



Worcestershire Local Area Self Evaluation of Services for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Recognising signs of improvement
and identifying areas of focus

Draft
2025/2026



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An Introduction

Welcome to the 2025-2026 Worcestershire Local Area Partnership SEND Self-Evaluation.

A self-evaluation intends to provide an evidence-based overview of current practice and impact across our local area. Structured using the key themes of the Ofsted SEND Inspection Framework, the evaluation uses this consistent set of themes to understand children and families' experiences. This brings together the voices of practitioners, children and young people and their families, to provide views on current practices, impact, and future priorities – informed by the lived experience and journey of the children and young people we serve.

The Worcestershire SEND Self-Evaluation reflects our commitment to achieve genuine co-production. It has been developed collaboratively with partners, practitioners, parent carers, and children and young people.

Guided by the Four Cornerstones Approach to Co-production - welcome and care, value and include, communicate and work in partnership - children, young people, families, and practitioners have worked together to evaluate education, health, and care experiences.

The Worcestershire Parent Carer Forum (WPCF) and representatives from across all services have contributed to this evaluation, offering insight, feedback, and constructive challenge to strengthen its accuracy, transparency, and shared ownership. This process deepened collective understanding and reinforced accountability across the partnership.

Throughout development, the WPCF are a central and valued partner – actively evaluating the outcomes of their contributions and reflecting on the wider impact of their work. Their voices, perspectives, and lived experiences are woven throughout this document.

In parallel, co-production officers have worked closely with children and young people to ensure their experiences and priorities directly inform the actions for the coming year. To support inclusion and accessibility, an easy-read version will be developed, enabling children and young people to engage meaningfully and see how their voices have shaped our shared journey.



Foreword

from the Executive Leads of the Worcestershire SEND and Alternative Provision Local Area Partnership

Since the Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection in April 2024, the Worcestershire Local Area Partnership has faced significant challenges including national changes across NHS leadership, the realignment of the Integrated Care Boards and the financial constraints the County Council is experiencing - all understandably capturing headlines. Despite such challenges, the partnership has made meaningful progress in strengthening its collaborative approach to delivering the improvements the children, young people and parents and carers of Worcestershire deserve. Collaboration is only possible when those receiving services are genuinely involved. Whilst there is still work to be done, children and young people with SEND and their parent carers now play a central role in shaping strategic approaches and reviewing the operation of the services themselves.

Co-production describes a collaborative approach to designing, delivering and evaluating services, where practitioners and service users work together transparently and as equal partners, to achieve common goals. By valuing diverse perspectives and lived experiences, the partnership has deepened its understanding of how to effectively co-produce and is now focused on the real impact its actions are having on the lives of children, young people, and their families. This self-evaluation has been produced collaboratively using the principles of co-production. It is not 'complete' and never will or ought to be, improvements have been made but further improvements are required. This is the reality for any service aspiring to be 'good'.

As leaders of the Local Area Partnership, we are delighted to welcome [Voices United](#). [Voices United](#) is Worcestershire's forum for children and young people up to the age of 25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). It was formed during the summer of 2025 and is rapidly gaining a vision, identity and purpose, all shaped by its members. Representatives from the forum have attended the SEND and AP Executive Board and other key partnership events to ensure services are shaped by those who use them. Three members of Voices United were involved in a workshop to shape the Local Area Partnership's Self Evaluation.



The Worcestershire Parent Carer Forum (WPCF) are active partners in shaping the local SEND offer, contributing to strategic discussions through committee, the Executive Board, and system-wide working groups. Their strong partnership ensures lived experiences inform decision-making, and they continue working with stakeholders to promote inclusion, co-production, and improved outcomes for all SEND families, including those who are marginalised.

Recently a parent carer attended the Worcestershire SEND and Alternative Provision Executive Board and shared her experiences of service intervention over the years for her 9-year-old child. Hearing the reality of her experience was difficult but important, as this insight is essential for shaping services that truly meet the needs of those they support. Whilst some progress has been made across the partnership in timely access to services, we acknowledge in some areas significant waits are still occurring and as a partnership we have agreed plans to reduce waiting times against a backdrop of increasing demand. **We have listened and remain committed to ensuring** best practice access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and Occupational Therapy assessment (OTA); we recognise the importance of being able to effectively communicate with an EHCP Co-ordinator; for schools to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of their learners; and to review how Educational Psychology assessments are carried out.

Within the sections of this self-evaluation these themes are referenced, and progress since the last inspection evidenced. In the **'areas of focus'**, we share our plans to improve further. A meaningful self-evaluation should be transparent, clearly demonstrate progress, identify gaps in intervention and outline plans to address those gaps. As a partnership – we believe this self-evaluation serves those objectives.

Mari Gay
Managing Director of Herefordshire
and Worcestershire Integrated
Care Board

Adam Johnston
Director of Children's Services,
Worcestershire County Council



Hello from Voices United!

Voices United provides us, as children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), with a platform where our voices are listened to, respected, and valued. It gives us the opportunity to share our experiences, express our views, and contribute to the decisions that directly affect our lives. Being part of the forum helps us to develop confidence, communication, and leadership skills, while connecting with others who understand what it means to have SEND. We take pride in representing not only our own perspectives, but also those of other young people who may not always have the chance to be heard.

Through Voices United, we are able to engage directly with decision makers to help them understand the realities of living with SEND. We want professionals to listen carefully, follow the law, and ensure that plans and support are accurate and effective for every young person. We believe our contributions are helping to bring about positive change by improving awareness, understanding, and attitudes across schools and services. As Voices United continues to grow, we aim to ensure that the voices of children and young people with SEND remain central to all decisions that influence our education, wellbeing, and future opportunities.

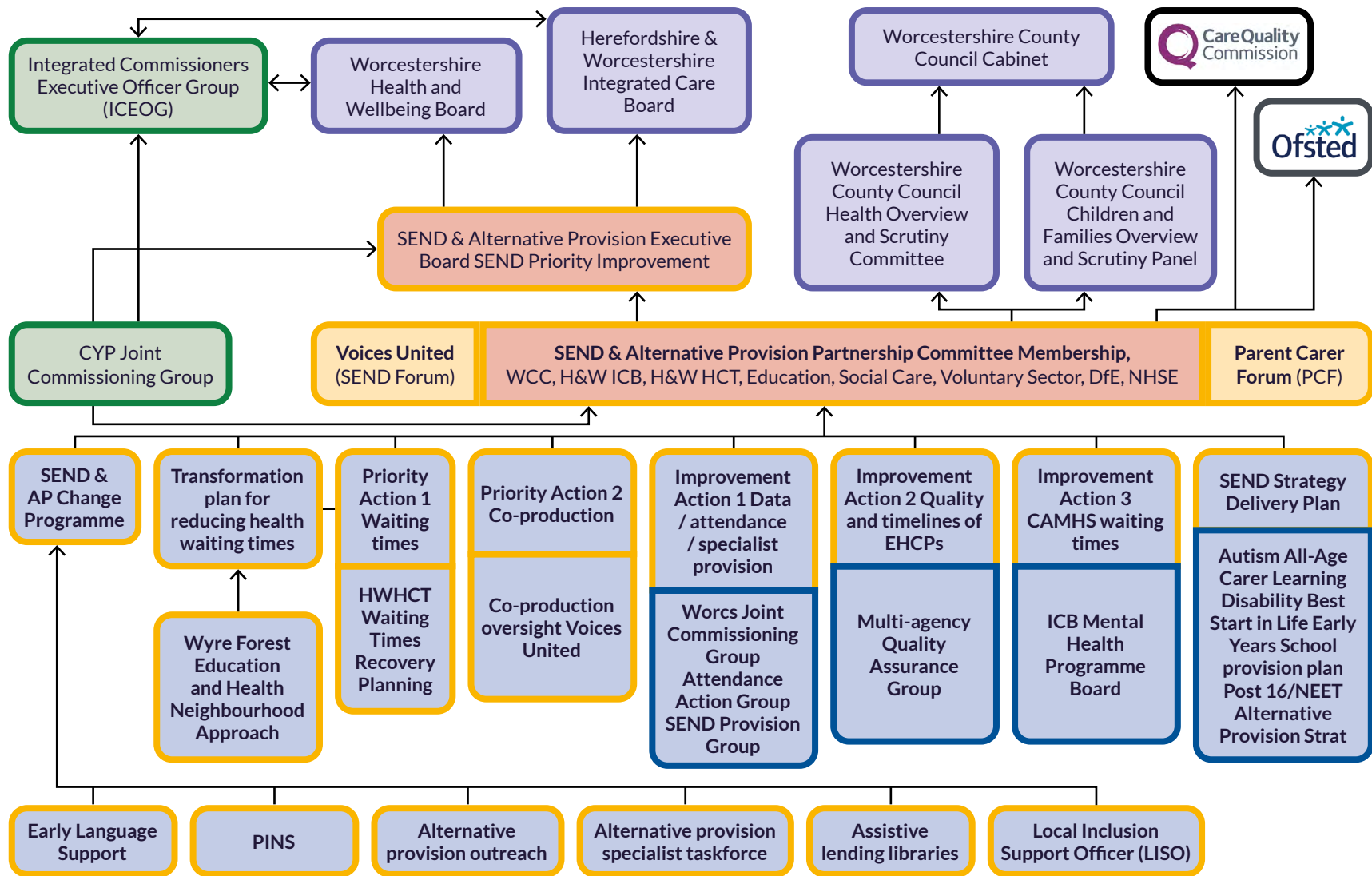


Voices United



Worcestershire Local Area Partnership Governance Arrangements

Working collectively with Children and Young People with SEND



Communication and Information Networks

- Website - Local Offer
- Social Media
- Parent Carers
- Media
- Schools & settings
- Staff and elected members

Key

- Task and finish/ operational forums
- The SEND & AP Partnership
- Voice of children, young people and parent carers
- Commissioning
- Public forums - not SEND specific
- External inspection and regulation

SEND In Worcestershire

Population

166,849	0-25 years
85,163	Male
81,686	Female
29,181	0-4 years
40,399	5-10 years
35,833	11-15 years
26,573	16-19 years
34,863	20-25 years
27.2%	0-25 % of population

Education

600	Providers delivering early years
177	Primary schools
93	Primary school academies
18	Middle schools
12	Middle school academies
31	Secondary schools
28	Secondary school academies
16	Special schools
9	Special school academies

Ethnicity of Worcestershire CYP

85.5%	White
5.3%	Asian or Asian British
4.8%	Mixed or dual background
2.2%	Unclassified
1.6%	Black or Black British
0.6%	Other

SEN Provision 2024/25 - number of school pupils

SEN Provision: 14,000

EHCP: 5,071

	ASD Autistic Spectrum Disorder	HI Hearing Impairment Team	MLD Moderate Learning Difficulties	MSI Multi Sensory Impairment	OTH Other	PD Physical Disability	PMLD Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties	NSA No Specialist Assessment	SLD Severe Learning Difficulties	SEMH Social, Emotional, Mental Health needs	SPLD Specific Learning Difficulty	SLCN Speech, Language and Communication needs	VI Visual Impairment
SEN Support	7.6%	1.2%	11.6%	0.2%	2.1%	1.6%	0.1%	4.3%	0.2%	19.4%	13.4%	37.4%	0.9%
EHCP	19.5%	0.8%	16.4%	0.4%	4.0%	3.3%	1.8%	0.0%	2.6%	22.9%	2.0%	25.7%	0.7%
Total	12.7%	1.1%	10.7%	0.2%	2.2%	2.5%	0.5%	3.2%	1.7%	18.8%	11.4%	33.8%	1.2%

Growing demand for SEND provision in Worcestershire

The number of Education Health and Needs Assessments (EHCNAs) increased significantly from 1142 in 2022 to 1883 in 2024. With monthly average increasing from 95 to 157 respectively. For 2025 to June end there have been 1009, a monthly average of 168, with a yearly forecast of 2018.

In 2025 a total of 1,025 new Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) were issued to children and young people residing in the local area.

The proportion of children and young people aged 0-25 with an EHCP has increased from 2.74% in 2022 to 4.19% in 2025. This compares with England from 2.84% to 3.77% over the same period.

Speech, language and communication needs account for 37.4% of all EHCP's compared with 25.7% for England in the 0-25 age group. Social, emotional, and mental health accounts for 19.4% of EHCP compared to 23.6% for England.



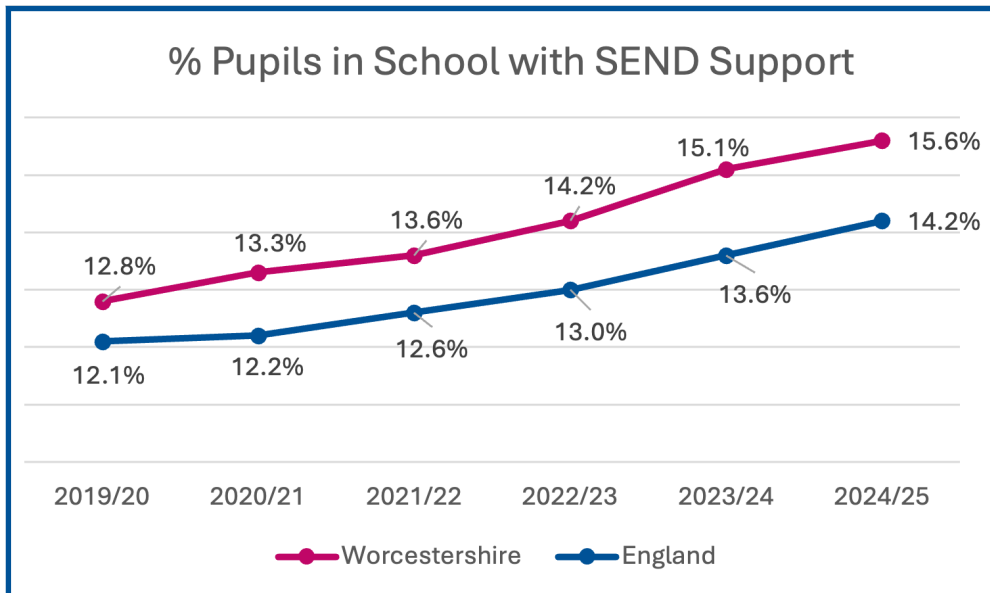
SEN2 Snapshot in January of each year	Worcestershire	England	England LA Average	West Mids Average
2019	3502	353,995	2,329	2826
2020	4053	390,109	2,567	2993
2021	4182	430,697	2,834	3295
2022	4555	473,255	3,114	3536
2023	4,904	517,048	3,401	3785
2024	5,945	576,474	3,695	4254
2025	6,970	638,745	4,202	4765
% increase in numbers 2019-2025	99%	80%	80%	69%

