALP lesson this week.

ALP Survey: 100% of feedback stated CYP's attendance had improved since attending an ALP

ALP Survey: 100% of feedback stated the CYP's confidence had improved, and they were engaging more with others in a positive way.

ALP Lead: Student F received a Head Teacher's Award and scored a goal during his match against a rival secondary school.

ALP Survey: 100% of feedback stated they'd seen a positive change in the CYP's behaviour.

ALP Lead: ALP alumni student has not truanted since returning into his mainstream lessons (8 weeks)

ALP Survey: 100% of feedback stated that time in the ALP had helped the CYP to avoid further fixed term suspensions.

ALP Survey: 100% of feedback stated that the CYP's mental health & wellbeing had improved since attending the ALP

ALP Survey: 75% of feedback stated that the CYP was demonstrating increase resilience.

ALP Survey: 100% of feedback stated that time in the ALP had been a positive experience for their child.

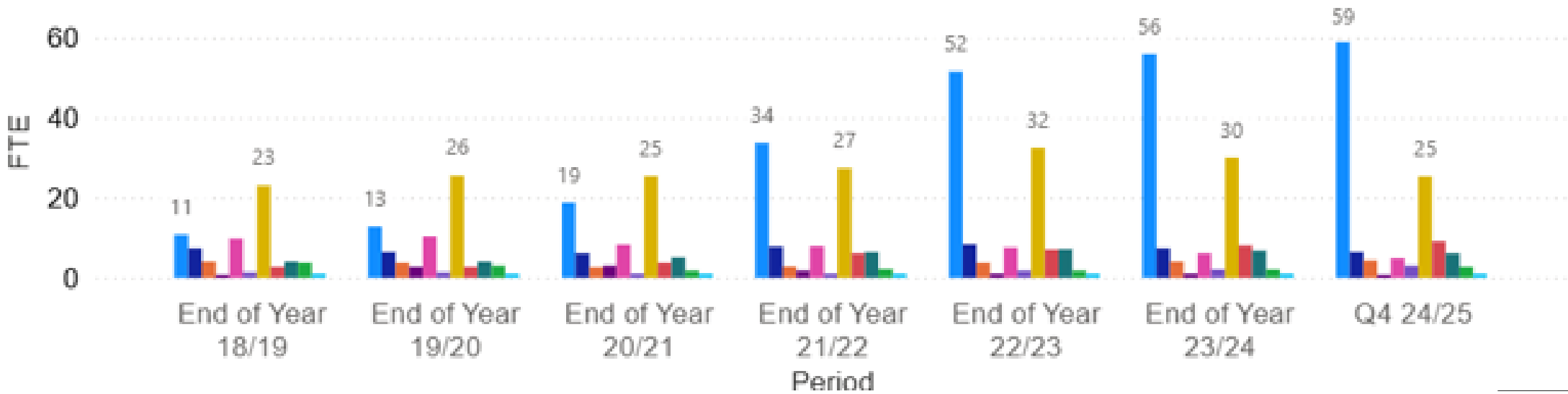


Educated outside of the city - numbers

We have seen an increase in the number of children and young people being educated out of the city. However, since we have further developed our provision since 2023 the rise in ASC placements is levelling off and the number of placement for SEMH is reducing. This will also have an impact on our Home to School Transport spend.

FTE

CONS ASD HI MLD OTH PD PMLD SEMH SLCN SLD SPLD VI



Educated outside of the city - costs

We have seen an increase in spend on Autism placements outside of the city but a decrease in the funding for SEMH funding. We believe we are starting to see an impact in the 3 Tier Alternative Provision Model which means children can go to school in their local area.



New Provision in Academic Year 25/26

Name of School	Needs they support	Number of places	Age of children/ young people that attend	Ofsted Rating
Moulsecoomb Primary Schools ASC Resource Base	Autism Specialist Provision	16	Age 4 – 11	Good
Stanford Junior School ASC Resource Base	Autism Specialist Provision	12	Age 7 – 11	Good
A third secondary school	Autism Resource Base	20	Ages 11 - 16	N/A TBC
Adaptive Learning Provision	SEMH	36	Ages 11-16	Spread across city secondary schools
KS2 PRU satellite at Fairlight Primary	Social, Emotional and Mental Health	10	Age 7 - 11	Under PRU – Good

Our plans for the next 12 months

Continue to embed Principles of Belonging across all settings

SEND Sufficiency Priorities:

- Further development of SEMH services and provision in the city with PRU KS2 satellite provision within some of our mainstream schools.
- Further development of Autism services and provision in the city: a further two Autism resource bases in our primary schools and one in our secondary schools.

SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment finalised with partners in public health and NHS Sussex used to inform future school placements

AP SEND Change Programme funded until March 2026. Work will continue:

- Embedding of Ordinarily Available Provision
- Continue to develop and embed AP provision in and out of schools
- Working on a Local Area Delivery Plan to support inclusive mainstream practice

Embed the Emotionally Based School Avoidance toolkit

National changes ahead

ISOS Report – commissioned by the County Councils Network and the Local Government Association (2024): Towards an Effective and Financially Sustainable Approach to SEND in England

Overarching messages:

- Reform of the SEND system is essential and unavoidable
- Delaying reforms will increase the cost in every sense
- Current SEND system does not meet requirements of an effective system
- These include financial sustainability, adequate funding, fair allocation of resources, equity, and impact in achieving outcomes
- High needs expenditure has increased significantly increased from £4 billion in 2015-16 to £10.8 billion in 2023-24
- Root causes of the crisis are systemic and require national reform
- Challenges are not the result of any group behaving unreasonably, but of an incoherent system

SEND funding

Supporting the SEND system (The SEN team, B&H Inclusion Support Service)

£3.7m

High Needs Block (HNB) Budget (special school and facilities costs)

£17.0m

HNB (HNB) Budget Specialist placements – mainly out of the city (pre and post 16)

£9.8m

HNB (HNB) Budget Top Ups to support inclusive schools and other SEN Interventions

£12.7m

Home to School Transport

£8.0m

TOTAL – Estimated SEND Related Funding 2025/26 is £51.2m

Government direction

White Paper on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) expected Autumn 2025

- Building upon the SEND Review and the learning from the SEND and AP Change Programme: Green Paper consultation in March 2022.
- The goal is to improve educational outcomes and ensure that children with SEND receive the necessary support at the right time and in the right place.

Key aspects of the upcoming White Paper:

- National Standards
- Local Partnerships
- Joined up System
- Addressing Educational Gaps
- Focus on Literacy and Numeracy
- Right Support, Right Place, Right Time

