



**Inclusive  
Cumbria  
Strategy**

**2016 - 2021**

## Contents

1. Foreword
2. Introduction
3. Our vision, principles and priorities
4. The national and Cumbria context
5. Delivering the strategy
6. Performance managing and reviewing the strategy
7. Milestones for delivery

### 1. Foreword

Cumbria has a strong record of inclusive education and continues to be committed to meeting the needs of the County's most vulnerable learners as close to their home communities as is possible. In the years since the launch of Inclusive Cumbria the needs of children in the County have changed and in order to ensure that we continue to be able to meet the needs of learners we need to develop our provision. That development takes place in the context of a new legislative framework for the delivery of education for children with special educational needs and a strong collaborative of all those concerned for the delivery of high quality education embodied in the Cumbria Alliance of System Leaders.

This strategy sets out proposals to enhance and improve our inclusion arrangements and will be delivered in conjunction with our partners. It builds on positive change in the education system in Cumbria over the last five years including the enhanced access to schools, the quality of our specialist services and schools and the strong leadership of the education system through the Cumbria Alliance. Developing new provision to meet current needs is at the core of the strategy but we know there are other areas we can improve on and the strategy also focuses on these as core activities including building capacity of all our schools to meet children's needs and ensuring that we work more effectively with our partners and families.

We will keep the strategy under review as the needs of the County's children change ensuring that in the future our approach to inclusion is dynamic and flexible recognising that children change and their needs change. At the heart of this approach is our ambition to ensure that we deliver the best education possible for all our children.

## 2. Introduction

All Cumbria's children and young people deserve the best possible start in life and to benefit from the opportunities that living in the county presents. This means that they grow up in loving and supportive families, have positive educational and social experiences, and go on to meet their potential.

To meet our ambition for children and young people we have set a challenging agenda for improvement through the Cumbria Children and Young People's Plan, the Children's Improvement Plan and the Cumbria Alliance of Systems Leaders planning framework.

This ambition includes those children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Cumbria should rightly be proud of its record of delivering an inclusive education system which meets the needs of all its learners. There remains much to be proud of including our special schools, specialist teaching teams and inclusive practice in all Cumbria's schools.

Despite this, there is more we need to do to continue to improve services for children and young people with SEND and to support their families and carers. The environment in which we operate has changed considerably since the original Inclusive Cumbria Strategy was agreed in 2002. This has meant the provision available for children and young people has not kept up with the changing environment and demands. In particular we need to have in place a long term strategy to address:

- The changes introduced by The Children and Families Act (2014), reformed the way support for children with special educational needs is provided;
- The changed needs profile of children being assessed as in need of additional support to meet their special educational needs;
- The governance arrangements across the schools of Cumbria which has changed over the past five years, with the development of academies and free schools;
- The significant changes to financial environment of schools and the County Council.

Inclusive Cumbria (2016-21) sets out the roadmap for how we will address these challenges, while continuing to improve the life chances of all children who are SEN.

## 3. Our Vision, Principles and Priorities

### Vision for inclusion

Children, young people and their families should expect Cumbrian educators to deliver the best available provision to meet a child's needs. This will be actively supported by all other agencies interested in the wellbeing and achievement of children particularly the health and care agencies.

We recognise that children thrive most within their own family and local community including access to learning with peers in their nearest school. Where this is not possible provision to meet needs should be as close to the child's home community as possible to support family and social life.

### **Principles for inclusion**

The following principles underpin our approach to inclusion:

- Learning provides the basis that enables people to participate fully in everyday life;
- All children should experience equality in access to high quality learning that meets their learning needs and can address any requirements relating to social background, culture and ethnicity;
- Inclusion is a collaborative activity which requires the engagement of children, families and providers;
- Inclusive values develop and evidence respect for difference, tolerance and understanding;
- All learners should be respected and valued and be able to access learning which offers the appropriate challenge and support;
- Cumbria's learning providers will meet the needs of children and young people as close to their home communities as possible;
- Early identification of need and intervention to meet this need is the most effective way of ensuring that children and young people achieve;
- Inclusive education should support children and young people make progress towards their potential and assist them in meeting their aspirations;
- Effective inclusion is a shared responsibility which requires the agreement of learners, families and providers, including health education and social care who must engage with the underpinning policy and legislative framework.