England average based on 152 Local Authorities

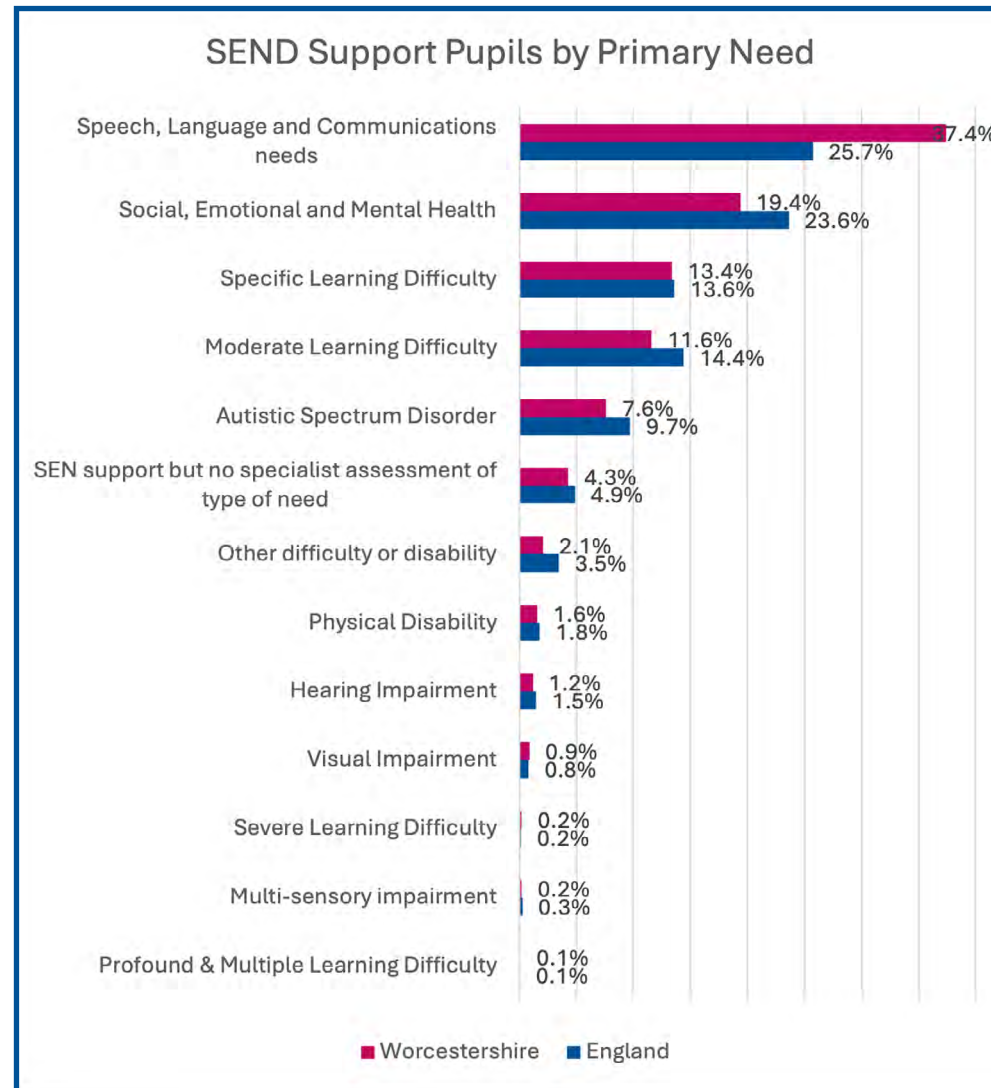
West Midlands average based on 14 Local Authorities

All data is based on January DfE SEN2 data collection

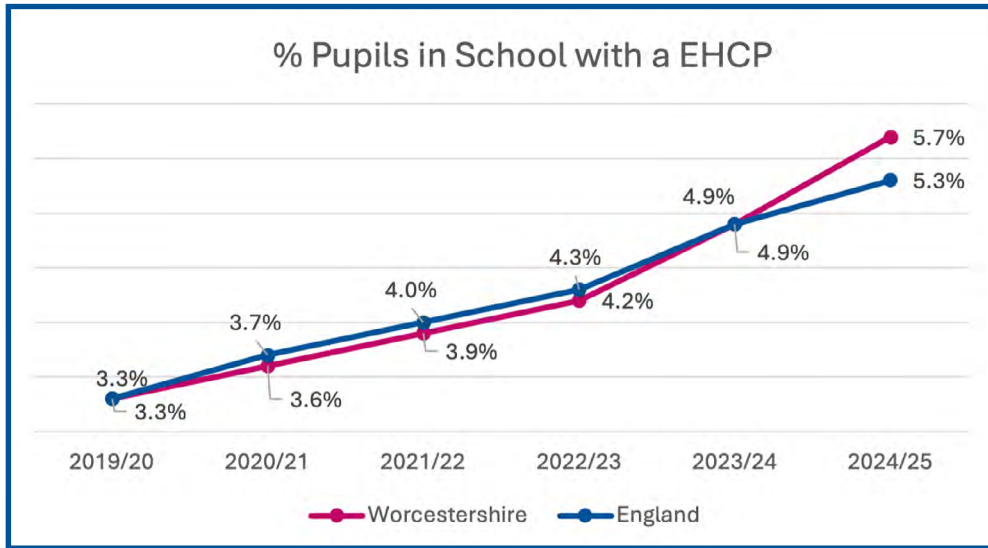
SEND in Worcestershire Schools - % of SEN Support Children



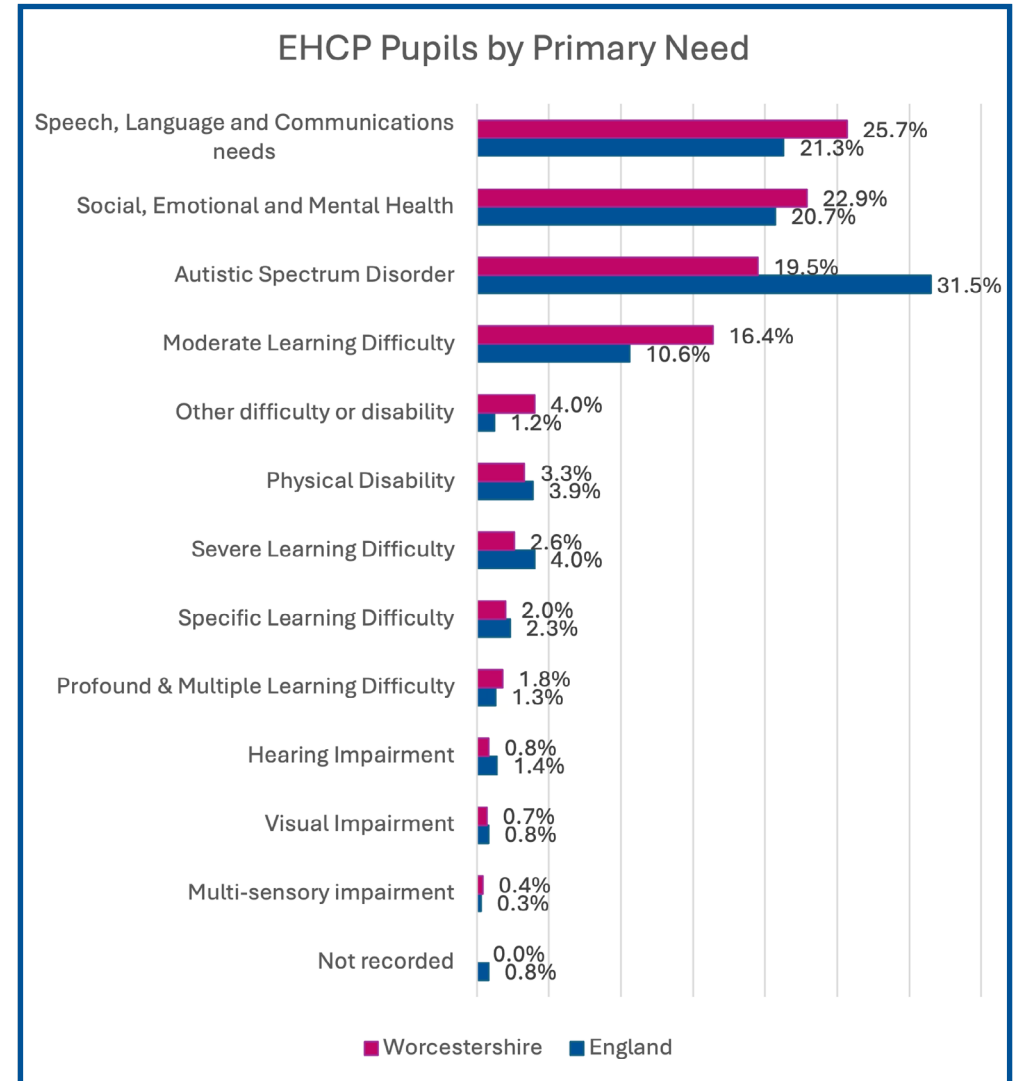
SEN Support pupils by Primary Need 2024/25



SEND in Worcestershire Schools - % of EHCP Children



EHCP Pupils by Primary Need



Educational Attainment

SEN Attainment Data for SEF: EYFS, KS2 and KS4 2024/25

Needs Title	Needs Title	2023/24 Wors	2024/25 Wors	Movement since last year	2024/25 England	Performance vs England in 2024/25
EYFS*	% of CYP with good level of development with an EHCP	4.2%	5.2%	Up	3.9%	Better
EYFS*	% of CYP with good level of development with SEN support	34.9%	37.9%	Up	26.4%	Better
EYFS*	% of CYP with good level of development with no SEN	67.6%	78.1%	Up	76.7%	Better
KS2**	% of pupil meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined with an EHCP	5.0%	7.0%	Up	9.3%	Worse
KS2**	% of pupil meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined with SEN support	21.0%	24.8%	Up	28.3%	Worse
KS2**	% of pupil meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined with no SEN	68.0%	68.5%	Up	73.4%	Worse
KS2**	% of pupils with greater depth of study in reading, writing and maths combined with an EHCP.	1.0%	0.3%	Down	0.7%	Worse
KS2**	% of pupils with greater depth of study in reading, writing and maths combined with SEN support	1.0%	1.1%	Up	1.9%	Worse
KS2**	% of pupils with greater depth of study in reading, writing and maths combined with no SEN	8.0%	8.5%	Up	10.3%	Worse
KS4	% of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE with an EHCP.	4.3%	7.3%	Up	7.3%	Same
KS4	% of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE with SEN support	17.7%	20.0%	Up	21.9%	Worse
KS4	% of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE with no SEN	48.8%	46.1%	Down	51.5%	Worse
KS4	Average attainment 8 score for pupils with an EHCP	12.6	14.9	Up	14.6	Better
KS4	Average attainment 8 score for pupils with SEN Support	32	32.5	Up	33.5	Worse
KS4	Average attainment 8 score for pupils with no SEN	48.1	47.9	Down	50.2	Worse
KS4 ⁽¹⁾	Average progress 8 score for pupils with an EHCP	-1.21	N/A	-	N/A	-
KS4 ⁽¹⁾	Average progress 8 score for pupils with SEN Support	-0.32	N/A	-	N/A	-
KS4 ⁽¹⁾	Average progress 8 score for pupils with no SEN	-0.03	N/A	-	N/A	-

* EYFS data is provisional data August 2025

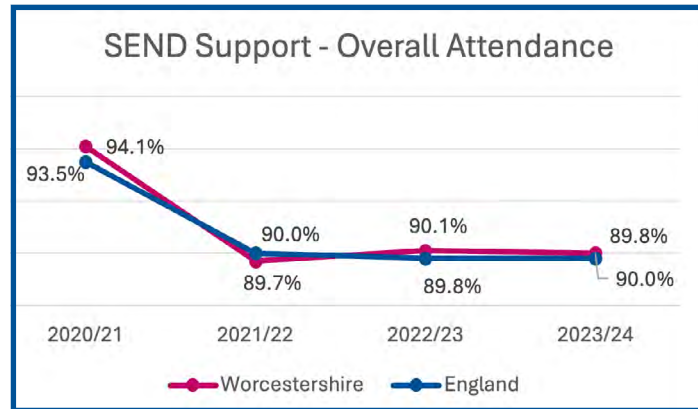
** KS2 data is the provisional July (DfE) cut of the data with revised data due for publication in November 2025. Due to issues with the DfE system being overwhelmed by the volume of TA assessment results being uploaded in the final 2 days before the deadline four Worcestershire schools do not have complete RWM scores since the system was not able to approve the school's results before the initial data cut was taken.

(1) No KS4 progress data is available for the years 2024/25 and 2025/26 due to the impact of Covid-19 on KS2 prior attainment data.

School attendance

- Overall SEN attendance rates in Worcestershire are broadly in line with England. (90 % vs 89.8% 2023/24)
- Overall, SEN authorised absence rates in Worcestershire are higher than England. (7.1% vs 6.3% 2023/24)
- Overall SEN unauthorised absence rates in Worcestershire are lower than England. (3.0% vs 3.9% 2023/24)
- Overall SEN persistent absentee absence rates in Worcestershire are lower than England. (29.6% vs 30.1% 2023/24)

SEND Support - Overall Attendance

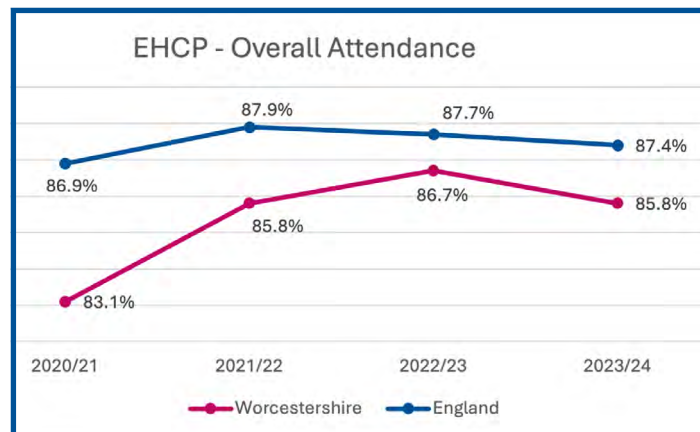


SEN Support Absence Rate	Area	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	Worcestershire	5.9%	10.3%	9.9%	10.0%
Overall Absence rate	England	6.5%	10.0%	10.2%	10.2%
	Gap	-0.6%	0.3%	-0.3%	-0.2%
	Worcestershire	4.4%	7.8%	7.0%	7.1%
Authorised Absence rate	England	4.5%	6.8%	6.4%	6.3%
	Gap	-0.1%	1.0%	0.6%	0.8%
	Worcestershire	1.5%	2.5%	2.9%	3.0%
Unauthorised Absence rate	England	2.0%	3.2%	3.8%	3.9%
	Gap	-0.5%	-0.7%	-0.9%	-0.9%
	Worcestershire	17.0%	33.8%	29.6%	29.6%
% of Persistent absentees (>10%)	England	18.9%	32.0%	31.1%	30.1%
	Gap	-1.9%	1.8%	-1.5%	-0.5%
	Worcestershire	1.5%	3.1%	3.8%	4.3%
% of Severely Absent pupils (>50%)	England	1.7%	3.0%	3.8%	4.4%
	Gap	-0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%

On the below charts Green means the LA is better than England, red means worse.

