

SEND SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY ROTHERHAM 2026-2029



SEND SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY FOREWORD

“As Lead Member for Children’s Services, I am proud to present Rotherham’s SEND Sufficiency Strategy 2026–2029. Our ambition is clear: every child and young person with SEND should have access to high-quality education and support as close to their local community as possible.

This strategy sets out how we will strengthen inclusive practice, expand specialist provision where needed, and work in partnership with families and schools to ensure the right support is available at the right time. Together, we will create opportunities for all children and young people to thrive and achieve their potential.”



Cllr Victoria Cusworth
Cabinet Member CYPs

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the SEND Sufficiency Strategy is to make sure that the educational needs of children and young people in the borough with SEND (Special Educational Need and/or Disability) can continue to be met. The Council has a responsibility to create enough education provision to meet the needs of all pupils, this is called sufficiency. This includes support to mainstream schools to meet a wider level of SEND need and also to provide sufficiency of education where it is determined specialist provision is required.

This SEND Sufficiency Strategy identifies local needs and provision requirements so that all pupils across the SEND continuum are able to access appropriate education provision.

Vision

We have a strong clear vision. In Rotherham we are just as ambitious for children and young people with SEND as for every other child.

The SEND Sufficiency Strategy should be read in conjunction with the Rotherham SEND Strategy My Life My Rights 2024-2028.

Principles

The Four Cornerstones

The Four Cornerstones are a set of principles arising from the voices of Rotherham children and young people with SEND, their families and practitioners. Recognised as national best practice in co-production, the Rotherham Cornerstones are at the heart of this SEND Sufficiency strategy, promoting stronger relationships and building trust, in doing so helping Rotherham organisations across Education, Health and Care embed a borough-wide culture of inclusion.

The Four Cornerstones:

Welcome and Care

Value and Include

Communicate

Work in Partnership

Progress during the last SEND Sufficiency Strategy (Safety Valve)

Supporting more children to access education within or close to their local community

I. CREATING GOOD AND OUTSTANDING LOCAL PROVISION

- The previous SEND Sufficiency Strategy coincided with additional capital funding received from the Department for Education (DfE) as part of Rotherham's Safety Valve Agreement. This focused on supporting mainstream provision to meet a wider level of SEND need across two distinct programmes of work. This included creating 100 additional resource provision places on mainstream sites across Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) need types. A second strand focused on improving Accessibility across mainstream and specialist sites through the implementation of a capital programme so schools can enhance their school site and improve access to the curriculum for SEND pupils.
- Across the period there has been a continued increase in places within local specialist provision with capital investment agreed to create 30 new SEMH places as part of the development of a second site of Elements Academy, investment in the continued development of Newman School and a capital programme at Aspire Pupil Referral Unit to address condition and suitability issues.

A specialist provision map for Rotherham is included as Appendix 1 to this Strategy. The provision map includes all local resource provisions on mainstream sites, all special school sites and Pupil Referral Units.



2. THE GRADUATED RESPONSE IN ROTHERHAM

Implementation of the Graduated Approach has contributed to the overall Sufficiency aim of supporting mainstream schools to meet a wider level of SEND need. Objectives include:

- Reduce use of independent specialist provision outside of the LA by creating appropriate capacity within Rotherham's high needs system, with a focus on ensuring provision is high quality and value for money.
- Improve Rotherham's early intervention strategy, including through investment in outreach work.
- Ensure appropriate use of provision and avoid escalation of children and young people's needs by, among other things, improving the governance around placement decisions.
- Review support services in Rotherham to ensure value for money is achieved.
- Increase the outreach offer for Social Emotional and Mental Health needs at primary and secondary.
- Increase the outreach offer for specialist SEND.
- Develop local sufficiency arrangements, including for Rotherham's Children in Care.
- Drive mainstream schools to adopt inclusive practice to enable more children and young people to remain in mainstream settings where appropriate.

- Maintain engagement with stakeholders through strong and collaborative governance arrangements, such as ISOS partnership work (the Isos Partnership is a specialist consultancy that works with local and national governments in England to research, evaluate, and reform the SEND system), Schools Forum High Needs subgroup, primary and secondary head teachers.

Significant progress was acknowledged on the development of the Graduated Approach during the 2024 Ofsted/CQC Joint Area SEND inspection.



3. DEVELOPMENT OF SEND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT OFFER AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

The SEND School Improvement Offer works with others to build capacity and to bring about positive change for children and young people with SEND. This ensures that the right support is given in the right place and at the right time for all children and young people.