### **Priorities for inclusion**

The priorities for Inclusive Cumbria are based on a number of challenges and gaps in current provision. The key challenges are set out below:

- The need to further develop the specialism within mainstream schools in meeting the needs of children with SEND;
- Provision for children with autism lacks breadth and is inconsistently available across the County;
- A lack of alternative provision for children and young people presenting with challenging behaviours due to underlying SEND;
- An over reliance on external placements in independent provision for young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs;
- Gaps in health provision for children and young people with SEND, particularly in supporting their continuing health care needs and mental health;
- Further development of joint working between agencies to meet needs;
- Challenges of rurality are not always addressed, especially in relation to children with severe and profound needs;
- Some cases where children are still waiting too long for assessment of their needs;
- Educational progress of children with SEND needs to improve further;
- Joint commissioning is not as effective as it should be in developing and delivering services for children and young people with SEND;
- Parents and carers role is underdeveloped in the development of service models.

In response to these challenges the following priorities will drive the implementation of Inclusive Cumbria:

1. To review the model of resourced provision across the county to ensure the needs of autistic children can be met equitably;
2. To develop alternative provision and associated specialist provision for children and young people with behavioural, social, emotional and mental health needs;
3. To expand the opportunity for Cumbria's special schools to enhance the provision for children with severe and profound needs and to support access to a wider curriculum for a larger number of children;
4. To develop a model of provision which addresses the challenge of equity and rurality in the county;
5. To work with the Cumbria Alliance of System Leaders to improve outcomes for children with SEND and build capacity within Cumbria's settings, schools and colleges;
6. To develop joint commissioning arrangements to ensure that children and particularly children with SEND are at the heart of commissioning decisions;
7. To work through enhanced joint commissioning arrangements that address gaps in health and care provision;
8. To further develop our approaches to assessment to ensure that statutory assessments are all completed within timescale;
9. To establish structures which allow parents and carers a meaningful voice in service development.

## 4. The National and Cumbria Context

### National context

**Relevant legislation:** The main pieces of legislation that inform Inclusive Cumbria are The Children and Families Act (2014), the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and the Equality Act (2010).

The Children and Families Act (2014) includes provision for the replacement of the Statement of Special Educational Needs with a Section 139a Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for children with special educational needs. EHCPs differ from statementing in that they are:

- More person centred with greater engagement and involvement from parents, carers, children and young people in the process;
- More co-ordinated in terms of the assessment process across education, health and care services;
- Focusses on outcomes to be achieved for each child/young person;
- Runs from birth to age 25;

The legislation applies equally to all schools including academies and free schools, and national data shows that the percentage of children in primary or secondary academies with a statement is similar to locally maintained schools.<sup>1</sup>

The revised new SEND Code of Practice came into force on 1st April 2015, and sets out four areas of Special Educational Need (SEN):

- Communicating and interacting – for example, speech, language and communication difficulties which make it difficult for a child to understand language or communicate effectively with others;
- Cognition and learning – for example, where a child learns at a slower pace than

<sup>1</sup> National statistics on SEND and EHCPs are available on:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-special-educational-needs-sen>

others their age, has difficulty in understanding parts of the curriculum, or with memory or other cognitive tasks. Sometimes they may have a specific difficulty affecting one particular part of their learning such as in literacy or numeracy;

- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties – for example, where a child has difficulty in their relationships with other people, they may be withdrawn, or act in ways that have an effect on their health and wellbeing, and learning (or on other children's);
- Sensory and/or physical needs – for example, a child with visual and/or hearing impairments, or a physical need that means they must have equipment and/or additional ongoing support.

The Equality Act (2010) defines a disability as '*a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term (a year or more) and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.*' This includes, for example, sensory impairments such as those that affect sight and hearing, and long-term health conditions such as diabetes or epilepsy.

While some children who have SEN may also have a disability, not all children with SEN are defined as disabled under the Equality Act. Likewise, and not all children who are defined as disabled will have SEN. For example, pupils with severe asthma or diabetes may not have special educational needs but will have rights under the Equality Act. When addressing its provision of support for children who are SEN, a school still needs to consider its wider Public Sector Equality Duty.