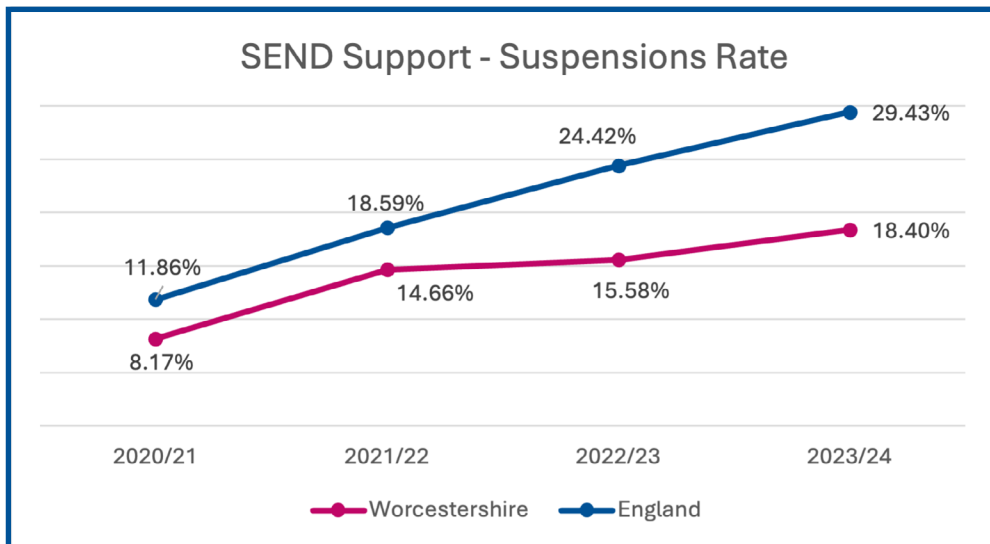
- Overall EHCP attendance rates in Worcestershire are lower than England. (85.8% vs 87.4% 2023/24)
- Overall, EHCP authorised absence rates in Worcestershire are higher than England (11.3% vs 8.8% 2023/24)
- Overall EHCP unauthorised absence rates in Worcestershire are lower than England (2.9% vs 3.8% 2023/24)

SEND Support - Overall Attendance

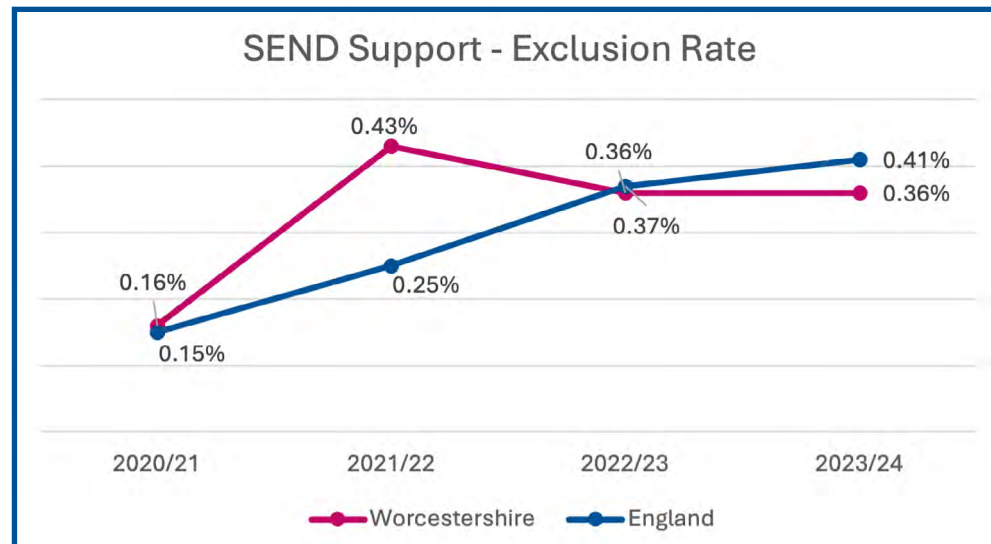


EHCP Absence Rate	Area	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	Worcestershire	16.9%	14.2%	13.3%
Overall Absence rate	England	13.1%	12.1%	12.3%
	Gap	3.8%	2.1%	1.0%
	Worcestershire	15.1%	11.5%	10.3%
Authorised Absence rate	England	11.1%	9.1%	8.8%
	Gap	4.0%	2.4%	1.5%
	Worcestershire	1.8%	2.7%	2.9%
Unauthorised Absence rate	England	2.0%	3.0%	3.5%
	Gap	-0.2%	-0.3%	-0.6%
	Worcestershire	53.8%	42.0%	36.7%
% of Persistent absentees (>10%)	England	42.3%	36.9%	36.0%
	Gap	11.5%	5.1%	0.7%
	Worcestershire	6.7%	7.1%	7.4%
% of Severely Absent pupils (>50%)	England	4.5%	5.2%	5.9%
	Gap	2.2%	1.9%	1.5%

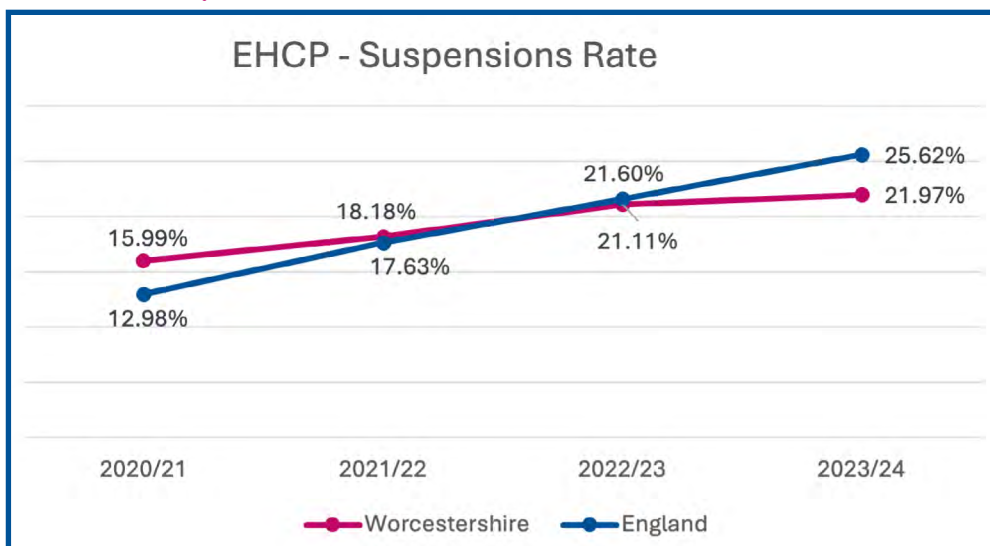
SEND Support - Suspensions Rate



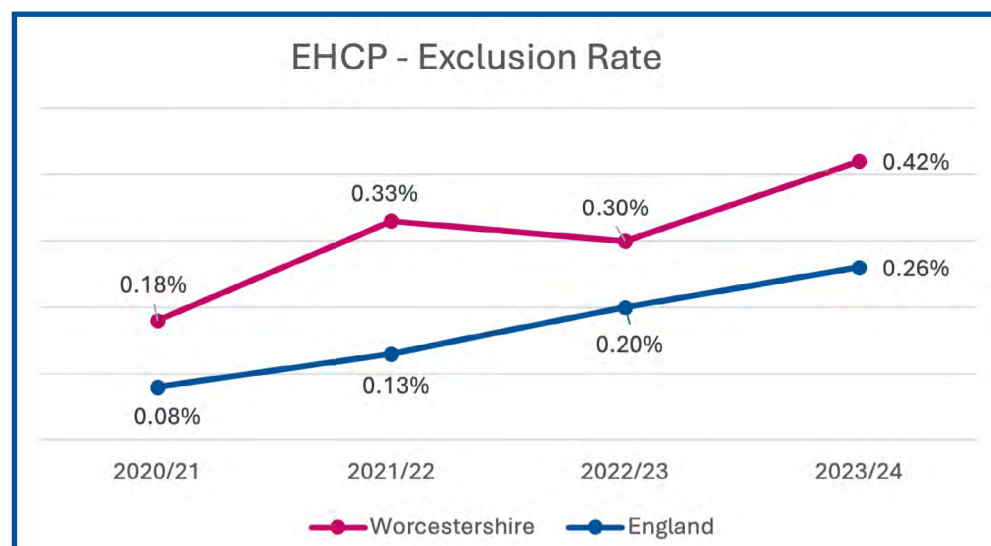
SEND Support - Exclusion Rate



EHCP - Suspensions Rate

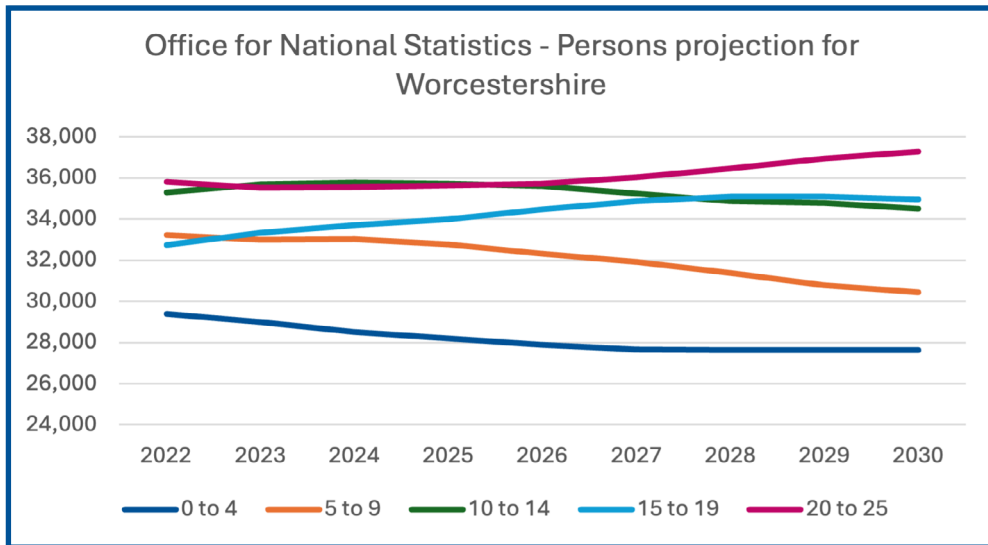


EHCP - Exclusion Rate

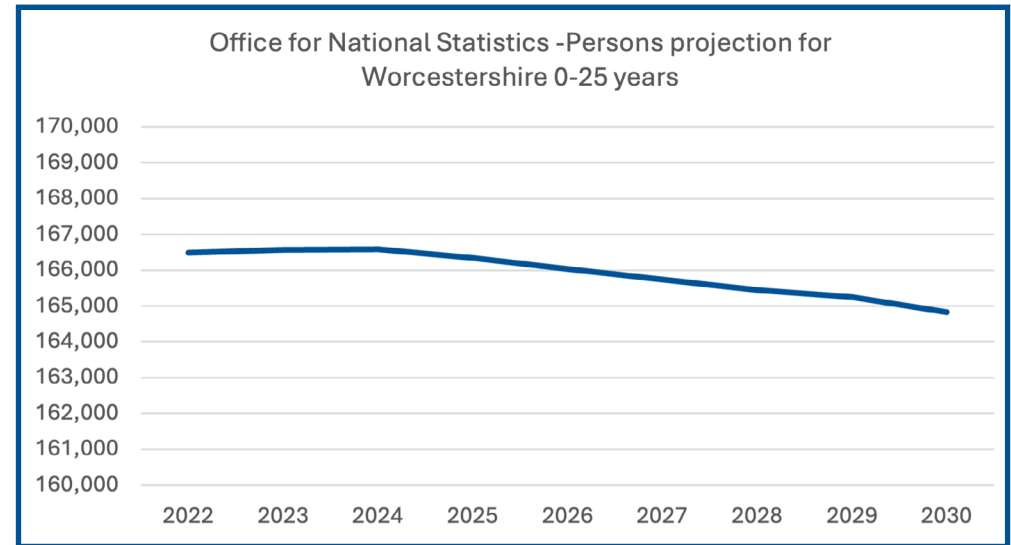


Population Data – Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2022 data

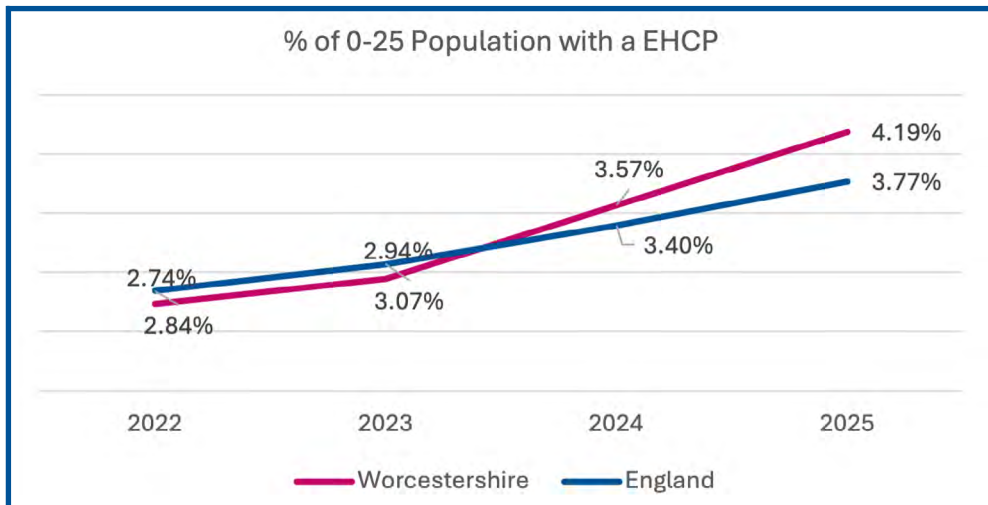
Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2022 data



Office for National Statistics - Persons projection for Worcestershire 0-25 years



% of 0-25 Population with a EHCP



1. Children and young people's needs are accurately identified and assessed promptly and effectively.

Positive signs

- WCC SEND services have strengthened the quality assurance process to develop and improve the quality of EHCPs. Reviews are undertaken through a multi-disciplinary team and monthly audits are completed internally with management oversight. "There is a solid foundation of the quality assurance framework...assessments are accurate." DfE deep dive July 2025.
- The Local Authority workforce is strengthened by the Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO) role and has increased capacity to include Initial Screening and Contact Officers (ISCOs). The purpose of these roles adds to the understanding of the wider needs of the child or young person's family and provides vital information to ensure help and support at the right time. The outcomes and impact of this work will be subject to ongoing review.

Pippa was very easy to talk to, very knowledgeable and professional throughout our telephone conversation. The follow up email had lots of useful links for us as a family.

*Feedback from parent carer 5th October 2025
from parent carer survey*

- The Young Adults Team assumes responsibility for young people from the Children with Disabilities Teams from the age of 16. They provide consistent support and oversight, ensuring continuity of care. In addition, social workers begin gathering evidence to inform the young person's future Care Act Assessment. For those with the most complex needs, this preparatory work typically begins at age 17, and more routinely around 17.5. This approach ensures that assessments are completed prior to the young person turning 18, preventing any disruption in service provision for them and their families. As part of this transition planning, the team also routinely completes Continuing Healthcare Checklists (CHC) to determine eligibility for Integrated Care Board (ICB) funding towards adult care services.



- To address autism assessment waiting times, the Local Area Partnership has successfully broadened its provider market, with increased uptake of assessments in the independent sector supporting backlog reduction. A pilot scheme in 2024–25 transferred 250 young people aged 16+ to independent providers, with those aged 16–18 now referred to the adult pathway unless paediatric assessment is indicated—helping to ease pressure on services and improve access.
 - Since April 2025, three independent providers have delivered 362 assessments, with numbers expected to rise as processes embed.
 - Evaluation of workshops shows they are valued by parent carers and young people, offering informative content and peer support during the waiting period
- Significant improvements have been made on wait times of other support services. Paediatric Therapies (Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy) and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) were both highlighted as areas of concern for the length of wait. We have addressed the workforce vacancies in CAHMS, reducing the vacancy rate to 11.9% and introduced additional services to widen the offer for children and young people. Waiting times for assessment have been restored and a higher number of children are accessing services. The transformation of therapies, adopting the Balanced Approach System is helping to make sure that specialist therapy services are accessible with low waiting.
 - CAMHS, children’s physiotherapy, public health nursing, children’s community nursing, school nursing and speech and language therapy services, all offer assessment and advice within national timeframes. The team use recognised assessment tools and follow NICE guidelines to ensure the quality of the assessment and treatment offer produces good outcomes.
 - The children’s eating disorders service, consistently meet their KPI’s for assessment and treatment (NICE guided intervention) Children and young people are seen within 7 days of referral if they have an urgent need and routine within 4 weeks in all other situations. The team have introduced a weekly regular consultation drop-in for professionals facilitated by a senior Clinical Psychologist offering formulation and signposting. This ensures that children with eating disorders are seen promptly and get to the right services quickly so that the right treatment can be provided effectively.



- The ICB have commissioned MELO in Worcestershire which is a dedicated emotional wellbeing and mental health service for children and young people aged 0–25 and their families. Delivered by Onside Advocacy, MELO offers a broad range of support designed to build emotional resilience, promote wellbeing, and address early mental health needs. ‘MELO’ has provided support during April-June 2025 to 178 young people confirmed as having an official diagnosis of ASD/ADHD with another 155 stating they are currently “under assessment”.
- Positive feedback received on newly commissioned Emotional Health and Wellbeing service Melo:

“ We have certainly noticed a difference, even people outside the family comment on how much more confident she seems. She loves her box and all the other bits you did with her. ”

“ We have seen such a difference in E ... she even hugged me this week – that’s the first time in 3 years! ”

“ W has opened up more to you in such a short space of time than he ever has to us at school. We can see a difference in his behaviour already and is able to manage his anger better. ”

“ Thank you for supporting A, she is coming into the hub less unless it’s just to chat. Her emotional outbursts have reduced dramatically, and she is looking a lot happier and definitely more resilient. ”

“ I really like you and I feel I can trust you”
comment from YP in session. ”

- Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust put processes in place to ensure children's needs are identified promptly and those children with the highest need, including urgent and high-risk need, are seen soonest.
- Worcestershire SEND Support While You Wait Website pages are live on the ICB website - [Support available in Worcestershire while waiting for your appointment](#). These pages are being reviewed every 3 months and information/links updated as appropriate.
- The Children Who Cannot Attend School (CCAS) Panel has been operational for two years. This way of working ensures appropriate application of the Section 19 duty to provide access to suitable education. The focus is on children who cannot attend school for medical or other reasons. It is a virtual, multi-agency forum with education, health, and SEND representation. Rotating chairs from senior education leaders provide shared accountability and strong oversight of tracking, monitoring, and quality. Between September 2024 and February 2025, the team discussed 121 children and young people from 49 schools, minimising the time spent out of school and out of lessons. The Panel received a Team Excellence Award at the West Midlands ADCS Network in September 2024 and has assisted other local authorities in developing similar approaches.

