

BRIEFING	TO:	Rotherham Schools Forum
	DATE:	13/06/2025
	LEAD OFFICER:	Mark Cummins (Transformation Lead) Cary-Anne Sykes (Head of Service SEND)
	TITLE:	SEND Sufficiency Update
1. Background		
1.1	The purpose of the report is to provide Schools Forum with an update on Rotherham’s SEND Sufficiency progress and future planning.	
1.2	The data included in the report has been taken from a number of sources including the local authorities Safety Valve data dashboard, SEN2 statutory returns and placement tracking information. The data contained is utilised as part of Safety Valve quarterly monitoring reports to the Department for Education and to support SEND Sufficiency planning	
2. Key Issues		
1.3	The current SEND Sufficiency Strategy forms part of the LA Safety Valve Agreement which runs until the end of 25/26. Work has taken place to build in borough SEND capacity to support reduction on out of borough placements and to ensure more young people with SEND can be educated locally.	
1.4	The Strategy has been underpinned by two core areas of work, the development of 100 new resource provision placements and the implementation of the local accessibility capital funding framework. Capital funding and provision development has been supported by work locally to improve the consistency of the application of the graduated approach.	
1.5	As of May 2025 - 33 successful mainstream accessibility capital projects have been funded with over 1.1m capital investment over the past 2 academic years. In addition, 1.2m of accessibility capital funding has been provided to improve access to the curriculum and create additional provision across special schools. The accessibility capital programme is currently being reviewed considering the recent announcement of the High Needs Capital Allocation for 25/26.	
1.6	Work to improve mainstream inclusion of SEND has been supported by incremental growth of specialist provision across the Safety Valve period. Notably this includes continued investment in SEMH specialist provision through the development of a second site for Elements Academy along with capital investment at both Newman Special School and Aspire pupil referral unit.	
1.7	Running alongside capital investment has been initiatives to improve consistency of the application of the graduated response, this has included providing Specialist Inclusion Team support to all schools along with further development of the SEMH Outreach Service which has been extended for a further academic year.	

Current EHCP demand

No of EHCP (0-25yr olds) as of each annual SEN2 return	No of active EHCP's as of each annual SEN2 return	Borough population (CYP 0-25yrs)	Proportion of CYP 0-25yrs in the Borough with an EHCP in place
2019	2060	80,426	2.56
2020	2215	80,355	2.76
2021	2379	80,401	2.96
2022	2600	80,455	3.23
2023	2885	80,426	3.59
2024	3310	80,511	4.11
1 st July 24	3461	80,511	4.30
1 st Oct 24	3495	80,511	4.34
SEN2 Census Day – 16 th Jan 25	3623	80,477	4.50
31st Mar 25	3722	80,477	4.62

Internal data is used

Current Place Planning

High Needs / Safety Valve Categories - by Primary and Secondary phase groups:	No of CYP with EHCP as of 1st April 24	No of CYP with EHCP as of 31st Mar 25	Growth / Decline in recent numbers since April 24
Special Schools - Primary Phase <i>(in borough only)</i>	350	404	54
Special Schools - Secondary Phase including Post 16 <i>(in borough only)</i>	711	728	17
Mainstream Schools - Primary Phase <i>(in borough only)</i>	690	795	105
Mainstream Schools - Secondary Phase including Post 16 <i>(in borough only)</i>	477	596	119
Resource Provision - Primary Phase	30	64	34
Resource Provision - Secondary Phase	71	81	10
Independent Non-Maintained Special Schools - Primary Phase	28	15	-13
Independent Non Maintained Special Schools- Secondary Phase including Post 16	104	113	9
Independent Specialist Provision	-	-	
Independent Specialist Provision - Secondary Phase including Post 16	172	164	-8

Rotherham's latest Comparison to National

School Types - Provision Categories:	No of CYP with EHCP at SEN2 Census Day 16th Jan 25	No of CYP with EHCP as 31st March 25	Latest National comparison (SEN2 2024)	% Roth Gap to Nat 24 (based on 31st March position)
Special Schools - ALL	32.2%	31.2%	26.9%	4.3%
Resource Provision	3.7%	3.9%	3.9%	0.0%
Mainstream Schools - ALL	37.5%	38.8%	39.2%	-0.4%
Independent Non-Maintained Special Schools	3.4%	3.4%	5.2%	-1.8%
Independent Specialist Provision	4.9%	4.4%	1.5%	2.9%
Post 16 / FE Colleges	13.7%	13.3%	11.7%	1.6%

1.8

The latest data demonstrates that Rotherham educates less pupils with an EHCP within mainstream than nationally, however during the Safety Valve period this position has closed by approximately 8%. Other areas of note include Rotherham providing more special school places when compared to national (4.3% above national) with more pupils attending post 16 ISP provision than national (2.9% above national).

1.9

A new SEND Sufficiency Strategy is being developed to coincide with the ending of the Safety Valve period on 31/03/2026. To support this a period of engagement with key stakeholders has taken place across Autumn and Spring Term 24/25. This has focused on understanding the impact of the current SEND Sufficiency Strategy, identifying current gaps and opportunities for the future. This has been supported by a refreshed needs analysis to identify future place requirements. Forecasting has taken place on a 'if nothing changes basis'

Potential future place requirements

1.10

From the 2025 SEN2 data - 37.5% of the EHCP cohort are in mainstream schools with 32.2% in special schools, 13.7% young people access Post 16+ provision and 8.3% access an ISP setting which includes non-maintained specialist schools and post 16 ISP within that cohort group.

