



## **HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**

### **LLR SEND & Inclusion Alliance Update**

### **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LLR SEND & INCLUSION ALLIANCE**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. This report provides the Committee with information about the work of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland SEND & Inclusion Alliance (SIA) including:
  - LLR SIA approach to co-production
  - LLR SEND Change Programme Partnership (CPP)
  - SEND Aligned Commissioning Programme
  - Shaping SEND Futures – local community inclusion model
  - Operational Plan for 2026/27
2. This report also sets out the central role that this collaborative arrangement across LLR will play in responding to the SEND Reforms that will be set out in the anticipated Schools White Paper and associated publications.
3. Finally, this report notes that the Alliance is currently resourced to July 27 and that proposals for funding from commissioning bodies to sustain the arrangements have been drafted.

#### **Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

4. SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) legislation in England is primarily governed by the Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3), which mandates support for children and young people (0-25) through SEN Support and Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plans.
5. This is supported by the Equality Act 2010 which protects children with disabilities from discrimination and the SEND Code of Practice 2015 which is statutory guidance that local authorities, schools and health bodies must follow.
6. The government's SEND and Alternative Provision green paper "Right Support, Right Place, Right Time" alongside a Schools White paper, was published in March 2022. In March 2023, the government published the SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement plan.
7. Note: The government is expected to publish a further Schools White Paper before the end of the current financial year.

## **Background**

8. The national SEND and Alternative Provision Change Partnership Programme (CPP) is a Department for Education (DfE)-funded initiative launched in September 2023, to test and refine proposed policy reforms for children in England with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. LLR is one of nine regional partnerships working across 32 local areas that was selected to test proposed changes.
9. Over these past two phases of the programme, more than 11 areas of reform have been tested across LLR; helping to create a stronger co-production and co-design ethos, shaping a more inclusive system and providing valuable evidence to the government to inform the SEND reform plans, and the soon to be published Schools White Paper.
10. In anticipation of the CPP concluding in June 2026 local partners created the LLR SEND & Inclusion Alliance (SIA) to sustain the impactful and cohesive programmatic approach used in the CPP; ensuring systemwide improvements in commissioning and delivery of services can continue to be effectively led. Endorsed by the DfE and NHSE, local organisations are collaborating within the Alliance to benefit local people and placing LLR as a target for innovation and investment.
11. The LLR SIA Operational Plan for 2026/27 was approved by the SIA Board in January. Commitments in the Plan include the delivery of the first-year priorities in the LLR SEND Joint Commissioning Strategy; delivery of the Local Integrated Service Offer (phase three of the national Change Programme); and roll-out of Shaping SEND Futures, the SIA's Community Inclusion Programme.
12. The LLR SIA is underpinned by a formal Memorandum of Understanding (appendix 2). It is accountable to the LLR Directors of Children's Services (DCSs) via the Children's and Young People's Executive Group. The DCSs set the strategic direction of the SIA, and delivery is achieved in partnership with the local NHS.

## **SIA Strategic Aims and Progress**

13. The five strategic aims of the LLR SIA are:
  - I. to co-produce our goals and delivery plans.
  - II. to ensure all children and young people with SEND, who don't need specialist provision, have their needs met in mainstream education.
  - III. to ensure all children and young people with SEND feel that they belong in their local communities
  - IV. to facilitate aligned commissioning as a health, care and education system, to ensure that our children and young people with SEND, and their families, receive the support that they need when they need it.
  - V. to collectively own the challenges and opportunities of our local SEND system to ensure we provide a high-quality standard of integrated support for children and young people with SEND, and their families.

14. Co-production:

The LLR SIA has established a Co-production Group, appointed a Co-production Lead for children and young people (CYP) with lived experience of the SEND system who is supervised by academic colleagues at the University of Derby. Co-production with parent carers is achieved via the three LLR Parent Carer Forums Chairs.

15. The CYP Co-production lead and PCF Chairs are PCF Chairs are partners on the SIA Board. The SIA has created a Co-production Charter (appendix 1 - slide 4) which underpins all activities of the SEND and Inclusion Alliance.

16. Inclusive mainstream education:

Phase three of the CPP has focused on the creation and establishment of a Local Integrated Service Offer (LISO) to support children and young people to remain in local mainstream education (appendix 1– slide 5).

17. Several projects have been tested that increase capacity to support CYP with SEND in mainstream education settings. Two of these have been jointly funded by DfE and NHSE; PINS (Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in schools) and ELSEC (Early Language Support for Every Child).

18. The LLR ELSEC pathfinder programme is a joint initiative launched in September 2023 by DfE and NHSE. The ELSEC programme is designed to identify and support children's speech, language, and communication needs through early intervention and innovative workforce models. ELSEC is delivered in Early Years settings, schools, families' own homes and Family Hubs. Together with many partners across LLR, we have made significant progress in strengthening a more balanced, responsive and effective system to meet children's speech, language and communication needs for the 0-11 age range. To date, almost 1000 children across LLR with universal or targeted SLCN, have received much timelier and evidence-based support, and have been diverted away from NHS waiting lists for specialist Speech and Language Therapy. Parents and schools report strong satisfaction with the service.