“ CCAS is, without doubt, a massive step forward towards the long-awaited desire for schools to feel reassured that in cases where they are working in partnership with the Local Authority to provide a suitable education for a child, then there will be robust protocols in place to enable children who meet the S19 criteria will have the opportunity to be successful. The review process at panel is very thorough and I know that health professionals will also be present at panel so effective multi agency working can take place. What is absolutely the case now is that there a team in place who are highly skilled and that are willing to work with schools to improve outcomes for S19 referred children and this is a huge step forward.

Headteacher



- The Early Years notification process for SEND has been further strengthened and enabled a coordinated support for preschool children, ensuring early identification and access to appropriate services. At May 2025 around 700 pre-school children were known to services and having their needs met via this process.
- In our Inclusion Support Services (ISS), we use a special way of checking how well things are working called Targeted Monitoring Evaluation (TME). This helps us to listen to what people say about how things are going, spot what's really helping children and use that information to make things even better for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). We found from last year's data that when ISS worked with the adults around the children to make a plan together, most children improved. On average, each child made 3 steps of progress from where they started. This shows that when ISS gets involved, children are more likely to reach their personal goals and do better with the help they get.
- Community paediatricians, Children's occupational therapy, physiotherapy, nursing and speech and language therapy work in partnership with specialist schools, offering assessment and intervention on site, enabling children with complex needs to receive the help they need, where they need it.
- Health visiting and speech and language therapy are embedded in the children's centres. They offer drop in advice where no referral is required. Physiotherapy is beginning to roll out a similar drop in offer.
- Speech and language therapy are embedded in the majority of mainstream schools. This has created a needs led, system approach with health and education working together to ensure children receive the right help at the right time with support available based on need.



Our plans for the next 12 months to enhance the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.

Areas of Focus

- A new Neurodivergent support service is being commissioned by the ICB and will launch in April 2026.
- Independent Social Care Officers (ISCOs) will pilot involvement in Joint Assessment Meetings (JAMs) alongside Educational Psychologists (EPs). This integrated approach enables ISCOs to gather social care advice directly from the young person and their parents during the EP assessment. The aim is to reduce duplication, allowing families to share their story once, and to evaluate whether the quality and relevance of social care advice improves through this collaborative process. This will be evaluated in the winter.
- Recovery of waiting lists is a priority for the system. A three-year recovery programme is underway to address long waits for assessments. In year 1 - the ICB has invested in a further 900 Autism & ADHD diagnostic assessments from the independent sector, enabling 900 CYP who have been waiting >104 weeks to receive an assessment by March 2026.
 - A service review has been undertaken and identified that a new model for assessment, diagnosis and support is required. A transition plan which details a phased approach to implementation is in place, this includes:
 - Phase 1 - early identification & needs-led support* / improved diagnostic referral & triage processes
 - Phase 2 - Nurse-led ADHD Medications Management service
 - Phase 3 – Stand-alone combined Autism & ADHD diagnostic service.
- Partnership for Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) is being implemented with 32 primary schools & will help develop neuro-inclusive SEND provision, providing early interventions at a school level to positively impact on all pupils, as well as CYP with neurodivergent tendencies.
- Building on the successes for the Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust speech and language therapy services, our children's occupational therapy and physiotherapy services are rolling out a drop in offer based in children's centres. Occupational therapy is also increasing their collaborative working on site in mainstream schools to develop a needs-led approach with education partners.
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire ICB will continue to monitor the newly commissioned MELO service along with the performance of the CAMHS services with a focus on ensuring any gaps for children and young people are identified and addressed.
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire ICB will be co-producing a service specification for the commissioning of a support service for children with neurodivergent need, available from April 2025.
- Training to be provided to EHCP Coordinators of procedures for children who cannot attend school and know how and when to refer to the CCAS panel.

2. Children and young people and their families are involved in decision-making about their individual plans and support

- Educational Psychologists embed pupil voice within their psychological advice. The approach has been enhanced through joint assessment meetings that bring together schools, families, professionals, and, where possible, to collaborate on understanding plans and support, including intended outcomes. SEN services also ensure informed consent is obtained directly from young people aged 16+.
- The SEND service has focused on strengthening the value of parents' expertise to improve an inclusive culture. This includes active listening and explicit sharing of parents and children's views in decision making is consistent. In Quarter 1 of 2025/26, 86% of EHCP audits rated the identification of children's needs and representation of their voice as good—up significantly from 38% in the previous quarter. Parental consultation and engagement also improved, rising to 71% from 38%.
- The introduction of the Initial Screening and Contact (ISCO) role has increased the further structured conversations with families to understand choices and contribute to decision making about plans and support. "Pippa was friendly and informative and showed empathy which is exactly what you want in this situation." Feedback from parent carer 4th October 2025 from parent carer survey
- Through the Inclusion Support Service (ISS) preparation for adulthood webcast and toolkit resources for schools, we have promoted person-centred reviews and encouraged educational settings to ensure children and young people attend their annual reviews wherever possible. Where attendance is not feasible, tools are provided to help capture and represent their views, so they are meaningfully included in the process. While individual settings hold responsibility for annual reviews, our role has focused on developing guidance, resources, and good practice examples to strengthen pupil voice.
- SENDIASS provides free, confidential, impartial, and arms-length advice, offering information and support on all matters relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Through this support, the service aims to empower parents, carers, children, and young people to make informed decisions about their needs. It also helps families participate as fully as possible in decision-making processes, ensuring that their views, wishes, and feelings are heard and considered by the Local Authority. Between January and December 2024 SENDIASS had 2,486 new families contact the service.



- The Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust community paediatrics, therapies and nursing services have developed an early years multidisciplinary team with parent carers, for children with profound and multiple disabilities. This has included developing a shared care plan and outcome measures. Parent and carers work with the team to identify the next steps they would like to achieve for their child which ensures they are involved in decision making every step of the way.
- Children, young people, and families have actively engaged in providing feedback on the Health Screening processes introduced in schools by the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care Trust school nursing team. This includes the wider school nursing offer through surveys, focus groups, and informal discussions. This feedback is systematically reviewed and used to shape service improvements. As a result, the school nursing service has made changes to how information is shared, increased flexibility in appointment options, and improved communication pathways between families and professionals. These changes have strengthened the role of children and families in shaping both individual care and wider service development, in line with NHS values of co-production and person-centred care.
- The Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust has established a health literacy team who are supporting all services to increase the accessibility of their written communication. Our aim is to make sure every message is clear and helpful. We're also working with our Equality Diversity Inclusion and Equity (EDIE) team to improve how we translate and adapt information, so families can access materials in the format that works best for them at every stage of their journey. This ensures people can access and be actively involved in their care, their decisions and their plans.
- The Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust CAMHS youth team is young person led, supporting young people with SEND needs to make their own decisions about their mental health support.
- There is a monthly joint panel – Worcestershire Children's Continuing Care panel between the ICB and Local Authority to determine eligibility and the package of support required to meet identified needs for children's continuing care or the adult's version of this.



Our plans for the next 12 months to enhance the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.

Areas of focus

- By prioritising genuine child participation in statutory assessments, Inclusion Support Services aim to strengthen the voice and agency of children and young people within decision-making processes. This focus supports more meaningful, person-centred assessments and promotes improved outcomes by ensuring that services are shaped around the lived experiences, preferences, and aspirations of the children themselves. Embedding this approach through ongoing CPD and practice development fosters a culture of inclusion, respect, and empowerment across the workforce.
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust will involve children and young people, along with their parents and carers, in the co-production of services for those with spasticity or cerebral palsy, to ensure that support is more responsive, inclusive, and tailored to lived experience. This collaborative approach strengthens decision-making, empowers families, and leads to services that are better aligned with the needs, preferences, and aspirations of those who use them.
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust has invested in an online platform (Care Opinion) that enables people to provide meaningful feedback about services. It is interactive and involves people in improving services and having a say about the support they experience. Care Opinion is being rolled out to all children and young people's services in Worcestershire by March 2026 to ensure that all children, young people, their carers and families, can share their opinions of services using the Care Opinion platform.
- The Local Authority is introducing a Child Passport – a personalised reflection of each child as an individual, rather than a record of their plan or disability. This shift in approach will be embedded across all levels of service delivery, promoting a more holistic and strengths-based view of children and young people.
- Parents told us they want to be included in our quality assurance processes. They also told us that experts from outside of the partnership should be included. We will make changes to our quality assurance processes and will recruit an extra quality officer to do the work.
- Embedding of parent carers, children and young people, and independent reviewers into partnership quality assurance processes, to enhance transparency and accountability. This inclusive approach ensures that lived experience informs service improvement, strengthens trust in the system, and promotes more person-centred planning. Providing training for young people with SEND and recruiting an additional full-time Quality Assurance Officer will further build capacity and sustainability.
- The Local Authority will provide improved clarity for parents/carers regarding the defined scope of the role of EHCP Coordinators, including with regard to children who cannot attend school.

3. Children and Young People receive the right help at the right time

Positive signs

- The partnership's timeliness of EHCPs has made a continuous and sustained improvement throughout the last academic year. Completion is averaging at 59% at 20 weeks – compared to 46.4% nationally and 42.3% regionally.
- The High Needs Assessment Panel and the Children's Continuing Care Panel ensure that children and young people receive the right support at the right time by facilitating coordinated, multi-agency decision-making. These panels bring together professionals from education, health, and social care to assess needs holistically, identify appropriate interventions early, and tailor support packages to individual circumstances.
- Worcestershire's Dynamic Support Pathway (DSP) provides coordinated support for children and young people with a diagnosed Learning Disability and/or autism at risk of being detained under the Mental Health Act or admitted to inpatient mental health hospitals. The pathway brings together children's and adults' services, ensuring smooth transitions and shared accountability across the system. A core multi-agency panel—comprising health, social care, CAMHS, and SEND—meets regularly to coordinate actions, monitor progress, and manage risk collectively. Monthly reviews, led jointly by the health system navigator and social care, enable early identification of emerging risks. This proactive, collaborative approach has reduced crisis escalation and significantly decreased detentions under the Mental Health Act.
- To ensure that children with complex needs including physical disabilities get the right help at the right time, the Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust children's community nursing team 'The Orchard Service' meet children and their families whilst they are on the acute, paediatric ward, 'Riverbank Ward'. This ensures that the transition from hospital to community care is smooth and supported. Visiting children and families on the ward and at home, the children's nursing team work in collaboration with parents, carers and young people to respond to the changes in their presenting needs, within hours. This means children don't have to go into hospital unless they need to and they get the support they need, where they need it and when they need it. The outcome is that more children remain at home with their families and friends with the ability to continue with their education without the interruption of hospital care.



- The Local Authority led 'Missing Mondays Panel' provides a strong multi-agency approach to reduce the time children are out of education. Weekly meetings ensure coordinated action, effective information sharing, and timely reintegration into appropriate provision, including support for hard-to-place pupils and those with persistent absence concerns. In 2024/25, the Missing Mondays Panel discussed 46 Children Missing Education (CME) and exclusion cases (including 36 carried over). Of these, 39 were closed, with 22 children successfully returned to suitable education. The remainder either moved out of area or transitioned to the Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) team for post-16 support. In addition, 23 Children Not In School (CNIS) cases were reviewed, with advice, signposting, and support provided.
- The Local Authority has an approved programme of investment to deliver additional education provision for children and young people with SEND and increase capacity. These include:
 - Enhanced Early Years provision – Dingley's Promise have opened two settings, one in Droitwich (Feb 2025) and one in Worcester (Sept 2025) to support pre-school age children with complex needs to receive their Nursery Education Entitlement.
 - Primary age SEN Units for children with Cognition and Interaction needs – Honeywell Primary School in Worcester opened in September 2024
 - Mainstream Autism Bases – Christopher Whitehead Language College opened an Enhanced Mainstream Autism Base in September 2023 and Tudor Grange Academy Redditch expanded by 25 places in September 2023.
 - SEMH Specialist School provision and Secondary SEND units - Unity Academy in Kidderminster is offering 30 places for primary-aged children with SEMH needs (Sep 2024)
 - Special Schools and Alternative Provision (AP) - A total of 178 additional places have been made available across eight specialist schools from 2023.
 - DfE announced in March 2024 that Macintyre Academies Trust will run the new Autism Special Free School (enterprise academy) in Malvern for pupils aged 5-19 years. This will provide 120 places when fully open, with capacity to expand to 160 places and is expected for 2027.
 - The Warwickshire College Group at Pershore College opened a Preparation for Adulthood Centre (Sept 2024) for young people with complex needs. Kidderminster College opened SEND Provision commissioned by the LA, and HoW College in Worcester with National Star College opened provision to support young people with complex needs in Sept 2024.
- The SEND and AP Change Programme has strengthened system collaboration and resourcing to deliver outreach pilots supporting more children within mainstream settings. These initiatives promote earlier intervention for children with SEND and have increased the capability and confidence of both Alternative Provision and mainstream schools. Schools report improved attendance and behaviour as a result. For example, 55 young people and 37 staff have participated in the holistic outreach support programme.
- There has been an increase to the Aspire Academy Parallel Pathways (Alternative Provision) places from 10 to 15, increasing capacity and reducing waiting times for children and young people accessing Alternative Provision.

Our plans for the next 12 months to enhance the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.

Areas of Focus

- The introduction of a Neurodiversity Support Service in response to feedback from children, young people and their families, co-produced model, is at procurement stage. The procurement will run between October 2025 through to April 2026. This will introduce advice, information and support for children and young people and their families, with or without a diagnosis.
- Following a quality service review into CAMHS, instigated following feedback from Healthwatch Worcestershire and Worcestershire Parent Carer Forum, we will implement recommendations from the review. This will be focused on making sure that our pathways are accessible for all children, particularly in times of mental health crisis.
- The development of a model of services that meets the needs of children. This is our approach to multi-agency coordination or team around a child, learning from a pilot in Wyre Forest, to roll-out across the county. Work will shortly commence on engaging schools, early years, health services and voluntary and community organisations as part of this.
- To ensure timely access to the 2.5-year review, to support earlier identification of SEND needs, Public Health have worked with the Health and Care Trust to review themes and inequalities within the 2.5 year review access data. This has identified areas for improvement and has led to the development of an action plan to increase uptake, ensure earlier access and reduce the identified inequalities. This plan will be implemented from Autumn 2025.
- The Local Authority has an approved programme of investment to deliver additional education provision for children and young people with SEND and increase capacity. These include:
 - Enhanced Early Years provision – market engagement with prospective providers for the other areas of the county has been completed. The service specification and tender process is being developed, to commission provision in the remaining areas of Worcestershire ideally by September 2026.
 - Primary age SEN Units for children with Cognition and Interaction needs – Matchborough First School in Redditch and St John's CofE Primary School in Kidderminster are due to open provision this academic year. Other schools are being identified to progress through the process to open provision in other areas of the county.
 - Mainstream Autism Bases – Dyson Perrins CoE Academy are proposing an increase in places. Abbey Park Primary School, Pershore are increasing the places available. Beaconside Primary School, Rubery and Meadows First School, Bromsgrove are progressing projects to increase and improve provision.
 - SEMH Specialist School provision and Secondary SEND units – Secondary schools are beginning to be identified to deliver SEMH SEN Units.