**National trends:** One of the main trends since 2010 has been the overall rise in the numbers of pupils who have a Statement of Special Needs and an EHCP. The largest increases have been among people aged 5-10 and 16-19.

There has been a particular increase in the numbers of children with an assessment of autism and who have an EHCP relating to their Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. This trend looks set to continue.

**National policy issues:** The changes introduced in the Children and Families Act has had implications for local authorities. Under the Act it is the local authority's duty to:

- Identify all children and young people who have or may have SEN and/or disabilities in their geographical area;
- Carry out an EHCP needs assessment to identify needs and provision to meet those needs;
- Ensure that the educational provision is then made;
- Cover any resources that the educational establishment is unable to meet (this could be in terms of finances, skills, staffing or equipment);
- Cover any aspects of the EHCP that fall under a local authority's social care responsibilities.

All health aspects of the EHCP are the responsibility of the Clinical Commissioning Group. This continuing statutory role has to be set against a more complex environment in which education is being provided. Most particularly the mix of locally maintained schools, academies and free schools in a local area requires effective leadership and partnership to make sure that there is consistency in relation to:

- The type of provision, and the policy goals to pursue (i.e. on mainstream provision, closeness to home and investment in pooled or dispersed resources);
- Addressing any budgetary impacts in relation to the High Needs budget;
- Effective partnerships with health services and school leaders, supported by the local authority.

These structural complexities cannot be seen in isolation from the overall increases in numbers being accessed for an EHCP and in the profile of need towards autism and Social, Emotion and Mental Health.

### **Cumbria context: general overview**

**Population:** On 1 September 2016 2644 children and young people in Cumbria had an Education Health and Care Plan and just over 10,000 children had an identified Special Educational Need which was supported by their school.

**Assessments:** Cumbria performs favourably in relation to the 20 week timescale for the statutory assessment of children with SEND. In the academic year 2015 69.3% of assessments were within the statutory timescales which compared to 58.2% for the North-West and 59.2% nationally. Our performance is projected to improve to 80.9% for the academic year 2016.

**Attainment:** Progress and attainment of children with SEND has been inconsistent over time at all stages of development. Broadly, pupils with EHCPs have achieved in line with their peers nationally but those with SEN supported by school have not achieved as well as their peers.

**Exclusions:** There were eight permanent exclusions of children with and Education Health and Care Plan in 2015/16. There was a declining trend in the number of children with SEN who were subject to a fixed term exclusion. Attendance at school by children with SEND is better in Cumbria than for their peers nationally.

**Special Schools:** There are five special schools in the County, three across Barrow and South Lakeland, one in Allerdale and Copeland and one in Carlisle and Eden. These schools offer a total of 500 places. There is acute pressure on places in the west and north of the county.

**Pupil Referral Units** There are three Pupil Referral Units, on each area of the County. The Pupil Referral Units should be short stay schools but have developed into the only alternative provision available in the local authority area. This development has restricted the amount of early intervention they have been able to undertake.

**Designated Resource Provision:** There are currently 25 schools designated as resourced provision, 15 primary and 10 secondary. Some of these schools have a designation across two categories of need.

The table below sets out the relationship between the numbers of designated resource provision by type against the total number of EHCPs. The table highlights the high number of children with an EHCP identifying autism as the primary need against the low number of schools identified a resourced provision for autism. It also highlights the relatively high number of provisions designated for physical/medical need compared with a far smaller cohort of children identified with this as their primary need.

**Table 1: Resource Provision against EHCPs**

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Number of Schools</b>	<b>Number of EHCPs</b>
Autism	5	764
Severe Learning	8	489
Physical/Medical	15	176
Deaf	2	58

The current mismatch between provision type and need means that currently half the places in resourced provision in the County are empty. This particularly affects the provision for physical/medical needs; as more schools are adapted to become fully accessible the number of children requiring access to the physical/medical provision has fallen.

A second factor is that the division of resourced provision across the County is inequitable with a higher number of designated provisions in the south of the County, nor does the split between the location and primary and secondary resourced provision support transition between primary and secondary.