Support is provided to whole school/college systems to identify and meet needs of learners with SEND at the earliest opportunity.

The offer includes:

- Undertaking whole school/setting SEND Reviews with leaders/ SENDCOs to identify strengths and areas for development.
- Embedding the graduated approach across the borough through Good Practice events and sharing of resources and practice.
- A centralised training offer, including a range of free training packages developed and delivered by RMBC and partners.
- Using local and national initiatives to improve practice and provision.
- Providing advice and support on SEND including termly updates on national and local issues.
- Termly SENDCO network meetings.
- Quality assurance visits to mainstream integrated resourced provisions.



4. SPECIALIST INCLUSION TEAM (SIT)

The Specialist Inclusion Team (SIT) is a SEND support service that now works with all schools and settings in Rotherham.

SIT is a team of experienced teachers and SENDCos, specialist teachers and autism specialists all with a passion for inclusion. The Specialist Inclusion Team has extensive experience with supporting families, children and young people across the graduated response.

SIT offers a wide range of support to schools including whole staff and targeted training, individual pupil assessment, individual 'Learning Support Programmes' (LSPs) and target setting, advice and support for the school SENDCo, contributing to advice around the graduated response for all pupils including Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

SIT supports all 123 schools and settings in Rotherham and currently 97 of these schools and settings and nine non-locality schools purchase additional traded hours. This includes work in other schools and settings where they request individual pieces of training or targeted support.

All SIT activities relate to:

- The national and local drive to promote inclusion of all children within their mainstream neighbourhood school.
- Raising attainment of all children.
- Ensuring appropriate progress of children identified as having SEND.
- Early Identification and Intervention.
- Targeted support for Pupils with Severe and Persistent Difficulties, such as Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and Autism.
- Promoting a graduated response to need in line with the SEN Code of Practice and Children and Families Act 2014.
- Equality of opportunity for all children, regardless of learning difficulties or disabilities.
- Enabling and empowering schools to meet children's diverse learning needs.
- Continuing Professional Development and Training.



Children in Rotherham Schools

Rotherham has 59,521 children aged under 18 representing 21.5% of the local population (ONS, mid 2020). There are 45,531 children and young people attending Rotherham's schools as at January 2025 School Census. 481 children in a maintained nursery school (1%), 24,408 pupils in primary schools (54%), 19,214 pupils in secondary schools (42%), 1,293 pupils in special schools (2.8%) and 135 pupils in Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) 0.3%.

Increasing demand for specialist provision

There are a growing number of requests for Education, Health, and Care Needs Assessment each year. Data shows that the number of requests submitted has doubled between 2021/22 and 2024/25 academic years. In the most recent academic year alone, there was a **17.6% increase** compared to 2023/24. Half of the special schools in Rotherham are regularly full or over their commissioned number and the alternative provision places at the Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) are close to capacity.



COMPARISON TO NATIONAL

This table shows the Safety Valve/High Needs categories that are currently tracked and monitored to inform current place planning.

School Types	% CYP in Rotherham as at SEN2 25	% CYP Nationally as at SEN2 25	Gap to National	% CYP in Rotherham as at SEN2 24	% CYP Nationally as at SEN2 24	Gap to National	% CYP in Rotherham as at SEN2 23	% CYP Nationally as at SEN2 23	Gap to National	% CYP in Rotherham as at SEN2 22	% CYP Nationally as at SEN2 22	Gap to National
*Special Schools	33%	25%	7.8%	32.8%	26.9%	5.9%	34.8%	28.2%	6.6%	32.8%	29.6%	-0.8%
*Resource Provision/SEN units	4.0%	3.8%	0.2%	2.9%	3.9%	-1.0%	1.2%	3.9%	-2.7%	3.2%	4.5%	-1.3%
Mainstream Schools	36.6%	39.7%	-3.1%	34.1%	39.2%	-5.1%	32.1%	37.4%	-5.3%	28.8%	36.0%	-7.2%
*Independent Non Maintained Special Schools	3.3%	5.3%	-2.0%	3.7%	5.2%	-1.5%	3.5%	5.0%	-1.5%	3.8%	5.2%	-1.4%
*Independent Specialist Provision	4.9%	1.5%	3.4%	3.4%	1.5%	1.8%	3.6%	1.6%	2.0%	4.3%	1.7%	2.6%
Post 16/FE Colleges	13.7%	12.3%	1.4%	14.2%	11.7%	2.5%	13.5%	12.3%	1.2%	14.7%	14.8%	-0.1%
*All Specialist Provisions	45.0%	35.7%	9.3%	42.8%	37.5%	5.3%	43.2%	38.7%	4.5%	44.2%	41.0%	3.2%

Included is the latest 2025 SEN2 census data for children and young people (CYP) with an EHCP, which has been aligned to the 2025 published national picture to provide a comparison.