19. PINS has been equally successful in LLR and was uniquely led by LLR Parent Carer Forums. Mainstream primary schools involved in PINS have positively evaluated the programme in terms of increasing knowledge and skills related to supporting CYP with SEND, and PCFs report stronger inter-sector relationships and support for parents. DfE and NHSE have committed to further funding ELSEC and PINS in 2026/27.

20. The LLR SIA are also developing a neurodevelopmental profiling tool which will support schools, parents and children and young people with suspected neurodevelopmental challenges to better understand and respond to their needs, regardless of diagnosis. This is due to be tested later this year.

21. When the CPP concludes in July 2026, the LISO workstream will evolve into supporting the implementation of the anticipated Schools White Paper. A summary of key impacts from the CPP can be found in appendix 1 – slide 2.

## 22. Community Inclusion: Shaping SEND Futures

Shaping SEND Futures is the LLR SIA's approach to holistic community-based inclusion acknowledging that CYP spend only a proportion of their time in schools. School leaders report that many young people attend school with additional needs, not directly relating to SEND, but instead as a consequence of socio-economic factors such as poverty, addiction and in some cases, domestic violence.

23. The LLR SIA is working closely with LLR Family First Partnership Programme Leads to ensure initiatives are complementary rather than duplicative. Pilots under the Shaping SEND Futures workstream have resulted in closer working relationships between primary care, schools and family hub; testing innovative new roles to support older school age children, and closer working with the voluntary and community sector to support CYP with SEND in their local communities.

## 24. Case study: Social Prescribing in Hinckley and Bosworth

*Our Hinckley and Bosworth Shaping SEND Futures (SSF) Team piloted a new Social Prescriber (SP) post which aimed to work specifically with children, young people and their families / carers; a first in England for this cohort. Evaluation for the full pilot is currently underway with 6 month findings demonstrating:*

- *889 consultations / contacts with CYP and families*
- *157 appointments diverted from the GP practice*
- *121 referrals directly from CYP and families attending drop-in sessions that had been arranged across the Hinckley and Bosworth area.*
- *100% satisfaction rating from all patients / clients*
- *Wellbeing assessments increasing from 30% at first meeting to 70% on discharge.*

*This scalable model has now been implemented in other SSF footprints with adaptations including SPs being based in schools and providing more targeted support to SENCOs. With LD /SEND SPs embedded in schools, this will provide an alternative route for education to access links to non-clinical local service support for children and young people e.g. mental health support links without having to go through a GP.*

## 25. Aligned Commissioning

Local evidence has been triangulated across the CPP-developed Local Area Inclusion Plans, our locally produced Young Researchers, Young Voices report, and analysis of our newly established LLR SEND Data dashboard which collates quantitative intelligence across LLR's health, social care and education sectors.

26. Seven clear priorities for aligned commissioning have been identified (attached – slide 6) and work is underway to scope the three we are prioritising for 2026/2027:

- I. Social and Emotional Mental Health
- II. Co-ordination of information, advice and support
- III. Preparation for adulthood – post-16 support.

27. Whilst the LLR SIA cannot commission services on behalf of the four LLR commissioning organisations, we have a key role in identifying and articulating need across the health, care and education system, coordinating activities and making recommendations to accountable bodies.
28. The LLR SIA deliberately uses the language of aligned commissioning in acknowledgment that new funding to commission additional services is unlikely, so it is incumbent on us to ensure that services we do commission as a system meet need, are cohesive, and provide value for money.
29. Collective Ownership and Accountability  
The LLR SIA is accountable to the LLR System Executive and the LLR CYP Executive. The full governance structure can be seen in appendix 1 – slide 7.
30. It is anticipated that through the embedding of our co-production charter, the delivery of our aligned commissioning priorities, Shaping SEND Futures programmes and local integrated service offer, the LLR SIA will significantly contribute to an effective and more affordable SEND system that delivers improved experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families.

### **Resource Implications**

31. The LLR SIA is currently resourced to July 2027. Proposals for funding from commissioning bodies to sustain the SIA arrangements have been drafted.

### **Background Papers**

32. SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan (2023)

Publisher: Department for Education  
Publication date: 2 March 2023

### **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

33. None

### **Equality Implications**

34. Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are statistically more likely to experience poor physical and mental health, barriers to accessing services, and worse long-term outcomes. Although SEND policy is rooted in education law, the SEND system plays a critical role in reducing health inequalities—largely through joint working with health partners, early identification, targeted support, and statutory duties placed on Integrated Care Boards (ICBs).

## **Human Rights Implications**

35. SEND law requires reasonable adjustments and appropriate provision to ensure pupils with disabilities can participate fully, supporting their right to non-discrimination and accessible schooling.

## **Other Relevant Impact Assessments**

NA.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – SIA overview slides



SIA Overview

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Appendix 2 – SIA Memorandum of Understanding



SIA MOU

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