



Tower Hamlets  
Clinical Commissioning Group



TOWER HAMLETS

A draft  
SEND  
Strategy  
for  
Tower  
Hamlets  
2018-2023  
Summary

# Introduction

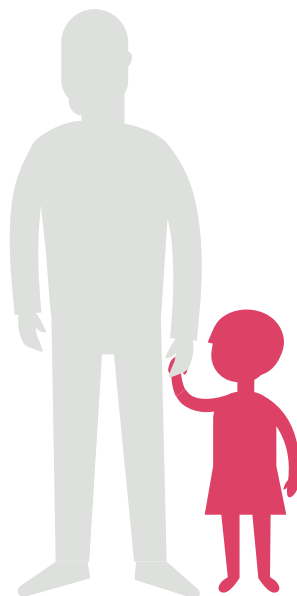
This draft strategy sets out our plans for the education and care of children and young people with **special education needs and disabilities (SEND)** in Tower Hamlets from 2018 – 2023.

Many children and young people with SEND, along with their families, rely on support from schools, the council, the NHS and voluntary organisations.

We spend around **£50 million a year in Tower Hamlets** across schools, agencies and services for children and young people with SEND. We already know that we can do a better job of coordinating this. The strategy sets out plans to organise both services and budgets so that children and young people with SEND do even better in the future.

The strategy will make sure there are more opportunities and **better information about care and education** across the board. We will also make it simpler for parents/carers to be involved in the big decisions about SEND, as well as with those about the care of their own child.

**To share your views on our draft strategy, please respond to our consultation by 19 November 2017.**



# SEND in Tower Hamlets

Out of 47,000 children and young people in Tower Hamlets around 7,900 (or 17%) get additional support with their special education needs and disabilities (SEND), which may include:

- Multi-sensory impairment
- Profound and multiple learning difficulty
- Specific learning difficulty
- Moderate learning difficulty
- Severe learning difficulty
- Hearing impairment
- Visual impairment
- Speech, language and communication needs
- Autistic spectrum disorder
- Physical disability
- Social, emotional and mental health

Tower Hamlets ranks as having one of the highest proportions of children in the country with SEND.

## Additional help

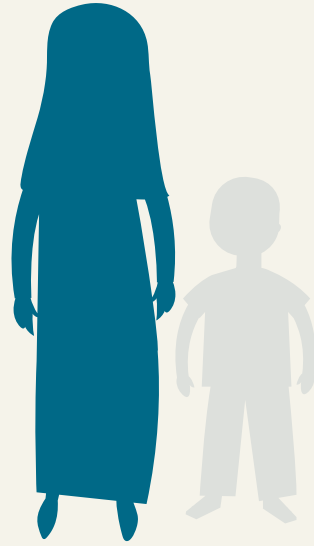
Most children and young people with SEND receive additional help with their learning at school. About 1 in 4, however, have high needs. That means they might need extra help from health professionals as well as from their school. These children will have statutory Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan: a plan which explains the extra help and support the child or young person needs to be able to learn well at school.

## Population growth

The school aged population in Tower Hamlets is expected to grow by over 28% by 2026. The number of children with SEND should, at least, keep pace with this growth. Although we do not know exactly, this might mean as many as 630 more children and young people with SEND with an EHC plan.

# The vision

**For all Tower Hamlets' children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to lead fulfilling lives and be as independent as possible; supported to learn, thrive and achieve by their families, services and local communities.**



## Principles

**The fundamental principles that will underpin SEND in Tower Hamlets:**

- All services will provide high-quality education and care.
- Education, health and social care services will work well together, supported by voluntary and independent organisations, and share accurate information in the best interest of the child and their family.
- Children, young people and their parents/carers will help

to plan and make choices about their support as much as possible.

- Funding and support is allocated fairly and openly.
- Children and young people are helped to be as independent as possible.
- Additional needs are identified as early as possible and services made available locally, within supportive communities.

We will work with parent/carer representatives, children and young people to turn these principles into a "SEND Charter".

# Priorities

There are five priority areas that we propose to focus on over the next five years to improve the lives of children and young people with SEND.