- Rotherham has 7.8% more CYP with EHCPs accessing special school places when compared to national.
- Rotherham has 3.0% less CYP with an EHCP being educated within Mainstream school than the national average (although this figure has closed significantly by 4.1% since 2022).
- Rotherham has 1.4% more YP attending Post 16/ FE provisions than the national average.
- Rotherham has 2.0% less CYP attending independent non – maintained school schools than the national average but within our post 16 ISP settings Rotherham has 3.4% more CYP than the national average.
- Rotherham are roughly in line with the national average for CYP attending a Resource provision/ SEN unit.

NEEDS ANALYSIS

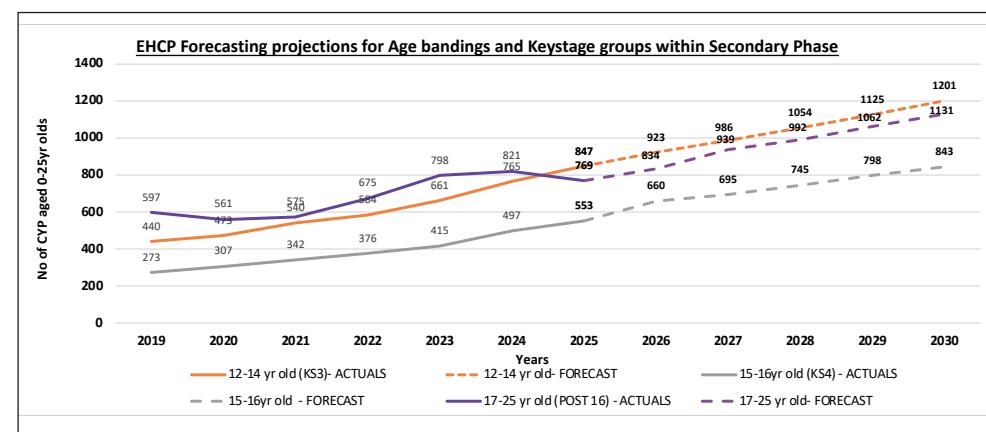
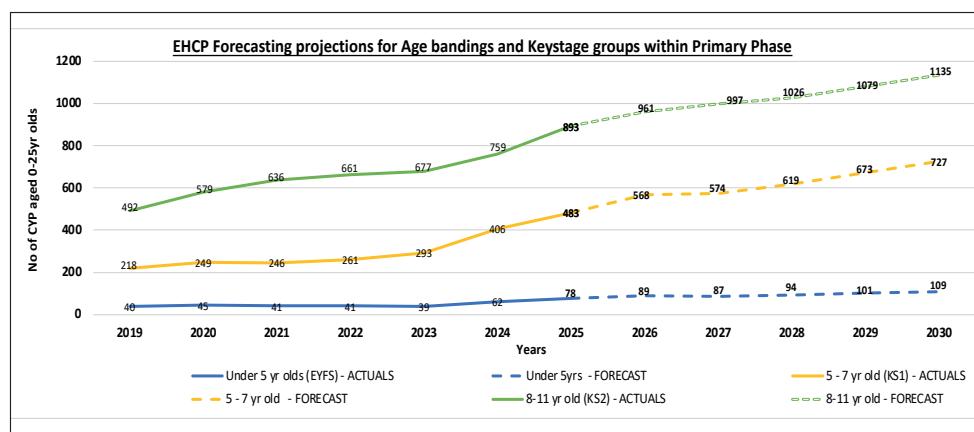
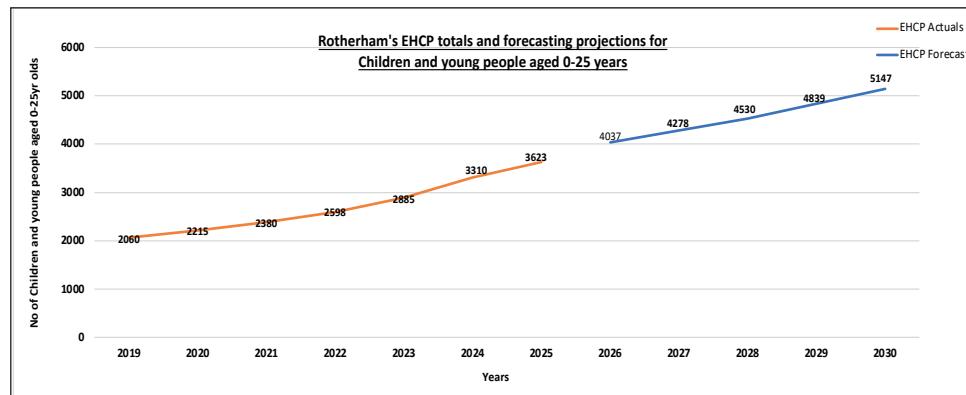
To support the development of the strategy a needs analysis has been completed utilising a range of data. This includes utilising statutory return data such as SEN2 Census and locally held EHCP trend data to build a forecasting projection to look at growth in demand for EHCPs over time. Current comparisons to the national position have been made where appropriate.