### **Cumbria context: changing patterns of need**

We recognise that the pattern of needs has changed and that there is a need to deliver a new model of provision to both address the needs of Cumbria's children and young people and to ensure that the resources available to the County are used as effectively as possible.

Since September 2014 there has been an 80% increase in EHCPs in Cumbria and the rate of increase is higher than the national average. This reflects a much longer term historical trend that underscores the scale of changes in patterns of need in the period since the previous Inclusive Cumbria Strategy was developing in 2002.

The table below shows rising trends across the board, with an especially high increase in relation Autism.

**Table 2: Cumbria profile of special educational needs 2002 to 2016**

<b>Need Area</b>	<b>Number of Statements April 2002</b>	<b>Number of Education, Health and Care Plans September 2016</b>	<b>Trend</b>
Autism	123	764	<i>Rising</i>
Speech Language and Communication Need	262	540	<i>Rising</i>
Severe Learning Disability	253	489	<i>Rising</i>
Social, Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health	360*	323	<i>Falling Changed definition</i>
Physical/ Medical and/or Physical Disability	162	257	<i>Rising</i>
Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities	39	94	<i>Rising</i>
Deafness	76	58	<i>Falling</i>
Moderate Learning Difficulty	498	42	<i>Falling</i>
Specific Learning Difficulty (Dyslexia)	140	39	<i>Falling</i>
Blind	21	37	<i>Rising</i>
Other	0	3	<i>N/A</i>

TOTAL	1934	2644	
-------	------	------	--

*\*Under 2002 SEN Code of Practice definition of need was Behavioural, Emotional and Social Development Need.*

The School Census return identified children in Cumbria who had a low need, high incidence SEND who were supported in school without an Education Health and Care Plan. The October 2016 census identified that 11.68% of children in schools were identified as having an SEN.

### **Cumbria Context: School Governance**

Over the last ten years new governance arrangements have been available to schools including the establishment of academies, multi academy trusts, free schools and university technical colleges. In Cumbria there are 342 schools, of which 48 area academies. There are five special schools of which one is an academy and three pupil referral units all maintained by the local authority. There is one all age free school in Cumbria, and plans are in place for a Free School that specialises in Autism.

## **5. Delivery, Performance Management and Review**

Inclusive Cumbria will be delivered through multi-agency working. The lead agency will be the County Council supported by the Cumbria Alliance of System Leaders and Clinical Commissioning Group(s).

The County Council will lead on all areas requiring formal consultation and the provision of information and data relating to school places and funding. The Council will also be the lead organization in supporting the development of Joint Commissioning models. Following formal consultation the Council will seek to identify the required capital resources to support development where this is required.

Cumbria Alliance of System Leaders (CASL) will work closely with the Council to identify the key opportunities to deliver the strategy as well as the building of capacity within the wider educational system.

Both the Council and CASL will work with partners in the NHS to identify the health needs of learners and ensure provision is in place deliver improved outcomes through better assessment and support for children with SEND and ensure that families are involved in the development of services.

Measurement of the success of the Inclusion Strategy will be divided into two parts. In the first two years of the strategy the focus will be on ensuring that the milestones in the action plan are met. In the 2019/20 academic year the focus will move to measuring the outcomes for young people and ensuring that there is evidence that all agencies are delivering on the aspirations encapsulated within the key principles.