- Special Schools and Alternative Provision (AP) – A project to expand Wyre Forest Special School has been agreed. Regency Special School is also being expanded. Feasibility studies are taking place at Vale of Evesham and Pitcheroak Schools to determine if these schools can be expanded further.
- The Warwickshire College Group at Pershore College opened a Preparation for Adulthood Centre (Sept 2024) for young people with complex needs.

Focus on practice - Rebuilding Confidence and Reconnecting with Learning – A Medical Education Team (MET) Success Story

When a Year 11 pupil joined the Medical Education Team (MET), he had been through an incredibly difficult journey. He was living with severe anxiety, OCD, body dysmorphia, and had an ASD diagnosis. At that time, he had also experienced three suicide attempts. His school attendance had dropped to 4.89%, and he had not left his bedroom for over three months. The young person was receiving support through a Child in Need (CiN) Plan with the Supporting Families First team.

Recognising his need for a specialist approach, he was referred to the Children Who Can't Access School (CCAS) panel, which approved a placement with the MET. During the following CiN meeting, an educational target was agreed: to rebuild engagement in learning through a gradual, carefully supported transition into the MET. This plan was co-created with both the young person and his parents, allowing him to retain a sense of control and choice—crucial for rebuilding trust and confidence.

I feel depressed, lonely and like a prisoner in my room.

(Young person, at the time of referral)

Person-Centred Support and Steady Progress

From the beginning, MET staff worked with empathy, patience, and consistency to help the young person reconnect with education and daily life. His hours were built up gradually, at a pace that respected his emotional wellbeing. Over time, he began to re-engage fully—first by attending part-time, then eventually participating in a full timetable.

Through careful relationship-building, encouragement, and the nurturing culture of the MET, his self-esteem grew, anxiety reduced, and OCD symptoms lessened. He made friends with his peers, began travelling independently—riding his moped to the MET each day—and even found a Saturday job in a local retail store.

Impact and Achievement

The transformation was remarkable. With consistent support from both MET staff and his family, the young person went on to sit and pass six GCSEs, achieving grades 6s and 7s. His renewed confidence and motivation enabled him to make a successful transition back into mainstream education, where he is now studying three A Levels.

“The teaching at the MET is really good and I felt that I was learning. The staff are really friendly, and they make people happy here. It is calm and quiet and if I want some time on my own, it is OK. I have made some friends at the MET and I don’t feel lonely anymore.”

Young person, end of Year 11

His parents also shared their gratitude:

“Thank you so much for everything. When I look back at where we were, with him not leaving his room and social care having to help us, I never imagined that he would attend school and take his GCSEs. Your belief in him has at times kept us going and the teachers have been amazing. Thank you also for your patience with me. I have always been worried that we would go back to how it used to be, but I can see now that he has grown into a mature young man (most of the time!) and knows what he wants from his future.”

4. Children and young people are well prepared for next steps and achieve strong outcomes

Positive signs

- SMART outcomes for pupils are improving, supported by SEND Educational health and Care Plan (EHCP) Coordinators are using costed provision maps to challenge where outcomes are not met. Ongoing SENCo and Educational Psychologist (EP) network events, alongside redesigned EHCP report templates, further strengthen the consistency and quality of SMART targets.
- Children and young people with SEND have improving academic outcomes across most standardised outcome areas as evidenced within the attainment data.
- The Local Authorities Short breaks residential homes play a vital role in supporting children and young people with disabilities to achieve strong outcomes by offering high-quality, person-centred care in a safe and supportive setting. These homes provide opportunities for children to develop independence, build social skills, and engage in meaningful activities tailored to their interests and abilities. By offering respite for families and promoting emotional wellbeing, short breaks contribute to improved stability, confidence, and overall quality of life for children and young people.
- Across the county 107 Worcestershire Autism Mentors (WAM) have been trained to deliver high quality support for young people in Worcestershire schools. During 2024/25 a total of 28 training packages were delivered. Many WAM's are attending our additional termly, online CPD meetings and our Annual Conferences, all of which is helping to create more inclusive and supportive environments for young people. The WAM training programme has received positive feedback from schools who have been part of this, which has included creation of videos to highlight pupil and staff voice about how this programme has supported them.
- The Local Authority Inclusion, Elective Home Education and Gypsy, Roma & Traveller Community Team has strengthened the support and challenge to schools to prevent permanent exclusions. This includes primary and secondary age phases. Children and young people who are permanently excluded from school receive a suitable education within three days.
- Rates of permanent exclusion in Worcestershire are showing a positive trend, decreasing from:
 - 161 in 2022–23 representing an exclusion rate of 0.20%
 - 149 in 2023–24 representing an exclusion rate of 0.18%
 - 122 in 2024–25 representing an exclusion rate of 0.15%
 - This improvement compares positively with the national trend. Nationally, as of 10th July 2025, exclusions increased by 16% compared to last year, from 9,376 in 2022-23 (0.11 rate), to 10,885 in 2023-24 (0.13 rate).

- Our medical education provision is robust, providing stable and accessible support for pupils unable to attend school due to medical needs. Improved accommodation at the Redditch Medical Education base has enabled delivery of a broader curriculum, with both indoor and outdoor learning spaces. In 2024/25, 31 Year 11 pupils accessed MET, achieving strong outcomes: 100% secured GCSEs in English and Maths (grades 1–9), 33% achieved grade 4+, 70% gained five or more GCSEs, and 100% progressed to post-16 destinations.
- CYP with Vision Impairment (VI) are taught crucial self-help skills such as dressing, personal care and preparation of meals and drinks. This not only builds independence and readiness for adulthood through learning everyday practical skills, but also promotes inclusion and emotional wellbeing, enabling CYP to learn the skills sighted peers take for granted, such as making a friend a cup of tea or a snack and learning skills to check their outward appearance. Habilitation contributes to strong and sustained long-term outcomes for children and young people with VI, whilst ensuring they are visible in and able to access, their community.
- With support from the Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust speech and language therapy service offer in the early years, children make rapid improvement in their communication skills, reducing the need for specialist placements and EHCP provision in key stage 1.
- The Local Authority has created an information pack to support young people with the transition to Higher Education information and an online tool kit for Year 9 Annual Reviews. This will strengthen the confidence of stakeholders to secure clear pathways for children and young people can be realised into adulthood.
- The Local Authority Careers Worcestershire service provides a consistent, holistic service that supports all young people with making plans for the future.
- The Local Authority Skills & Employability service has significantly expanded its Supported Internships offer, creating a more structured, inclusive, and outcome-focused pathway for young people with additional needs. Supported Internships are embedded as a consistent and promoted opportunity across the entire service area. In 19/20, the county had 26 interns and an employment rate of 42.3%. The 5-year average since then is 50 interns. Percentage into employment has remained relatively static, but the opportunities are having greater reach.
- The Learning Disability Strategy has supported individuals aged 18+ being found suitable housing that contributed to independence and having a place individuals can call home.
- The Positive Days DPS have services available for individuals who would like to spend their days in a working environment, this can be working on farms, horticultural work, working in cafes or even being upskilled to carry out some mechanical works.



- The Supported Employment Service works closely with our operational teams to identify individuals that are seeking employment, and the team supports individuals through the application and interview process. If individuals are successful in gaining employment, the team continue to support that individual to be successful within the role. Close links have been made via the SEND Preparing for Adulthood Stakeholder Group and the Skills and Employability Team who support people into employment.
- The Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust CAMHS youth team supports children and young people aged 14 years and older to manage the transition from mental health services into community-based opportunities. This empowers the young person to manage and normalise their own needs, reducing their reliance on mental health services and ensuring they are prepared for next steps with the best opportunity for strong outcomes.
- Worcestershire's Specialist Play team is part of the Children's Therapy hub within the Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust. They work with pre-school children and families in their own homes to develop play skills and enhance overall development for children with developmental delay. Their work empowers parents to meet the needs of their child, at their pace, preparing them for school and next steps.
- Using High Needs Capital Grant , Kidderminster College has created new specialist facilities for SEND students. This includes a fully accessible kitchen, two sensory rooms, a one-bedroom flat and a quiet student common room. The space is open and playing an important role in preparing young people for more independent fulfilling futures.

Our plans for the next 12 months to enhance the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.

Areas of Focus

- The Local Authority Careers Hub services are using feedback from PCF to plan for the development and promotion of a consistent and more widely available service.
- The Local Authority intends to increase the variety of internships available. We aim to collaborate further with parents and schools to reflect and realise children and young people's ambitions.
- The Connect to Work supported employment programme has started from September 2025. Similar to Supported Internships, this will add another practical route into employment for children and young people seeking job-carved roles and advocacy into the workplace. This will help CYP with health conditions and disabilities, where they can, act on their aspiration to work.
- The Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care are increasing the support available for children with complex needs in the community with additional staff offering respiratory physiotherapy and children's community nursing care. This will ensure children spend less time in hospital and receive the care they need at home that enables them to remain with their family, in the community and able to access education.

Focus on Practice – empowering independence – T’s journey to university

T is a 19-year-old young person who sustained a traumatic tetraplegia spinal cord injury and vertebral fracture, resulting in full-time wheelchair use and a need for daily support with mobility, transfers, and personal care.

Despite the life-changing nature of his injury, T has shown remarkable resilience and determination to live independently and pursue his education. Through consistent, person-centred social work support, T has achieved a major milestone—successfully moving to London to attend university, where he is now completing his first academic year.

Leadership and Person-Centred Practice

Fiona Watson, previously allocated as T’s Social Worker, played a pivotal role in supporting and empowering T on his Preparing for Adulthood (PFA) journey. Her approach combined clear professional leadership with compassionate, person-centred practice.

Through a strengths-based approach, Fiona focused on T’s ambitions rather than limitations, working alongside him to identify what mattered most—living independently, accessing higher education, and building confidence in managing his support needs.

Direct payments were introduced to give T greater choice and control over his care and personal assistants, allowing flexibility to meet his daily living and study routines. Fiona also ensured T’s social care planning aligned closely with his health provision, integrating a small CHC-funded element (2.5 hours weekly for bowel care) within his overall support package.

Impact

T is now living independently, successfully studying at university, and managing his support with confidence. His journey demonstrates the power of person-centred leadership and partnership working in enabling young people with complex physical needs to achieve meaningful independence and fulfil their ambitions.



5. Children and young people are valued, visible and included in their communities

Positive signs

- We collaborate with a wide range of providers across Worcestershire to deliver a diverse and inclusive Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme for children and young people aged 5–16 who are receipt of free school meals. In 2024/25, 1,325 children and young people with SEND participated in the programme. Following the Easter 2025 programme, 90% of survey respondents indicated HAF had a positive impact of their child's wellbeing. Sutton Croft is the commissioned provider responsible for delivering HAF on behalf of Worcestershire County Council. As part of the Department for Education (DfE) grant requirements, regular reporting is undertaken, and these reports are published on our dedicated HAF website.
- Local Authority Short Breaks settings undertake activities in the community in line with children and young people's section E EHCP outcomes. Children and young people's voice and aims set within the home inform activity plans. Community settings are regularly accessed such as local shops, disability cricket and football, cinemas, and theatres enabling children and young people to develop essential life skills. These experiences support the development of independence, confidence, and social communication by allowing children and young people to practice tasks such as handling money, interacting with members of the public, and planning journeys using public transport. Children and young people who attend Kidderminster Short Breaks have participated in fund raising events and join in with the summer and Christmas fayre at Wyre Forest School. The home has recently introduced a therapy dog, which is another way for young people to get out into the community and meet others.
- Worcestershire's public health grants have supported the creation of inclusive play spaces, provided resources for SEND-specific activities, and enabled schools to offer more accessible and engaging outdoor play and learning experiences. Additionally, grants have helped fund specialist equipment, training, and inclusive youth activities, ensuring that children and young people with SEND can participate fully in school and community life.
- Wyre Forest school have a community café – The Blossom Tree café to provide work experience opportunities for SEND pupils. Pupils can develop their hospitality and catering skills while practicing communication, interaction and functional skills. Regular customers build mutually beneficial relationships with our young people, helping them grow in confidence and maturity. Pupil-led initiatives like community seed-swaps and charity cake sales are always well-received. Students have won the Wyre Forest District Council No Barriers community award twice.
- Local Authority commissioning has created a Dynamic Purchasing System for Positive Days; this framework has a wide variety of providers offering all different types of services for an individual to have a meaningful day and achieve the outcomes that are outlined in an individual's support plan. There is a range of services from community-based building services to community outreach.
- The Co-production officers have been connecting with children and young people with SEND across the county and have enabled them to form Voices United – a forum for children and young people up to the age of 25 with SEND. This forum provides opportunity for their voices to be heard and to input to projects and service development. The forum has 19 members as of August 2025.

- Habilitation is the teaching of independent living skills and mobility to CYP who have a vision impairment (VI). Through Habilitation, CYP with a vision impairment gain vital skills to equip them with a readiness to participate in their communities, form friendships and develop independence. Habilitation forms a part of the curriculum framework for CYP with a VI, a national standard, which places all the skills a child or young person might need at the heart of their education. Through mobility sessions, CYP with a vision impairment are taught routes around their local areas, in order that they are able to access places of their choosing, such as shops, cafes, and leisure providers. CYP can receive long cane training, route learning, bus travel and road crossing skills. Training is bespoke to the needs of the CYP and always guided by their individual interests and needs. Development of independence, confidence, and social communication is facilitated by teaching CYP to recognise money and handle it, locate items in shops, ask for support when needed, and undertake journeys on foot and/or public transport.
- With a whole school approach, Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust mental health support teams in schools (WEST) is now available in 60% of state funded schools and empowers children and young people to access opportunities within their school community. They recognise the small but significant steps individuals take with prizes, awards or recognition at the level the child values. WEST also supports the school community to value and include children with a range of emotional health needs, promoting visibility.
- The Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust CAHMS Youth Team delivers accessible, community-based support for young people across Worcestershire. By meeting young people in locations that suit them—often within their own communities—youth workers help strengthen local connections and foster a sense of belonging. Through regular networking and collaboration with the community and voluntary sector, the team ensures young people are aware of and can access a wide range of local support services they might not otherwise encounter.
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust Speech and language therapy services are embedded in the mainstream school community and support the children to access all everyday opportunities.



- Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust school nursing services and sexual health outreach services are both accessible to young people using chat health text messaging options. These are private but accessible to young people, enabling them to access services in their preferred way. Young people can self-refer to these services, respecting their dignity and safety and improving access to health advice and sexual health services. This is particularly important for young people who may struggle to discuss their health needs face to face, verbally or with privacy or who have a range of SEND needs.
- The SEND and AP Change Programme has been extended for a further year into 2026 by the DfE. This programme, the extension of existing pilots and the new elements are key to whole system change and ensuring the right provision at the right time and in the right place. This includes the introduction of the Partnership in Inclusion in Schools (PIN's) launched with 30 primary schools across Worcestershire.

Our plans for the next 12 months to enhance the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.

Areas of Focus

- Following feedback from Worcestershire Parent Carer Forum, The Local Authority is co-producing the improvement of the short breaks statement and short breaks offer with parent carers and children and young people to address dissatisfaction with the offer and the website.
- The Local Area Partnership will increase membership of Voices United and the feeder Voices Network and the opportunities available to them.
- The Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust's children's physiotherapy and occupational therapy teams are developing ways to be more embedded in school teams to promote the inclusion of all children in the school community. Occupational therapy guidance and advice will be available to all schools. The balanced system will be in place. This will mirror the SALT model that is currently in place and successful.
- With ongoing national investment, Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust's mental health support teams in schools (WEST) will continue to roll out with an ambition to be available in 100% of schools in Worcestershire by 2030. This is in line with the National plan for increasing mental health support in schools.
- Local Authority commissioners are working with the market and CYP to develop more community outreach provision for individuals moving into adult services. This type of provision is a more flexible way of delivering support with the focus being on individuals accessing universal services in order to be valued and visible in their community.
- Worcestershire Public Health will increase community access into Family Hub buildings and outreach locations.
- The Worcestershire Public Health Community Grants Programme will continue to raise awareness of the opportunities of the grant across Worcestershire specifically in those with additional needs and vulnerabilities including SEND.