The needs analysis draws out the key themes and forecasts demand based on previous years trends to support the anticipated provision requirements for Rotherham covering the lifespan of the strategy.



EHCP Growth Forecasting

* Data figures have been taken from previous SEN2 returns and forecasted aligned against the latest Rotherham 0–25-year-old population estimates. All forecasting is based on projections that if nothing changes in Rotherham then this could potentially be where we move/grow to for children on EHCPs.



Forecasting projections have also been completed per Key Stage phase covering Primary aged children and Secondary/Post 16 children and young people.

PRIMARY NEED FORECASTING

EHCP NEEDS BY YEARS	Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	Hearing Impairment (HI)	Medical (M)	Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD)	Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI)	Other Difficulty/ Disability	Physical Disability (PD)	Profound & Multi Learning Difficulty (PLD)	Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD)	Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH)	Specific Learning Difficulty (SLD)	Speech, Language/ Communicate Difficulty (SLCD)	Visual Impairment (VI)	Total Children & Young People
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	1468	50	0	448	6	6	205	14	45	889	68	815	23	4037
2027	1542	54	0	477	7	4	233	17	36	1003	78	798	29	4278
2028	1649	55	0	475	7	3	238	19	26	1068	81	879	30	4530
2029	1777	57	1	479	8	2	246	20	16	1146	85	971	31	4839
2030	1904	58	2	482	8	1	254	21	6	1224	90	1063	32	5147

Primary need forecasting has been completed to highlight our current position for children and young people on Plans with previous years' data. Based on current and previous years' data a formula has been developed to forecast changes in the percentage of children by primary need type as well as the numbers in line with Rotherham's population estimates.

Forecasting projections are available to show a forecasting position up to 2030 if nothing changes from where we have been and are at now. The percentage has been displayed to the nearest number of whole children.

- The data shows the most prevalent primary needs for CYP with EHCPs are ASD (35 %), SEMH (23 %), SLCN (17 %) and MLD (12.7 %).
- Forecasting projections indicate by 2028 nearly 365 more children would make up the ASD primary need type and by 2030 this could potentially be over 600 more children than currently.
- SEMH forecasting projections show that by 2028, 232 more children could have a EHCP which could be over 380 + CYP by 2030.

PLACE PLANNING FORECASTING

The forecasting on Place planning looks at the same data source to outline the proportions of pupils who are attending each provision type. The forecasting projections show how the growth in each provision type would be necessary to meet the need assuming we kept placing pupils in the same way as we have. It does not reflect limits on places and assumes that the additional EHCPs can be accommodated within the existing provision available.

Data reflected as of time period:	Alternative Provision (EOTAS, EHE, ASPIRE PRU)	Independent Specialist Provisions and Independent Special Schools/ Non-maintained Specialist Schools (ISP's)	Mainstream Schools	Post 16/FE Colleges	Resource Provisions	Special Schools	Other*	Total Children & Young People
Mar-21	164	199	720	300	40	831	101	2369
Mar-22	151	211	792	402	81	856	148	2641
Mar-23	32	281	956	391	81	999	223	2963
Mar-24	22	303	1223	457	98	1062	180	3345
Jan-25	77	302	1361	496	134	1168	85	3623
2025 - data from SEN2	77	302	1361	496	134	1168	85	3623
2026	107	292	1505	571	194	1229	140	4037
2027	89	332	1642	591	194	1291	139	4278
2028	77	337	1852	609	211	1312	132	4530
2029	72	367	1928	671	242	1426	134	4839
2030	66	386	2081	714	267	1501	132	5147

This 2025 SEN2 data shows that 37% of Rotherham's EHCP cohort are educated in mainstream schools with 32.8% in special schools; 13.7% young people access Post 16+ provision and 8.2% access an ISP setting which includes non-maintained specialist schools within that cohort group.

