

Rotherham SEND Reform Plan (2026– 2029)

A System Transformation for Inclusion, Outcomes & Sustainability

Our Ambition

- A consistently **inclusive 0–25 system**
- Needs identified early and met locally
- Strong partnerships across education, health & care
- Sustainable system delivering **better outcomes and value**

Our Change Story

- **From:**
- Late intervention
- Inconsistent practice
- High reliance on EHCP/statutory routes
- **To:**
- Early, multi-disciplinary support 0 to 25
- Confident and strong mainstream system
- Reduced escalation and improved outcomes
- Consistent Thresholds and Pathways
- Accessible local provision
- **Improved outcomes + reduced variation**

Why Reform is Needed

- Rapid demand growth:
 - EHCP requests: **1,114 → 1,556 (1 year)**
 - EHCPs: **3,623 → 4,062 → 5,564 (forecast)**
- Increasing complexity (ASD, SLCN)
- Rising financial pressure:
 - **£62.9m → £85.5m (unmitigated)**
- Variation in:
 - Early support
 - Inclusion practice
 - Workforce confidence

System currently **reacts to demand rather than shapes it**

Goals and Priorities

Strategic Goal	Priorities	Outcomes (Co-produced)	Key Deliverables	Baseline	2028/29 Target
1. Early Identification & Support	Early multidisciplinary support as default	Healthy, supported, access to help that suits needs	Experts at Hand (EAH) embedded across all phases	SALT 59.8%, OT 45.1%, PT 59.5%; SEND Support 68%	≥70% seen within 18 weeks; ≥70% SEND Support
2. Inclusive Practice & Engagement	Reduce variation; improve attendance & inclusion	Safe, supported, voice heard	Graduated response embedded; clear attendance & EBSA pathways	Persistent absence 39%; attendance 83.9%; high SEND exclusion rates	Absence ≤35%; attendance ≥87%; exclusions aligned to national; improved EET
3. Co-production & System Confidence	Shape demand; strengthen governance & QA	Voice respected; confidence in system	Integrated data, QA, and governance	EHCP timeliness 80.1%; SEND Support 68%; EHCP growth 11.8%	Timeliness ≥20% above national; SEND Support ≥70%; growth ~6%
4. Strong Local Provision	Strengthen mainstream capacity	Belonging, inclusion, supported adults	Inclusion bases with reintegration pathways		

Divers for Change

- Capital investment in Inclusion bases
- Experts at Hand to deliver advice and support what and when education providers need it.
- Threshold of Need - local Inclusion standard (Based on the National Model)
- Continue SEND and EHCP Support (New EPS delivery Model, Increasing non-traded work for SIT, Increased early intervention and targeted work by Aspire Outreach)
- Workforce development (Training the children's workforce)
- Improved Data and digital systems (tracking and monitoring to enable targeted intervention)
- Using parental engagement as a push factor (The PCF is developing parental confidence and QA framework)

Enabling **system-wide consistency and confidence**

Capital Investment and funding

- Stop moving 0.5% from the schools block to HNB giving school locally £1.4m per year
- Building on existing capital grants funding programme to support schools to develop inclusion bases (School commissioned Support Bases and LA commissioned special Bases)
- Ensuring that there are special school places for children with the most complex and profound needs

Example of How the EAH Model Can Work

A school notices that many children are struggling with speech, language, and communication.

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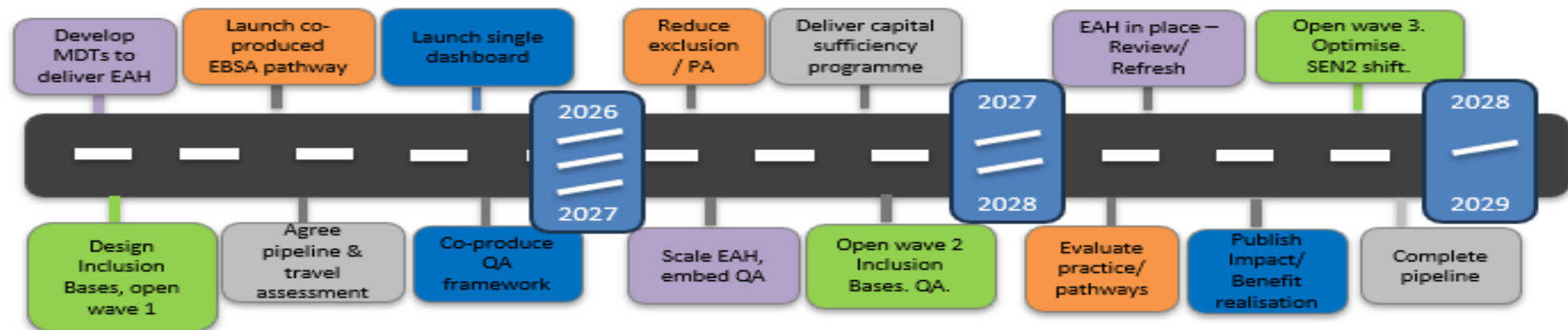


A small team of specialists visits the school:

- Speech and language therapist
- Educational psychologist
- Occupational therapist
- Specialist teacher



SEND 3-Year Transformation Roadmap (2026–2029)



	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Goal 1 (EAH coverage & standards)	Stand-up MDTs; co-produce standards; hotspots	Scale coverage; embed outcomes framework	Full coverage; independent review & refresh
Goal 4 (Inclusion bases)	Design & open first wave	Second wave; QA & curriculum access	Third wave; optimise flows; SEN2 shift
Goal 2 (Practice & pathways)	Launch boroughwide pathways	Deepen fidelity; reduce exclusions	Consolidate; publish impact
Goal 4 (Capital & sufficiency)	Agree pipeline & travel assessment	Deliver capital & accessibility upgrades	Complete pipeline; publish impact
Goal 3 (Data & monitoring)	Single dashboard & QA framework	Automated run-charts & benchmarking	Benefits realisation report

Year 1 Priorities

- Recruit MDT workforce
- Deploy first EAH model
- Launch inclusion base test site
- Implement new data systems
- Establish parental confidence baseline

Coverage target: **60% of settings**

Success Measures

- **Outcomes**
- Persistent absence ↓ to $\leq 35\%$
- Suspensions ↓ to national levels
- Improved EET (to 87%)
- **System**
- 100% EAH coverage
- Therapy access ↑ to 70%
- SEND Support cohort to 70%
- **Confidence**
- Measured improvement in parental confidence
- More children thriving in mainstream
- Earlier support without escalation
- Reduced reliance on EHCPs
- Increased parental confidence
- Financially sustainable system

A high-performing inclusive SEND system