Focus on practice - Kidderminster College Opens SPACE – A Safe Place and Calm Environment for Students with SEND

Kidderminster College has officially opened SPACE – a new specialist provision designed to support students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) aged 16 and over.

Standing for Safe Place and Calm Environment, SPACE provides an inclusive and nurturing setting where young people can build life skills, develop confidence, and prepare for more independent and fulfilling futures.

The project was made possible through capital investment from Worcestershire County Council and was carefully designed to provide new life skills and sensory accommodation within the heart of the college. Building work began in August 2024 and was completed by February 2025. The first students began using the facilities in May, and a full cohort joined in September.

What SPACE Offers

SPACE has been thoughtfully designed to meet a range of needs and provide real-world learning experiences. The new facility includes:

- **A fully accessible kitchen** where students practise essential life skills such as cooking, budgeting, and meal preparation, alongside hospitality skills like hot drink service and customer interaction.
- **Two calming sensory rooms** to support emotional regulation, offering multi-sensory experiences that can be tailored to individual needs.
- **A realistic one-bedroom flat** where students gain practical experience in cleaning, laundry, personal care, and managing daily routines.
- **A quiet and supportive common room** designed for those who prefer a calmer space during breaks or need time to reset.



A Space to Learn, Grow and Belong

SPACE is already making a positive difference. Students are using the new facilities to build confidence in daily living and to develop skills for work in areas such as hospitality, retail and customer service. For some, the sensory rooms have become an essential place to regulate, recharge, and feel ready to take on new challenges.

Kidderminster College continues to provide a wide range of specialist course options for students with SEND, alongside learning support across all programmes. More than 100 young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) now study at the College, from entry level through to Level 3. The addition of SPACE ensures every learner can access an environment that meets their needs while empowering them to grow in independence and self-belief.

As one student recently reflected after using SPACE for the first time:

“ It helps me feel calm, and I can focus again. I like learning in the kitchen because it feels like real life. ”

SPACE is more than a facility – it’s a community within the College where students feel supported, understood and inspired to reach their potential.

Focus on practice - Preparing for Adulthood at Wyre Forest School

At Wyre Forest School, preparing our students for adulthood isn’t something that starts in the final years – it begins the moment they walk through our doors. Every part of our curriculum is designed to give our young people the skills, confidence, and real-life experiences they need to live as independently as possible when they leave us.

From post-14 onwards, our curriculum is guided by the four Preparing for Adulthood outcomes, and one of the most important elements is community. We want our young people to feel part of the Wyre Forest community – to see themselves as valued young adults who have something to give and something to gain.



Each week, pupils take part in a range of community-based experiences: travelling on public transport, shopping, volunteering, taking part in leisure activities, and joining local advocacy groups. Visits to organisations such as Nightstop and Kidderminster Youth House help them learn about the services available to them and how to access them. These partnerships often grow both ways – for example, after our sixth form pupils shared their thoughts on accessibility, the local Sexual Health Clinic adapted its referral forms based on their feedback.

Perhaps most powerfully, we hear from former pupils who tell us they still use the services they first discovered through these school experiences. Knowing that they've carried that confidence and independence into adult life is exactly what preparing for adulthood is all about.

The Blossom Tree Café

Finding suitable work experience for SEND pupils can be difficult, so we decided to create our own opportunity – The Blossom Tree Café. With support from a local park group, we opened a community café where our pupils could gain hands-on experience in hospitality and catering while developing communication, teamwork, and functional skills.

The café has quickly become a well-loved part of the local community. Regular customers know our pupils by name, and the relationships that have formed are full of warmth and mutual respect. For many of our students, this is where they first realise that they have something truly valuable to offer the world.

Our pupils lead on community events such as seed swaps and charity cake sales, and they also complete training that helps them meet the needs of their customers – including dementia awareness and support-dog awareness. Our accessible, symbol-supported menus and ordering system have even drawn visitors from specialist colleges in Birmingham.

The pride our young people take in their work shines through every day, and being recognised twice with the Wyre Forest District Council No Barriers Community Award has only strengthened that sense of achievement.



What People Say

Customers tell us:

It is always nice to see how well the students do each term, gaining confidence in their abilities and interaction...always believe in yourselves.

It's a pleasure being customers.

Couldn't have asked for better service...we will be back very soon... thank you.

It was great to see our son giving out change to the customers.

Just wanted to say what a wonderful team effort...really enjoyed my visit to your special café.

Our pupils tell us:

I know all the customers and they know me. They think I'm doing brilliant.

It's my favourite part of the week.

At Wyre Forest School, preparing for adulthood is more than a curriculum — it's a mindset. The Blossom Tree Café, and the many community experiences we offer, show what can happen when young people are given real opportunities to belong, contribute, and shine. The confidence, independence, and pride our pupils take with them into the wider world are the clearest signs of impact we could ever hope for.

6. Leaders are ambitious for Children and Young People with SEND

Positive Signs

- Improvement of SEND services is a high-status priority, with a clear focus on transforming services, reducing waiting times and embedding co-production, led by The Managing Director of the ICB and the Director of Children's Services for the Local Authority. They jointly serve as Executive Leads for Children and Young People and Chair the SEND and AP Partnership Committee. They are supported by the Clinical Lead for children and young people, who also serves as a GP and Deputy Chief Medical Officer. Executive Leads are accountable to the SEND and AP Executive Board. Through joint oversight, direct engagement with children, young people, and families and partnership collaboration including Worcestershire Parent Carer Forum and SEND National Crisis Worcestershire, Executive Leads are driving service transformation to address long waiting times and embed lived experience into decision-making.
- Worcestershire Local Area Partnership has strengthened the governance for SEND, with the SEND and Alternative Provision Partnership Committee driving strategic and operational developments and the SEND and Alternative Provision Executive Board providing oversight and monitoring of progress. The ambition is further driven by the appointment of an independent chair, who challenges and supports progress is made at the right pace and in the right areas, while providing robust challenge to the partnership.
- A regular frequency of scrutiny by Department for Education and NHS England includes six monthly stock takes and deep dives to look at specific areas of improvement. There is public quarterly scrutiny of leaders that examine improvement and responsibility and accountability against statutory duties.
- Leaders continue to use the SEND and AP strategy to have sight of the whole SEND system and use a delivery plan approach to provide clear structure and tracking of progress to ensure accountability in achieving strategic priorities. In February we held a Delivery Plan event, attended by practitioners from across the partnership and representatives of parent carer forum. The session provided a platform to share progress across delivery plan areas and gather stakeholder input on priorities for the upcoming financial year. Feedback from this event directly informed the refreshed delivery plan, ensuring it reflects shared ambitions and system-wide needs.
- Leaders from the partnership commissioned Genuine Partnerships to deliver a workshop to practitioners and parent carers on the four cornerstones of co-production. The workshop engaged leaders, practitioners and parent carers in reflective and practical discussions to build a common language and understanding of co-production. Leaders are working towards building a culture in Worcestershire where lived experience shapes decision-making and drives service improvement.



- The Co-Production Officers have overseen the creation of a dedicated forum for children and young people with SEND up to the age of 25. The forum provides a structured space where the voices of children and young people with SEND are heard regularly and meaningfully, demonstrating a commitment to co-production and inclusive decision making. This year marked the launch of the Voices United Forum, supported by the co-production officers, which had 17 members as of August 2025. Representatives from the forum have attended the SEND and AP Executive Board and other key partnership events helping to ensure services are shaped by those who use them. In addition, partnership leaders have attended Voices United forum meetings answering questions and listening to the views of its members.
- Leaders from the partnership have been overseeing the co-production of outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The co-production officers have been to multiple settings and events to find out what is important to young people to inform the development of emerging outcomes that reflect the priorities and lived experience of children and young people with SEND. These will be finalised via the Voices United forum and adopted across the SEND strategy and associated delivery plans, demonstrating a system wide commitment to co-production.
- The development of the SEND pillars of communication reflects leaders' ambition to build a more informed and connected SEND community through a co-produced communications approach. By working towards clearer, more inclusive, and accessible messaging, the partnership aims to strengthen trust, promote transparency, and ensure that children, young people, and families are kept informed about the things that matter to them the most.
- The Local Authority, along with Academy Trusts and Ofsted, are preparing leaders for the implementation of the new school inspection framework. The inclusive approach in schools expects leaders to identify and understand children with SEND and have appropriate ambition and expectation for children and young people with SEND.
- The SEND AP Change Programme 'Change Makers', led by the Local Authority with Worcester University, has engaged 28 cross-phase schools (40 participants) to trial the Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision (OAIP) document, which sets out expected SEND provision in mainstream settings. Using the Education Endowment Fund implementation cycle and the Appreciative Inquiry 5D innovation cycle, the programme has promoted effective co-production and ambition for shared outcomes, high expectations and quality across education settings. As part of this, Worcestershire Parent Carer Forum have been commissioned to work with schools to develop their co-production.
- Regular health team attendance at CCAS has strengthened communication between services and enabled more targeted responses to severe absence. Children's therapy services, particularly speech and language, have pioneered a balanced approach that supports CYP to reach their communication potential in inclusive local settings. This impact will be extended through the rollout of the PINS project.
- The Local Authority meets with Headteachers and Academy Trusts to discuss and agree approaches to plan for sufficiency of provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. The range of provision within the SEND Provision Plan has been developed as a result of engagement with schools and settings. SEND Strategies and plans | Worcestershire County Council.

Our plans for the next 12 months to enhance the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.

Areas of focus

- The Local Area Partnership is piloting a needs-led, multi-agency offer that affirms neurodivergence and removes reliance on diagnosis, to enable earlier access to support. This approach reduces pressure on diagnostic pathways, shortens waiting times, and ensures children and young people receive timely, inclusive help based on their needs.
- The Local Area Partnership will be launching “The Outcomes for Children and Young People with SEND and the Partnership Vision” to set a clear, shared ambition for improving the lives of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) across our area. The vision and outcomes will be embedded across services through delivery plans. All service leads will be expected to demonstrate meaningful co-production with children and young people with SEND in both their planning and service development processes.
- Introduce a monthly SEND Effectiveness Report to evidence the difference partnership work is making to CYP and families, highlight progress and areas for development, and demonstrate co-production in service planning and delivery.
- The Local Area Partnership will host a SEND strategy and delivery plan event in the last quarter of 2025/26, inviting children and young people with SEND to share their views, reflect on progress across delivery plan areas, and help shape the development of the new SEND strategy from 2026 onwards, ensuring their voice directly informs future priorities.
- By developing and delivering in-house training based on the Genuine Partnerships four cornerstones—welcome and care, value and include, communicate, and work in partnership—the Local Area Partnership will embed a shared understanding of co-production across services. This approach builds staff confidence, strengthens relationships with children, young people and their families, and ensures that co-production becomes a consistent and embedded practice rather than a one-off activity. It supports a cultural shift where children, young people, and families are recognised as equal partners in shaping services and outcomes.
- The Local Area Partnership will continue to support the development and growth of the Voices United Forum, reflecting the commitment to strengthening co-production and ensuring that children and young people with SEND have a meaningful role in shaping the services that affect them.
- As the ICB progresses the clustering with NHS Coventry and Warwickshire, leaders will maintain children and young people as a priority and maintain continued focus and delivery for CYP with SEND.



- The children’s joint commissioning group and Integrated Care Executive Officers Group (ICEOG) will review the workplans and terms of reference to strengthen joint decision-making and swift commissioner action to agree changes that are required to improve services.
- The Local Authority is reviewing capacity and delivery of Occupational Therapy for education and social care, working with the ICB to explore joint commissioning opportunities.
- The Local Area Partnership will develop and implement a tripartite funding panel for EHCPs to strengthen joint decision-making, increase transparency, and ensure consistency beyond current Section F and G plan-based funding agreements.
- The Local Authority will implement and embed an auditing programme with schools to evaluate delivery and impact of Section F resources, identify themes through QA deep dives, and use findings to inform school improvement and strengthen outcomes for young people.
- The Local Authority will identify additional mainstream settings requiring environmental or accommodation adjustments, and through targeted support and investment, improve accessibility so that more children and young people with SEND are enabled to remain in their mainstream setting where appropriate.
- The Health and Care Trust will continue to improve EHCNA response times and quality through specialist health input, deliver system-wide neurodivergence training (Anna Freud model) for CAMHS staff and develop a nurse-led ADHD service to increase access.
- The Local Authority is collaborating with state funded special schools to improve locality collaboration with mainstream and expansion of provision.

Focus on Practice - Strengthening Supported Internships in Worcestershire

Strong and purposeful leadership within Worcestershire’s County Council Skills and Employment service has driven real change in Worcestershire’s Supported Internships programme, transforming it into a structured, high-quality pathway that equips young people with SEND to move confidently into work and adult life.

This improvement has been led by Hannah Strong, SEND & Internships Work Lead, whose clear strategic vision and collaborative leadership have embedded Supported Internships as a key part of the Council’s Skills & Employability offer.

“When I first stepped into the role, we had around 35 young people placed across just two providers,” explains Hannah. **“There was no real infrastructure – no monitoring, limited support, no quality assurance, and no marketing.”**

Through targeted leadership, partnership working, and use of the Internships Work programme, the service established dedicated roles, strengthened employer engagement, and introduced clear accountability and quality frameworks.

Strategic Leadership and Collaboration

Under Hannah's leadership, Worcestershire's Supported Internships are now delivered through five providers, supporting more than 50 young people each year with numbers rising. The introduction of the Supported Internships Quality Assurance Framework (SIQAF) has ensured consistent, person-centred support and measurable outcomes.

Employer engagement has been a key success factor. The creation of the Inclusive Worcestershire Leaders (IWL) employment charter—developed with the LEP, Growth Hub, and Chamber of Commerce—has doubled the number of Disability Confident employers in the county. Over 40 local businesses have achieved IWL status, and around 20% now host supported interns.

“We know the reasons employers hesitate, so we made sure supported internships featured in all of our engagement and employer communications,” says Hannah.

Using Data and Driving Change

Effective leadership has also strengthened governance and data use. New Memorandums of Understanding with providers and termly review meetings now ensure transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement across the network.

At the same time, proactive work with families and schools has reframed Supported Internships as an aspirational pathway. New bursaries, family explainer videos, and targeted school engagement have increased awareness and take-up.

Impact

Outcomes have already improved: employment and apprenticeship numbers have risen, partnerships with inclusive employers have expanded, and young people are moving into paid work and further training with confidence.

One young person recently completed their internship at an Inclusive Worcestershire Leaders organisation in the housing sector and has since begun an apprenticeship.