Forecasting projections from data 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:

- 491 more specialist places needed in mainstream schools by 2028 which would grow further by 2030 to be approximately 700 more places than we currently have now. This would potentially be the equivalent of 40% of the cohort in mainstream schools by 2030.
- 144 more places needed in special schools by 2028, which could grow further by 2030 to be 333 more places needed than are provided now.
- 113 more Post 16 / FE places required by 2028 which could increase to 218 by 2030.
- Potentially if nothing changed then approximately 35 more places needed within our ISP settings by 2028 and this could grow by up to 84 more places needed by 2030. This ISP category is a combination of both independent specialist provisions (post 16) and Independent non maintained special schools.



OUR AMBITIONS

Based on our analysis of local need, the resources available, and the direction of national policy, we have identified the following ambitions for the next three years.

Ambition		Outcome Measure How will we know when we have done it
1	More young people are able to be educated locally, in their communities with mainstream peers	% of young people with an EHCP attending mainstream settings. Increase in young people attending mainstream post 16 provision.
2	We will work with our network of special schools to identify gaps in current provision and make best use of the places available across our special schools	New targeted specialist provision places created. Reduction in the amount of young people attending Independent Non-Maintained Specialist Provision.
3	More young people are able to start their education journey successfully with a plan for their next phase of education	Place Planning systems established. Placement Trackers established for resource provision to support transitions.
4	Mainstream Schools are able to access a range of support and best practice guidance to create a more consistent offer to SEND pupils.	Increase in Specialist Inclusion Team time allocated to all schools. Development of best practice guidance and thresholds of need document. Continuation of SENDCO network events on a termly basis. Continuation and development of Outreach Services tailored to specific need types.
5	Our mainstream and special schools are more accessible places for SEND learners.	Number of capital accessibility projects funded. Increase in the % of young people with an EHCP attending mainstream settings.
6	More young people benefit from additional support to improve outcomes at post 16 and access employment	Increase the amount of young people attending the mainstream post 16 college offer Create a compliant route to market for our placements in Independent Special Schools. An increase in the number of young people transitioning into employment.
7	We will ensure that our network of local specialist provision is utilised to its fullest and continues to deliver good outcomes	Quality Assurance Framework embedded across different specialist provision types. Develop resource provision workstream group to identify gaps in provision and support place planning.

DELIVERY AND GOVERNANCE

The SEND Sufficiency Strategy will adopt a workstream approach to delivery, this will include working alongside the core workstreams as identified in the SEND Strategy (My Life My Rights). The specific SEND Sufficiency sub-groups are listed below:

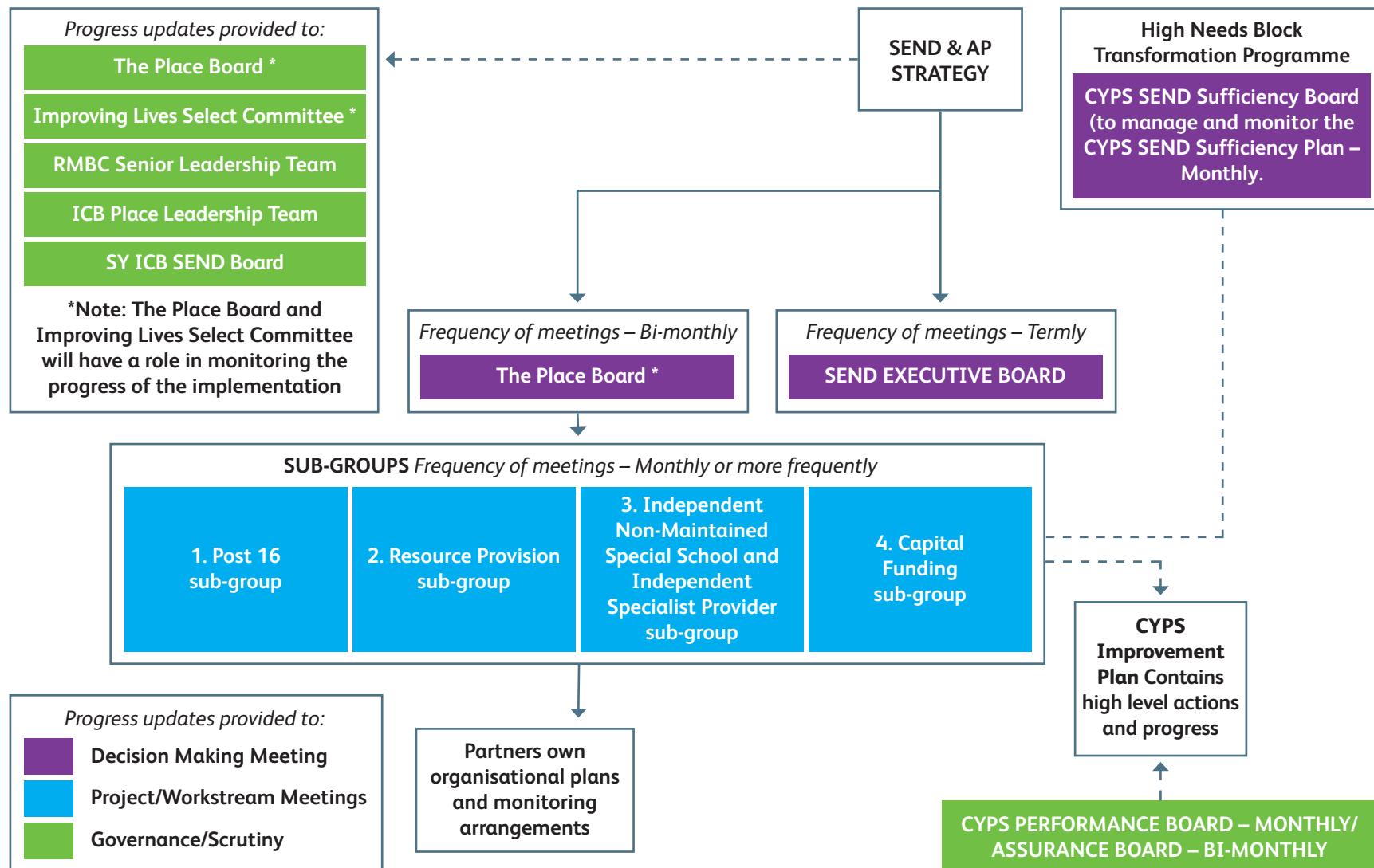
Resource Provision sub-group

16+ sub-group

**Independent Non-Maintained Special School and
Independent Special School sub-group**