1.11

Forecasting projections from data held in these provisional types, show that if nothing changes in Rotherham from where we are now and where we have been, then the trend in numbers could indicate the need for

- 380 more places needed in mainstream schools by 2028 which could grow further by 2030 to be around 670 more places than now. This would potentially be at 40% of the cohort in mainstream schools by 2030.
- 161 more places needed in special schools by 2028, could grow further by 2030 to be at 300 more places needed than now.
- Nearly 100 more Post 16 / FE places required by 2028 which could move to nearly 170+ by 2030.

- Potentially if nothing changes then approximately 78 more places needed within ISP settings by 2028 and this could grow up to 128+ more places needed by 2030. This ISP category is a combination of both independent specialist provisions (post 16) and Independent non maintained special schools

- 1.12** As part of the previous Strategy Schools' Capacity Assessments identified that existing special schools are full or are working at close to capacity with minimal opportunities for future growth. Accessibility capital funding has been provided in the current round of sufficiency to support improving access to the curriculum for specific cohorts of pupils. Given the capacity issues across special schools this process may provide future limited opportunities for increases in special school places.
- 1.13** The needs analysis and stakeholder engagement have identified some core areas for further development this includes continued support to move the SEND continuum towards the mainstream mirroring national guidance with this also including a focus on post 16 locally.
- 1.14** Since the onset of a local SEND Sufficiency Strategy, 596 additional SEND places have been created. This has created a footprint across different phases, need and provision types. An updated local provision map is included as an appendix to this paper.
- 1.15** An analysis of need type forecasting and comparisons to national data is given below:

Latest national published Primary need information for CYP with an EHCP – this is from the published special educational needs data (downloaded data) here:-

[Special educational needs in England, Academic year 2023/24 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)

National ASD – 33%

Rotherham 35% as of January / SEN2 2025

National SEMH – 15.5%

Rotherham 23% as of January / SEN2 2025

National SLCN- 19.5%

Rotherham 17% as of January / SEN2 2025

National MLD – 8.5%

Rotherham 12.7% as of January / SEN2 2025

Local Forecasting

EHCP NEEDS BY YEARS	Autism Spectrum Disorder	Hearing Impairment	Medical	Moderate Learning Difficulty	Multi- Sensory Impairment	Other Difficulty/ Disability	Physical Disability	Profound and Multi Learn Diff	Severe Learning Difficulty	Social, Emotional & MH	Specific Learning Difficulty	Speech, Lang, Comm Difficulty	Visual Impairment	EHCP forecasting numbers in line with Rotherham's 0-25 population estimates
2019	651	40	9	439	3	9	164	8	104	388	45	182	18	2060
2020	682	40	9	450	4	10	172	8	102	470	50	198	17	2212
2021	747	42	6	445	4	11	178	8	97	536	50	223	24	2371
2022	820	49	6	455	5	13	189	7	84	607	54	264	25	2578
2023	952	49	0	461	5	1	214	13	83	686	62	334	25	2885
2024	1142	47	0	476	6	0	216	16	63	783	71	460	30	3310
2025	1284	49	0	461	6	0	211	15	46	836	69	622	24	3623
2026	1367	54	1	488	7	0	235	17	46	945	74	630	28	3892
2027	1460	55	1	487	7	0	243	18	36	1009	81	686	32	4115
2028	1576	57	1	494	8	0	254	20	26	1091	86	760	34	4405
2029	1692	58	1	500	8	0	264	22	17	1172	91	834	35	4695
2030	1807	60	2	507	9	0	275	23	7	1253	96	908	37	4984

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forecasting projections indicate by 2028 nearly 300 more children could make up the ASD primary need and by 2030 this could potentially be over 500 more children than now. SEMH forecasting projections show that by 2028, 255 more children could have a EHCP which could be over 400 + CYP by 2030 (approx. 25% of the EHCP cohort). Data shows that Moderate Learning Difficulty as a primary need type is not expected to grow in numbers based on previous trends and as such will reduce as an overall % of all need types
1.16	A deep dive into EHCP's for pupils diagnosed with Moderate Learning Difficulty as a Primary Need identified that often dual diagnosis or need types are present including ASD, SEMH and Speech, Language and Communication. This was supported by the three special schools designated with a Moderate Learning Difficulty specialism.
1.17	Given the local and national context in relation to SEND a renewed focus on commissioning arrangements and place planning is required to ensure available provision is maximised whilst also exploring further opportunities for mainstream inclusion of SEND.
1.18	Following the needs analysis and engagement programmes of work are being identified locally to prepare for the implementation of a new SEND Sufficiency Strategy, this will be presented to Cabinet for approval later this year prior to becoming operational in April 2026.
3. Key Actions and Timelines	
	Not applicable
4. Recommendations	
4.1	For Schools Forum to accept the report and provide any supporting comments.