“They absolutely smashed it and proved just what's possible with the right support,” says Hannah. **“It's warmed my heart to see so many amazing students find their place in the world of work. Watching them grow in confidence and independence is what this is all about.”**

“The real impact of this programme will take time to emerge,” Hannah reflects. **“But the value is clear. With relatively small investment, local authorities can achieve lasting outcomes for young people, their families, and their communities. It's a spend-to-save case—and one worth backing.”**

7. Leaders actively engage and work with children, young people and their families

Positive signs

- To strengthen strategic co-production with children and young people with SEND, the partnership has appointed two dedicated co-production officers. This is to support the strengthening and embedding of co-production across the Local Area. Since taking up their roles in April 2025, they have worked directly with over 200 children and young people from across Worcestershire to co-produce meaningful outcomes. These outcomes will be embedded across all service areas and are also informing key strategic developments, including the Quality Assurance Framework review, the PINS project, and the Change Programme. This work is helping to ensure that the voices of children and young people are central to service design and improvement.
- Executive leaders are actively involved in shaping a culture of co-production across the Local Area Partnership. This is being embedded through participation in Genuine Partnerships' Four Cornerstones training, delivered in May and October 2025. These sessions were co-hosted by senior leaders and attended by Voices United members, parent carers, and practitioners, creating space for meaningful engagement, shared learning, and joint ownership of change.
- Since their 2024 relaunch, WPCF has rebuilt trust with families, doubled membership to 317 as of June 2025, trained 25 parent reps, and now runs over 100 annual events and attends 200+ multi-agency meetings. Their strong partnerships ensure lived experiences inform decision-making, and they continue working with stakeholders to promote inclusion, co-production, and improved outcomes for all SEND families, including those who are marginalised.
- Worcestershire Parent Carer Forum (PCF) representation has expanded significantly—from attending a single monthly meeting to active participation across multiple strategic forums—ensuring that family voices inform decision-making across the SEND system. The PCF continues to identify and address gaps to ensure all parent and carer perspectives are heard. Evidence of strengthened co-production includes co-delivered Autism & Parental Blame training for 30 social work staff and 30 school governors, and the launch of the Parent Carer Ambassador Network, which embeds parent participation within Worcestershire schools. The Forum also leads dual-stream training for parents and professionals on priority topics identified by Worcestershire families, promoting shared understanding and collaborative practice.
- Worcestershire Parent Carer Forum has established mechanisms to ensure parent carer perspectives can inform decision-making. They provide qualitative feedback to Health on a quarterly basis, maintain regular monthly meetings with key partners, and contribute to a significant number of meetings annually to articulate the parent voice. Feedback is gathered through published reports, event participation, and active engagement in committees, ensuring lived experiences is starting to influence service planning and improvement. This multi-channel approach aims to ensure decision-makers hear accurate, timely, and actionable insights from families.



I came to one of your groups, you gave me the confidence to apply for an EHCP and ask for an independent school, you know, like a local grammar school or something, and we got the place. So actually the whole EHCP process wasn't as bad as I thought it would be. Pretty good. Thanks for your help to get us started.

I recently moved to the area and have been looking for a group like this. Wednesday was my first time attending, and I felt incredibly welcome. I'm so glad I went along, and I will definitely be returning. Even after just one session, I can already see how much it will help. The ladies who run the session were absolutely fantastic. I'm very grateful to have found a place where I can access support and information as a parent carer.

Thank you for organising this and to the amazing presenter [from The Feeding Trust] - the workshop was brilliant with lots of helpful information to help me think differently about what is going on for my children. The length of session was great - enough information but not too much.

- The Local Area Partnership hosted a co-production event at the Hive in August 2025, organised by the co-production officers in conjunction with the charity KIDS. This was attended by leaders from across the partnership and provided opportunity for direct engagement with children, young people and their families. Co-production activities included one key message for leaders from the children and young people who attended, the results of which are being used to inform the partnership vision.
- Through PCF, parent carers attended the SEND Strategy Delivery Plan review event in February 2025. They worked alongside leaders and practitioners to shape the delivery plan priorities for the year ahead.
- Representatives of the Voices United Forum have attended two SEND and AP Executive Boards and provided their direct feedback on items such as the 'needs led approach' to waiting times and the partnerships progress in participation and co-production. The ambition is for Voices United to become permanent members of the Board. Senior leaders have also attended Voices United forum meetings.
- The Local Area Partnership has launched a co-production webpage which includes an update page and a projects section. This provides children, young people and their families with visibility of live co-production projects with the opportunity to express interest to get involved.
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust are redesigning their website and have actively engaged with children, young people and families to ensure this work is co-produced. This will result in a new children's website going live in March 2026 with all children's community health services offered by the Trust being accessed from one site with easy navigation to signposting, advice and services.
- The Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust Mental health roadmap was co-produced with children young people and their families. This is due to go live in November 2025.

What are your plans for the next 12 months to enhance the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND?

Areas of focus

- For the Local Area Partnership to strengthen co-production by establishing structured opportunities for professionals to engage directly with parents, carers, children, young people, and local organisations, ensuring lived experience consistently informs strategic decisions and service delivery across the SEND system.
- The SEND & AP Executive Board will invite Voices United to become members to strengthen the partnership's commitment to co-production, accountability and inclusive decision making, bringing lived experience to the heart of partnership governance.
- The Local Area Partnership will continue to work with the Parent Carer Forum and Voices United to build upon the four pillars of communication and develop a communication strategy. The Local Area Partnership recognises clear, consistent and accessible communication is essential to keep families informed and build trust. This will include a review of the Local Offer.
- The Parent Carer Forum will transition from a hosted organisation to a fully independent charity, increasing capacity to scale and extend impact.
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust are redesigning their website and have actively engaged with children, young people and families to ensure this work is co-produced. This will result in a new children's website going live in March 2026 with all children's community health services offered by the Trust being accessed from one site with easy navigation to signposting, advice and services.
- The Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Health and Care Trust Mental health roadmap was co-produced with children young people and their families. This is due to go live in November 2025.



8. Leaders have an accurate, shared understanding of the needs of children and young people in their local area

Positive signs

- The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB) has strengthened and deepened its understanding of service demand and waiting times by implementing robust data monitoring. This enhanced understanding is enabling more responsive planning, including securing additional capacity to provide an offer to families with support for autism and ADHD.
- The SEND and AP Change Programme is helping the partnership to understand the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND in the area and test out initiatives such as the assisted technology lending library, the multi-disciplinary team to support children using alternative education provision, Partnership in Neuro Inclusion in Schools (PINS) and outreach into mainstream schools.
- A robust partnership dashboard is in place, outlining SEND service demand, outcomes, and local trends. This enables monthly KPI reporting to committee and the executive board strengthening transparency and accountability.
- Developments in Public Health nursing and Mental Health Support Teams in schools (WEST) have been informed by leaders having an accurate, informed and shared understanding of the needs of children in the local area. Using deprivation and inequality data, together with an examination of individual school data appertaining to CYP vulnerabilities that predispose them to poor mental health and wellbeing, has ensured that we have a good understanding of the need and inequalities experienced in our area. This information informs our focus and enables an individual, bespoke approach to support identified schools.
- In 0-19, public health commissioned services, services work together as part of the family hub networks. Shared review leads to greater understanding about the opportunities in each locality for the best start in life. Sharing our service's data, enables accurate, shared understanding across universal services, about the needs of CYP in local areas and informed response from services to meet these needs.



What are your plans for the next 12 months to enhance the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND?

Areas of focus

- Deliver the Wye Forest system-wide pilot to strengthen how we meet the needs of children with neurodivergence in the local area. Use the pilot to build and share greater understanding of children's needs with leaders and partners as it progresses.
- To improve the accuracy and efficiency of SEND and education reporting by migrating to a single integrated system (by April 2026). Alongside this, develop and embed dashboards to support timely reporting and strengthen quality assurance.
- To improve the accuracy of data reported by the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care Trust, ensuring the SEND data dashboard can specifically identify and report on the experiences for children with an EHCP
- Publicise the data dashboard on the Local Offer so that parent carers and stakeholders have transparent, real-time access to information whenever they need it.



9. Leaders commission services and provision to meet the needs and aspirations of children and young people including commissioning arrangements for children and young people in Alternative Provision

Positive signs

- The Children and Young People Joint Commissioning Group, which encompasses SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) provision, meets bi-monthly and brings together representatives from Public Health, the Local Authority, and the Integrated Care Board (ICB). The group provides a collaborative forum to address commissioning priorities and ensure alignment in the planning, monitoring, and delivery of services. Over the past year, the group has explored several key areas, including:
 - Best Start in Life initiatives and the introduction of SEND Health Visitors,
 - Progress in therapies transformation, and
 - The development of future models for neurodiversity support.
- In July, a dedicated shared planning session was held to assess the needs of children and young people with SEND. This session informed strategic service planning, anticipated demand, and identified opportunities for co-commissioning and joint working across agencies.
- Between April–June 2025, the new CYP Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing service MELO supported 178 young people with confirmed ASD/ADHD diagnoses and a further 155 under assessment. Positive feedback from families highlights the impact of this newly commissioned service.
- WCC are working closely with our Alternative Provision providers and mainstream schools to establish a robust tier one outreach offer, enabling earlier advice, guidance, and support within mainstream settings to help sustain placements. Our priority is to ensure that AP functions as an intervention rather than a destination, with a clear focus on supporting successful reintegration into mainstream education. By strengthening tier one provision, we are building the foundations to better understand and plan for short-term and long-term placement needs, ensuring a strategic and sustainable approach.
- The Children with Disability Service has strengthened engagement with parents and carers through wider provider choice, clear information on options, and a funding request system to support access. Parents are actively involved in shaping bespoke short break packages, with decisions agreed by a multi-agency panel. Parent carer feedback directly informs the panel's allocation of small bids, ensuring offers are responsive to need.



- The Children with Disability Service provide a diverse and wide-reaching short break offer, delivering 6,000 places in 2024–25. Ongoing work with providers has extended provision to children with more complex needs, supported by panel oversight and feedback mechanisms. Developments such as Forest Families' new facilities ensure children with complex needs are fully included.
- Children's services have expanded inclusive SEND provision across Worcestershire to ensure children and young people can access the right support close to home. Primary and secondary hubs provide nurturing environments within mainstream schools, alongside SEN units for communication and interaction needs, Autism Bases (MABs/EMABs), and Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) provision. Recent developments include Honeywell Primary SEN Unit (10 places, Sept 2025), Christopher Whitehead Language College EMAB (12 places, Sept 2023), Tudor Grange Academy Redditch EMAB expansion (now 55 places across MAB/EMAB, Sept 2023), and Unity Academy SEMH provision in Kidderminster (30 places, Sept 2024). In addition, School Age Language Classes continue to increase access to SALT in mainstream schools. Together, these developments significantly strengthen the local SEND offer.
- Early Years Hubs strengthen support for children and families by preparing them for education and identifying needs early, particularly where an EHCP may be required. Provision includes ensuring sufficient nursery, preschool, and childminder places for children with complex needs, alongside the continued delivery of Early Years Language Classes to increase access to SALT support in mainstream schools and settings. Dingley's Promise has opened an Enhanced Early Years setting in Droitwich (Feb 2025), offering up to 15 nursery places for children with complex needs. In 2023/24, 117 preschool children and 63 school-aged children benefited from language classes as part of their education.
- The Local Authority Sensory Impairment Team is well established and compliant in understanding and responding to the needs and aspirations of children and young people with sensory impairment.
- Post-16 and Post-19 provision has been strengthened, offering young people with SEND greater choice and access to further and higher education. The Warwickshire College Group opened a Preparation for Adulthood Centre at Pershore College in September 2024, creating 12–16 new places for young people with complex needs. In the same month, HoW College in Worcester, in partnership with National Star College, launched a new course to support young adults in developing independence and life skills, starting with 5 students and capacity to expand to 12 places.
- The commissioning team has strengthened SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) across Worcestershire, widening sufficiency and embedding robust quality assurance. In the last 12 months, 13 new AP providers have joined the DPS and 868 children have been placed, ensuring improved choice and needs-led matching through the AP Directory. Safeguarding and quality are prioritised, with regular provider visits and, most recently, the suspension and re-admittance of a provider following concerns raised by parents, professionals and children—demonstrating effective joint working with Herefordshire CC and resulting in improved provision. Independent school placements are informed by the SEND Directory and parental preferences captured by EHCP Coordinators, ensuring consistent, timely consultations and that families' voices are central.
- Early years sufficiency has been strengthened, with 30 specialist nursery places created through swift market engagement and Enhanced Early Years provision commissioned for up to 24 children in the South, with further capacity in development in the North. Case study evidence, such as from Spark Academy, highlights direct positive impact on individual young people.

What are your plans for the next 12 months to enhance the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND?

Areas of Focus

Work on a 3-pillar approach to reducing waiting time in SEND underway:

- 1.** The investment into waiting list management was confirmed during 2024 for 2025/26, with a similar process replicated for 2026/27, with the ICB funding the resources required for children and young people waiting the longest on the waiting list to receive their Autism or ADHD assessment at another provider that is commissioned by the ICB. Subject to the success of the transfers in 2025, this is likely to be replicated for 2026/27 and 2027/28, to eradicate all long waits over the 3 years plan.
- 2.** The introduction of a Neurodiversity support service in response to feedback from children, young people and their families, co-produced model, is at procurement stage. The procurement will run between October through to April. This will introduce advice, information and support for children and young people and their families, with or without a diagnosis.
- 3.** The development of a model of services that meets the needs of children. This is our approach to multi-agency coordination or team around a child, learning from a pilot in Wyre Forest, to roll-out across the county. Work will shortly commence on engaging schools, early years, health services and voluntary and community organisations as part of this.



- Develop and implement a new short breaks strategy through co-production with parent carers, children, and young people. Coordinate working groups to ensure the strategy is accessible to all families, embed children's views in service design, and establish SMART outcomes for short breaks that link directly to EHCPs.
- Strengthen the promotion of the short breaks offer through earlier and wider communication, including schools and social media. Assess and measure the coverage of provision for children and young people with complex needs to ensure the offer meets increasing demand.
- Develop a coordinated approach between special schools and mainstream colleges to address the identified Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD) provision gap. Produce a specification exploring hybrid models, including satellite sites on school grounds. Evaluate the impact of removing the preschool forum and determine alternative approaches to strengthen early identification.
- Explore and commission options for creating additional SEN Units to support children with complex needs between September 2025 and September 2027. Assess opportunities to expand existing Mainstream Autism Bases (MABs) and Enhanced MABs (EMABs) to meet growing demand. Identify secondary schools able to deliver or host SEMH provision and develop plans to increase and improve access to SEMH special school places, particularly in the south of the county.
- Strengthen parent and child involvement in commissioning through closer work with co-production officers and Worcestershire Parent Carer Forum and Voices United, ensuring child/parent voice shapes specifications and provider practice.
- Launch Mencap Pre-Internships October 2025 to better prepare young people for internships, evaluating impact for future scaling.



Focus on practice - Creating Joy and Belonging Through Short Breaks – Morgan's Story

(Child's name changed to protect anonymity)

Morgan is a bright, curious seven-year-old with autism, global learning difficulties, and sensory processing disorder. They are non-verbal, still in nappies, and require close adult support throughout the day to stay safe, comfortable, and engaged in the world around them.

Morgan lives at home with their mum, dad, and two siblings – an older sibling who also has autism, and a younger sister. Like many families caring for multiple children with additional needs, finding opportunities for each child to thrive individually has been a daily challenge.

Before Support

Before discovering the short break programme, Morgan's family had been unable to find any holiday or activity provision that could meet their child's complex needs. Most clubs were not equipped to provide the level of specialist care, sensory understanding, and one-to-one attention that Morgan required.

This left the family with little respite, limited opportunities to spend individual time with each child, and an ongoing sense of isolation and exhaustion.

Morgan's parent shared:

“ We didn't have anywhere Morgan could go safely. It meant we were always juggling, and none of the children were getting the time they deserved. It was exhausting and worrying. ”

Support and Inclusion

Everything changed when Morgan joined their local short break holiday club. The staff took time to understand Morgan's communication style, sensory needs, and interests, creating a nurturing and structured environment where they could flourish.

Morgan quickly settled into the routine and has become a regular attendee. They light up when exploring the forest school area, delighting in the feel of leaves and mud, or when splashing happily in the water trays. They enjoy simply being around other children – observing their play and sharing space in their own way.

Impact on Morgan and the Family

This opportunity to belong and explore has transformed life for the whole family. Morgan's parents now have time to take their older child on outings or give their daughter precious one-to-one attention, all while knowing that Morgan is safe, happy, and understood.

Week by week, staff have seen Morgan grow more comfortable, more curious, and increasingly willing to try new experiences. These small but powerful steps are building blocks for the future – helping Morgan develop confidence and a sense of belonging outside the family home, while giving parents renewed energy and hope.

This story is a powerful reminder of how effective short break provision can radically improve not only a child's quality of life, but also the wellbeing and resilience of their entire family.