Capital Programme sub-group





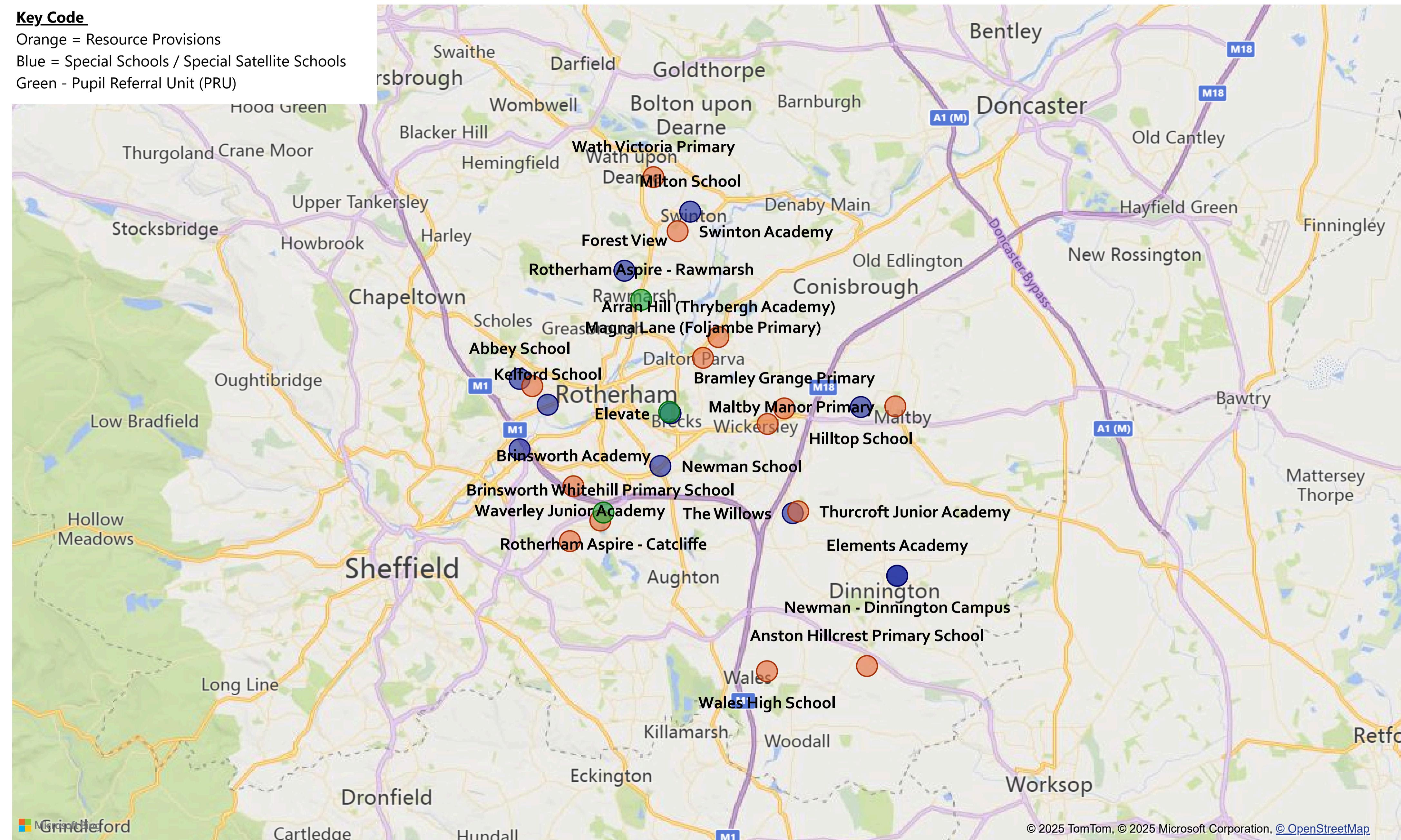
SEND and Alternative Provision Mapping across the Borough