## **6. Milestones**

Objective	Activity	Delivery
<p>To deliver an improved resourced provision offer for children with autism.</p>	<p>Undertake consultation on resourced provision focusing on delivery of a new model of provision in which collaboratives of schools deliver resourced provision for autism equitably across the County.</p> <p>Identify the required budget and support arrangements for collaboratives to develop their provision.</p> <p>Review complete and first placements into new arrangements.</p> <p>Deliver revised resourced provision offer across the County.</p> <p><i>Key Performance Measures</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Resourced Provision available for 4 – 19 year olds in each area of the County.</i></li> <li>• <i>Transition between key stages possible within single district.</i></li> <li>• <i>Identified need for resourced provision matched by availability of placements.</i></li> <li>• <i>Reduction in use of external placement.</i></li> <li>• <i>Improved outcomes for children in resourced provision.</i></li> <li>• <i>Permanent exclusion of children with an EHCP is zero.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Summer term 2017</p> <p>June 2017</p> <p>September 2017</p> <p>September 2018</p>
<p>Develop alternative provision in each are of the County with associated specialist provision for Social Emotional and Mental Health Needs</p>	<p>Review current governance and leadership arrangements for Pupil Referral Units to ensure capacity for an expanded remit.</p> <p>Extend current pilot of provision in west to south and north of the County.</p> <p>Work with headteachers and other stakeholders identify potential sites and capital for investment in long term sustainable model which includes multi agency engagement.</p> <p><i>Key Performance Measures</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provision available equitably across the County.</i></li> <li>• <i>Permanent exclusion of children with and EHCP is zero.</i></li> <li>• <i>Reduction in use of external placements.</i></li> <li>• <i>Improved outcomes for children in alternative provision.</i></li> </ul>	<p>April 2017</p> <p>September 2017</p> <p>April 2018</p>
<p>Develop opportunities for co-location of special schools.</p>	<p>Consultation on resourced provision to include option of special school co-location to support children with severe and profound needs particularly in rural areas.</p> <p>First co-location to replace existing SLD/PMLD resourced provision.</p>	<p>April 2017</p> <p>September 2017</p>

	<p>Identify schools with space and capacity to develop co-location. Define curriculum offer within co-located provision and cohort criteria.</p> <p>First co-location under strategy in place.</p> <p><i>Key Performance Measures</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Increase the proportion of children with EHCP highlighting severe or profound learning need accessing provision supported through special school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Improved outcomes for children with EHCP.</i></li> <li>• <i>Enhanced capacity to meet all SEND in schools with co-location.</i></li> </ul>	<p>September 2017</p> <p>September 2018</p>
<p>Build capacity and improve outcomes for all children with SEND.</p>	<p>Ensure that inclusion and specifically SEND performance is integral to the Cumbria Alliance of System Leaders (CASL) planning process.</p> <p>Work with and the Local Alliances (LASL) to identify areas of good practice and to challenge poor practice.</p> <p>Develop clear pathways for young people which support schools in identifying resource and support and offers clarity for children young people and families.</p> <p>Review the activity of central teams to ensure that they deliver improved capacity as well as child focussed support.</p> <p>Identify and explore best practice from outside the County and utilise CASL and LASL to share this in the County.</p> <p>Develop the use of focus groups with families to better understand their experience and how they would improve outcomes.</p> <p><i>Key Performance Measures</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Children with SEN perform at least as well as their peers nationally at all key stages.</i></li> <li>• <i>Children with SEN begin to perform better than their peers nationally at all key stages.</i></li> <li>• <i>Early, supported, intervention reduces the number of children requiring an EHCP.</i></li> <li>• <i>Schools are able to demonstrate improved capacity through the Local Offer.</i></li> <li>• <i>Parents express improved levels of confidence.</i></li> </ul>	<p>December 2016</p> <p>April 2017</p> <p>January 2017</p> <p>September 2017</p> <p>September 2017</p> <p>April 2017</p>
<p>Joint Commissioning</p>	<p>Review current arrangements for joint commissioning.</p> <p>Ensure commissioning of services for children and young people with SEND are reflected in commissioning plan and at Health and Wellbeing Board.</p>	

Assessment	<p>Complete the reshaping of the SEND Team and ensure each child with an EHCP has a key worker.</p> <p>Work with colleagues and health to streamline the statutory assessment process.</p> <p><i>Key performance measures:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Assessments completed within timescale reach 100% target.</i></li> <li>• <i>All Statements transitioned to Education Health and Care Plans.</i></li> <li>• <i>Continued reduction in number of cases taken to SEND Tribunals.</i></li> </ul>	<p>January 2017</p> <p>July 2017</p>
Parents	<p>Establish and maintain a County SEND Reference Group to include local authority, health and parents.</p> <p>Establish parent led steering groups for shortbreak providers.</p> <p>Establish focus groups to review and support development of services.</p> <p><i>Key performance measures</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Parents and carers report improved services.</i></li> </ul>	<p>April 2017</p> <p>March 2017</p> <p>September 2017</p>