10. Leaders evaluate services and make improvements

Positive signs

- The Local Authority Education Engagement team have strengthened their professional relationships with the seven Alternative Provision (AP) schools. The team are regularly visiting and working from these schools and as a result have a strong oversight of Alternative Provision and experiences for children and young people.
- The SENCO network meetings are well attended with circa 179 settings represented at the online meetings, and up to 60 in the face-to-face events. The purpose of the network is to allow SENCOs to be kept up to date with national and local agendas as well as learn from each other and share good practice. The SENCO network meetings have improved provision planning for the next academic year, enhanced collaboration with speech and language therapy, improved signposting for families, identified creative staffing solutions and increased confidence in the application of Worcestershire SEND guidance.
- Staffing within the SEND EHCP co-ordinator team has increased, reducing caseloads and improving responsiveness. Additional capacity has been built through a dedicated complaints officer, two tribunal officers, and an extra Business Support Officer. Area teams have expanded from four to five, with three specialising in pre-14 and two in post-14, ensuring more focused and effective support for children and young people with SEND.
- In 2025 the Local Authority SEND service has been restructured to introduce teams focused on children who are under 14 years and 14 years and above. The intention is to focus on the right help and support at the right time and has strengthened alignment to reflect changes in children and young people's skills and independence, including transitions in education, preparation for adulthood and improved continuity care and planning.
- WCC has a dedicated data team in place to update reports and oversee quality assurance processes. Their primary function is to monitor and improve the quality of SEND data, ensuring accuracy and reliability. As a result of their work, liquid logic reporting across SEND has improved, supporting more consistent oversight and informed decision-making.
- The introduction of the Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO) role has strengthened the quality and consistency of social care advice within the SEND system, enhanced professionals' understanding of SEND across social care, and increased the visibility and integration of social care in multi-agency planning and decision-making.
- An Initial Screening and Contact Officer (ISCO) has been introduced to triage all new EHCNA requests. This role ensures timely identification of children and young people known to social care, supports threshold decisions for early help or social work assessment, and provides social care conversations with families where needs are identified but thresholds are not met.
- There is a strong culture of continuous learning from practice, with a multi-agency subgroup (chaired by Health) overseeing Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs). Clear action plans are developed with strong accountability, and regular webinars ensure learning is shared across the partnership, driving continuous improvement in safeguarding practice.

- The Local Authority have developed mainstream bases and enhanced accessibility by adapting four schools (including accessible bathrooms and a stair lift). We also introduced an 'Accessible Schools Matrix' on admissions webpages, enabling parent carers to make informed choices and ensuring more children and young people can access needs-led mainstream provision.
- The 0 – 19 public health nursing service has been evaluated, re-commissioned and redesigned to improve the service offer to children, babies, infants and their parents/carers. Having launched in August 2025, an 18-month evaluation plan is in place, including external evaluation, to ensure a cycle of continuous improvement.
- Health service leaders work closely with the assistant designated clinical officer to ensure constant evaluation of the quality of all EHCP reports, generating actions and improvements for health contributions to EHCPs.
- Significant progress has been made in reducing waiting times for CAMHS and paediatric therapy services. Workforce gaps within CAMHS have been addressed, and the introduction of new services has expanded access, enabling more children to receive timely support. Adoption of the Balanced Approach in therapies has improved accessibility and reduced waits, with physiotherapy long waits now resolved.
- In CAMHS, services work hard to ensure children with emotional wellbeing and mental health needs access the right service first time. A new, CAMHS single point of access has been set up and regular meetings between CAMHS and other providers (eg MELO) aims to ensure children access the service that will most benefit them first time. Our mental health support teams in schools (WEST) deliver the 'Whole School Approach' and offer consultation to teaching and support staff about individual CYP and wider mental health and emotional wellbeing issues.
- The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB) undertake regular audits to assure the quality of health contributions to the EHCP. Governance reporting tracks workforce training, while dashboards monitor EHCP timeliness, waiting times, complaints and tribunals, providing evidence of impact and areas for improvement.
- Resourcing of the SEND Commissioning Hub has been strengthened to increase the staffing capacity resulting in greater efficiency, stronger provider relationships and improved engagement with parent carers. Enhanced QA capacity has enabled more rigorous oversight of AP and independent schools, with updated protocols aligned to national standards, leading to improved provider quality and better outcomes for children. Over the last 12 months, 96% of 904 children referred via the AP DPS have been placed successfully, demonstrating sufficiency and timely matching. The DPS continues to expand, offering greater choice for schools and families, supported by weekly SEND Provision Planning Meetings chaired by the Assistant Director to monitor sufficiency and delivery. Regional collaboration with West Midlands colleagues is strengthening information sharing and best practice, while Worcestershire's Independent Schools Contract embeds co-production requirements to ensure the voices of children, parents and carers are consistently heard through planning, reviews and delivery.



- This year, the public health nursing contract has been enhanced to include two full-time equivalent (FTE) SEND-specific health visitors. These dedicated roles will focus on delivering early-stage interventions for children with emerging needs identified within the 2.5 year review, aiming to provide timely support and reduce reliance on waiting lists. By embedding targeted interventions within the health visiting service, we are strengthening our capacity to identify and respond to SEND needs earlier, ensuring families receive proactive and accessible support. The intended impact is that parents with a child identified with SEND at age 2.5 years will get additional, specialist health visitor support to identify SEND needs early and ensure parents/carers are supported and skilled to meet the individual needs of their child.
- There has been an increase to the range and availability of Alternative Provision services, through the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS). 13 providers have been added to the DPS this year. 904 children were referred via the DPS in the last 12 months. 96% of these secured placements with DPS providers. This commissioning approach provides tailored provision to meet the needs of pupils requiring support.
- The first AP DPS Provider Forum was held in person in May of this year, with 22 attendees from 13 different providers, this was a combination of providers on Lot 1 Alternative Provision and Lot 2 Home Tuition. The aims of the forum were to bring all of our providers together to provide an opportunity for WCC Teams to share information and guidance with providers on the DPS; to build stronger working relationships between WCC and providers and promote best practice. The provider forum was very well received by providers with 53% evaluating it as very helpful and 42% evaluating it as extremely helpful. The impact of the event has built stronger working relationships with providers and increased their understanding of the DPS. It provided a great platform for information sharing but also an opportunity for providers to raise their concerns and questions with WCC.
- The Short Breaks Support Work and Domiciliary Care Provider Forum is a well-established platform for engagement between commissioned providers, Service and the Commissioning Team. It typically meets every 4 months. Over the last 12 months, 18 people and 12 providers have attended. When the service is recommissioned, attendance at the provider forum will be made mandatory. The forum provides a structured space to promote good practice and collaborative problem solving.
- The Local Authority has developed mainstream bases and enhanced accessibility by adapting four schools (including accessible bathrooms and a stair lift). We also introduced an 'Accessible Schools Matrix' on admissions webpages, enabling parent carers to make informed choices and ensuring more children and young people can access needs-led mainstream provision.

What are your plans for the next 12 months to enhance the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND?

Areas of Focus

- Explore and develop a model to replicate early years' joint assessment meetings for older cohorts, ensuring timely multi-agency decision-making that informs appropriate next steps both within and beyond education.
- The Local Authority is committed to developing a more consistent mechanism to update families of any changes to their EHCP co-ordinator.

- Embed the DSCO audit tool within wider children's services to align with the EHCP audit, enabling triangulated multi-agency evidence and strengthening quality assurance across the service.
- Increase the proportion of parents who feel heard from 46% to 70% within 12 months of implementing the new roles, strengthening quality assurance and parent carer confidence in the SEND system
- The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care Trust will co-produce and introduce innovative SEND health visiting roles within the 0–19 public health nursing service to provide earlier, practical support for preschool children with SEND. This will strengthen early intervention pathways, reduce reliance on EHCNAs and specialist health services, and offer 'bridge' support for families while awaiting further provision.
- By July 2026, recruit and embed an additional Quality Assurance Officer to strengthen oversight of Local Area Partnership SEND processes. Success will be measured through improved consistency in QA audits, evidence of timely identification of themes, and demonstrable impact on the quality of EHCPs and outcomes for children and young people. This will include development of the audit process for Educational Psychologist reports.
- The Local Area Partnership will review, design and deliver a new communications strategy with Worcestershire Parent Carer Forum and Voices United. This will include the Local Offer website to respond to feedback on accessibility, relevance, and clarity.
- The Local Authority will encourage and monitor provider adoption of national AP Quality Assurance standards and will build on increased staff resource to strengthen provider partnerships.
- The Local Authority will review and re-contract Early Years Language Classes & SaLT provision; expand therapeutic and targeted SEN provision to meet sufficiency needs.
- We will collaborate with partners, including parent carers and children and young people to implement measurable indicators for specialist resource bases/hubs.
 - Ensure that parent carer and young persons' voices are heard in developing proposals for future specialist resource bases.
 - Ensure that our commissioning intentions are evidenced in the delivery of SEND provision.
 - Create a culture of inclusive decision-making and ensure parent carers are systematically included as key partners in the assessment and decision-making process for new units, so that their insights directly inform planning, provision, and evaluation.
 - Establish formal mechanisms (e.g., parent carer forums, structured consultations) for gathering parent voice during assessment and planning.
 - Involve parent carers in co-production meetings when new units are designed or reviewed.
 - Provide staff with training on effective engagement and partnership working with parent carers.
 - Record and monitor parent carer contributions to ensure their views inform final decisions.

11. Leaders create an environment in which effective practice and multi-agency working can flourish

Positive Signs

- Multi-agency collaboration within the Local Area Partnership has been significantly strengthened through a range of joint initiatives, including the SEND strategy delivery plan update, co-production events such as The Hive family day, and targeted workshops on waiting times and communication. These activities have brought together professionals from education, health, social care, and the voluntary sector, alongside children, young people, and families, to co-design and improve services. Clear accountability structures and active partnership working are driving continuous improvement and maintaining a collective focus on positive outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- Multi-agency training from Genuine Partnerships on the four cornerstones of co-production has further embedded shared values and approaches and enabled leaders to encourage a focus on understanding children and young people's needs and aspirations.
- The Health and Care Trust has invested in Nationally accredited, expert by experience led, Anna Freud Training for all CAMHS staff. This ensures the neurodivergent needs of children are understood with a focus on inclusive practice and accessibility for children in CAMHS Services.
- Leaders of Local Authority Children's Services bring together managers and practitioners across the service areas on a regular basis through 'end-to-end' meetings, to ensure clarity of roles, celebrate working together to agreed outcomes and build the development of appropriate skills to understand children and young people's needs and aspirations.
- The Local Area Partnership offers a comprehensive and diverse menu of training and professional development opportunities, designed to build skills, deepen understanding, and support best practice across education, health, social care, and the voluntary sector. These opportunities are tailored to meet the needs of practitioners working with children and young people with SEND and reflect a shared commitment to continuous learning and collaborative improvement.
- Worcestershire's multiagency partnership has strengthened child level decision making processes including a range of panels such as the High Needs Assessment panel and Children's Continuing Care panels, to ensure children and young people receive timely, coordinated support in the right place.



- Worcestershire Family Hubs provide a single point of access, bringing together a network of services to identify and address the needs of babies, children and their families. Through district-based networks and collaborative working, Family Hubs enable early intervention, coordinated support, and seamless referrals. This integrated approach ensures that families can access the right help at the right time, with services working together to close gaps and develop new offers in response to local needs.
- In the first quarter of 2025/26 Family Hubs in Worcestershire were accessed by a total footfall of over 11,000 parents and children within their main hub buildings. A range of outreach support was also delivered within locations countywide.
- Family Hub networks have now been set up within each district since April this year. These now meet termly, and each have their own data profiles and partnership led priorities/actions.
- Since the refreshed Family Hub models were recommissioned in April this year a wider range of services, drop ins and clinics are offered within hub buildings. These now include more domestic abuse support, paediatric therapies, birth registration pilot, mental health support, healthy homes interventions and a wider range of peer support groups.
- There is a strong partnership between the Educational Psychology (EP) services and the local Virtual School. This collaboration provides free at the point of access training and consultation for schools to develop evidence-based Trauma-Informed and Attachment-Aware approaches. The EP service supports practitioners further by offering by regular consultation and drop-in opportunities.
- Parent carers benefit from well-attended, accessible drop-ins co-delivered by EPS and CCN. 142 drop ins have been accessed between June 2023 and October 2025.
- Schools staff can access Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) training, that includes regular supervision from EPs. 18 staff members are on the current new cohort (training Sept 2025-Dec 2026), with 19 trained in previous cohort 2024-2025, and another 19 in 2023-2024, and 12 in 2022-2023 cohort. This makes a total of 68 ELSA staff trained in schools; to enable them to keep their qualification as an ELSA they must also attend half termly supervision.



- Within Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health Care Trust multidisciplinary working for early years children with profound and multiple disabilities is in place and encompasses the journey of the child from the neonatal unit through to starting school. This is a wonderful example of how effective partnership working can make a real difference to children with SEND.
- The CCAS panel is an ongoing collaboration between health and education to ensure appropriate information sharing to manage children who have severe absence from school or are missing from school. The culture and environment developed enabled multi-agency working to flourish with a focus on meeting the needs of children.
- The Local Authority has a NEET strategy for 16+ learners, supporting young people into employment, further education, or voluntary opportunities. Early identification through the Young Adults Team from age 14 enables timely planning and smoother transitions from education to social care. Progress for young people with disabilities is actively tracked to ensure appropriate support and resource allocation. Collaborative work with HE and FE colleges is developing pathways for complex post-16 learners, reducing reliance on special schools or high-cost independent placements and promoting sustainable, appropriate options into adulthood.

Areas of Focus

- The SEND and AP Change Programme is helping the partnership to understand the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND and test out initiatives such as the assisted technology lending library, the multi-disciplinary team to support children using alternative education provision, Partnership in Neuro Inclusion in Schools (PINS) and outreach into mainstream schools.
- The Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision and Local Area Inclusion Offer, being led by the Local Authority, will standardise Neurodiversity training for all teaching staff and leadership teams. The Local Area Inclusion Support Offer will be a resource for educational setting to access advice, guidance and support to help them create inclusive environments for CYP with SEND.
- The Local Authority is in the process of co-producing guidance about the Educational Psychologist role with Worcestershire Parent/Carer Forum, Guidance will be made available on the Local Offer and will be shared by Worcestershire Parent/Carer Forum.
- We are piloting a Neighbourhood Health Model to improve the support of children and young people with SEND through closer collaboration between health, education, social care, and community services within the local area. This integrated approach helps identify needs earlier and streamline access to support. By working in partnership with families and schools, neighbourhood teams can ensure that services are better aligned and delivering improved outcomes for children and young people.

Glossary of Acronyms

ADD: Attention Deficit Disorder

ADHD: Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder

AP: Alternative Provision

AR: Annual Review

ASD: Autistic Spectrum Disorder

CAMHS: Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

CCAS: Children who Cannot attend School Panel

CCP: Children's Continuing Care Panel

ChN: Child in Need

CHC: Continuing Healthcare Checklists

CME: Child Missing Education

CNIS: Children Not in School

CPD: Continuing Professional Development

CP: Change Programme

CSPR: Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

CYP: Children & Young People

GP: General Practitioner

HAF: Holiday Activities Fun

HE: Higher Education

HI: Hearing Impairment

HNA: High Needs Assessment Panel

HoW: Heart of Worcestershire

HV: Health Visitor

H&W NHS HCT: Herefordshire and Worcestershire
NHS Health and Care Trust

ICB: Integrated Care Board

ISCO: Initial Screening and Contact Officers

ICEOG: Integrated Care Executive Officers Group

ISS: Inclusion Support Service

JAM: Joint Assessment Meetings

KPI: Key Performance Indicators

LA: Local Authority

LAP: Local Area Partnership

LO: Local Offer

MAB: Mainstream Autism Base

MDT: Multi-Disciplinary Team

MET: Medical Education Team

MLD: Moderate Learning Difficulties

MSI: Multi Sensory Impairment

SENCO: Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

SI: Sensory Impairment

SLCN: Speech Language and Communication Needs

SLD: Severe Learning Difficulties

SpLD: Specific Learning Difficulties

SLT: Speech and Language Therapy

VI: Visual Impairment (loss of sight)

WAM: Worcestershire Autism Mentors

WPCF: Worcestershire Parent Carer Forum

YP: Young Person