All Special Schools, Pupil referral units (PRU) and Resource provisions (RP)

- Abbey School
- Anston Hillcrest Primary School
- Arran Hill (Thrybergh Academy)
- Bramley Grange Primary
- Brinsworth Academy
- Brinsworth Whitehill Primary School
- Elements Academy
- Elevate
- Enterprise Works - Source
- Forest View
- Hilltop School
- Kelford School
- Magna Lane (Foljambe Primary)
- Maltby Manor Primary
- Milton School
- Newman - Dinnington Campus
- Newman School
- Rotherham Aspire - Catcliffe
- Rotherham Aspire - Hutton Park
- Rotherham Aspire - Rawmarsh
- Swinton Academy
- The Willows
- Thurcroft Junior Academy
- Wales High School
- Wath Victoria Primary
- Waverley Junior Academy
- Wickersley School & Sports College
- Winterhill School

Key Code

- Orange = Resource Provisions
- Blue = Special Schools / Special Satellite Schools
- Green - Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)



SEND and Alternative Provision Mapping across the Borough

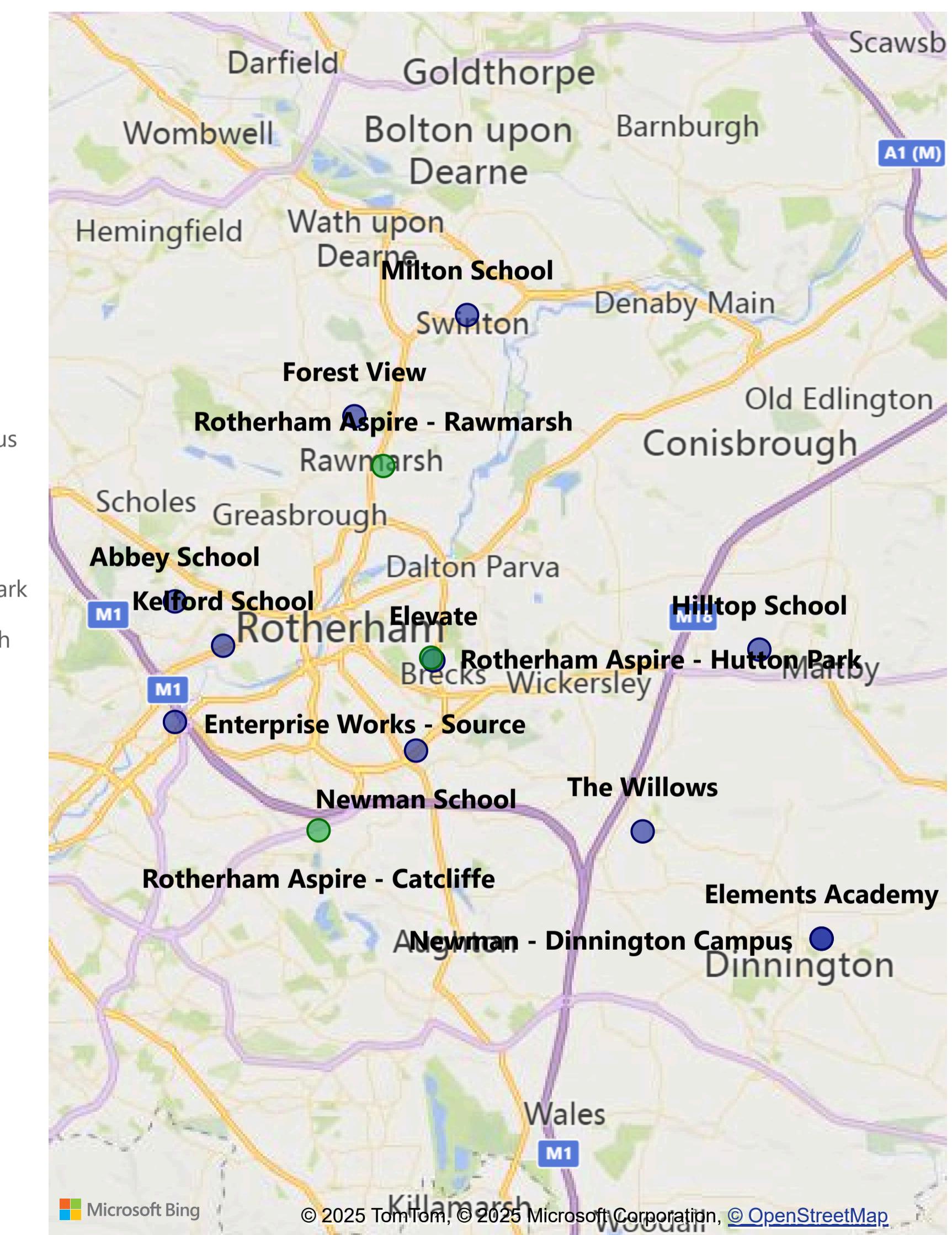
Special Schools , Special Satellite Sites and Pupil Referral units (PRU)

Schools / Provisions	Phase Types	Provision Type	Main Primary Needs
Abbey School	All	Special School	MLD
Elements Academy	KS2-KS4	Special School	SEMH
Elevate	KS4	Satellite Site to Elements	SEMH
Enterprise Works - Source	Post 16	Satellite Site to Kelford	SPLD / SLD
Forest View	14-19 Students	Satellite Site to Hilltop and Kelford	ALL
Hilltop School	All	Special School	SLD
Kelford School	All	Special School	SPLD / SLD
Milton School	All	Special School	MLD / ASD
Newman - Dinnington Campus	KS3-KS4	Special School	SEMH
Newman School	All	Special School	ALL
Rotherham Aspire - Catcliffe	All	PRU	SEMH
Rotherham Aspire - Hutton Park	All	PRU	SEMH
Rotherham Aspire - Rawmarsh	All	PRU	SEMH
The Willows	KS2- Post 16	Special School	MLD / SLCN

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- Forest View
- Hilltop School
- Kelford School
- Milton School
- Newman - Dinnington Campus
- Newman School
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- Rotherham Aspire - Rawmarsh
- The Willows

Key code-

Blue = Special Schools / Special Satellite Schools
Green - Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)



SEND and Alternative Provision Mapping across the Borough

Resource Provisions (RP)

Schools / Provisions	Phase	Types	Provision Type	Main Primary Needs
Anston Hillcrest Primary School	Primary		Resource Provision (RP)	SLCN
Arran Hill (Thrybergh Academy)	Secondary		Resource Provision (RP)	SEMH
Bramley Grange Primary	Primary		Resource Provision (RP)	HI
Brinsworth Academy	Secondary		Resource Provision (RP)	MLD
Brinsworth Whitehill Primary School	Primary		Resource Provision (RP)	C&I
Magna Lane (Foljambe Primary)	Primary		Resource Provision (RP)	SEMH
Maltby Manor Primary	Primary		Resource Provision (RP)	SEMH
Swinton Academy	Secondary		Resource Provision (RP)	ASD
Thurcroft Junior Academy	Primary		Resource Provision (RP)	C&I
Wales High School	Secondary		Resource Provision (RP)	ASD
Wath Victoria Primary	Primary		Resource Provision (RP)	ASD
Waverley Junior Academy	Primary		Resource Provision (RP)	ASD
Wickersley School & Sports College	Secondary		Resource Provision (RP)	HI
Winterhill School	Secondary		Resource Provision (RP)	SEMH

- Anston Hillcrest Primary School
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