## Priority 1

### Leading SEND

- We will launch a new SEND Strategy Board that will feature representatives of head teachers and parents/carers.
- We will plan better so that there will be enough school places locally for children and young people with SEND, particularly those with an EHC plan.
- We will use improved statistics, data collection and other information so we know what is working well and where we need to make improvements.
- We will make sure that we keep parents/carers informed.



## Priority 2

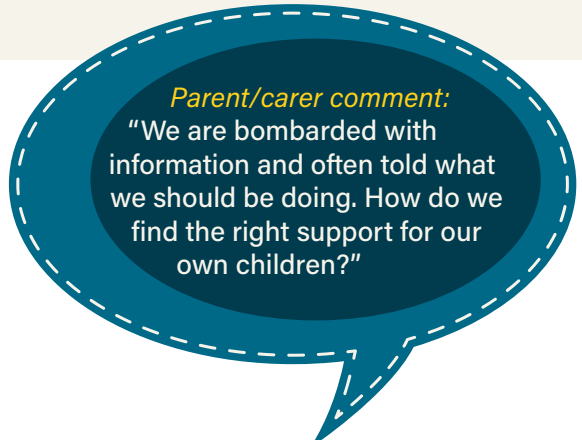
### Timely identification and assessment

- We will have improved processes for EHC needs assessments and decision-making, which involve parents/carers and schools to produce clear EHC plans.
- We will streamline and remove unnecessary assessments for children and young people with SEND.
- We will shorten waiting times for assessment for children with autism by reviewing and improving the arrangements.

## Priority 3

### Better outcomes and pathways

- There will be pathway maps for all main groups of children and young people with SEND, broken down by age group with links to relevant services, that have been co-designed with parents and young people.
- We will include a breakdown of the budgets for all EHC plans.
- We will run a campaign to let more parents know about personal budgets and direct payments so that more people will take them up.



## Priority 4

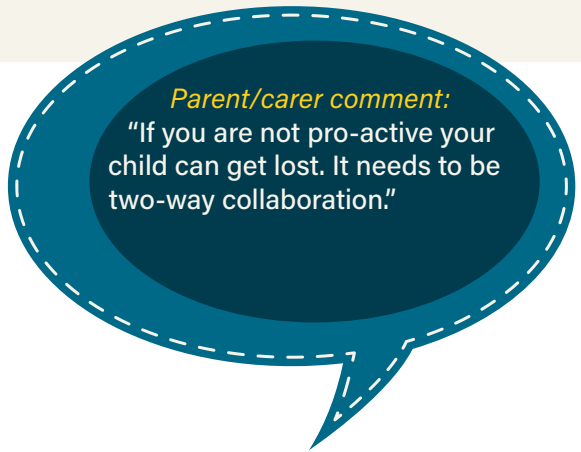
### Clear information and involvement

- We will make sure that the SEND Charter is useful and helps parents/ carers get the support needed for their child with SEND.
- Parent/carer volunteers will carry out 'mystery shopper' activities to identify where we can improve services.
- We want to increase understanding and awareness of SEND locally so that there are fewer reports of negative experiences from parents/carers.

# Priority 5

## Moving on

- We want to see a large increase in the number of supported work experience, internship and apprenticeship places for young people with SEND in Tower Hamlets, as a result of a new Mayor's Challenge.
- We will have at least 30 additional, supported housing units available for young adults with complex needs in Tower Hamlets.
- We will have clear, updated EHC plans for all young people with SEND from age 14 and make sure they are assessed in good time for any adult services they might need.



# Making it happen

The council and Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group (THCCG) share a joint vision:

**to provide the best leadership for the local SEND system and, with partners,**

improve the educational, health and emotional wellbeing of all children and young people with SEND in Tower Hamlets.

We want to make sure that all parts of the system – which includes organisations, professionals, parents/carers, along with children and young people with SEND - work together more closely. As a result, we will make better decisions and map out the future direction, together.

We will judge the strategy's success through there being:

- Even more under 5s with additional needs reaching the 'expected levels of development.'
- Improved and faster SEND assessments: at least 90% will be carried out within 20 weeks.
- At least a threefold increase in the openings for work experience and apprenticeships for young people with SEND.
- Clear information will be available to all parents/carers via the Local Offer website .

Local campaigns will help to keep residents, parents/carers, children and young people with SEND informed about what is happening next.