

BRIEFING

TO:	Rotherham Schools Forum
DATE:	12 th June 2026
LEAD OFFICER:	Mark Cummins (Transformation Lead) Cary-Anne Sykes (Head of Service SEND)
TITLE:	SEND Sufficiency Annual Update

1. Background

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Schools Forum with an update on Rotherham's SEND Sufficiency Strategy 2026-2029. The paper outlines key areas of the local needs analysis, place planning forecasting and progress on implementing the workstreams of the new SEND Sufficiency Strategy.

2. Key Issues

Statutory Duty and Local Responsibility

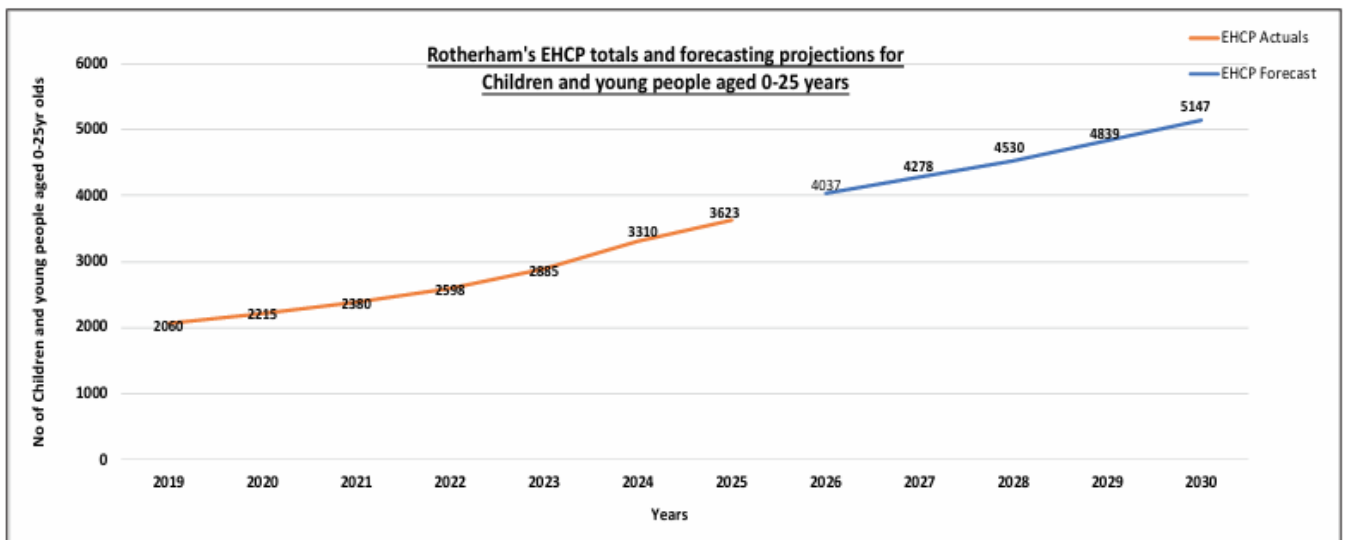
- 2.1** Under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 the Council has a general duty to secure sufficient schools to provide primary and secondary education in their area and should have particular regard to securing special education provision.
- 2.2** Under the Children and Families Act 2014, the Council also has a responsibility for working with parents, young people and providers and commissioning and reviewing services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) to ensure improvements in the standard, quality, and/or range of educational provision for children with SEND.
- 2.3** In February 2026 Cabinet formally approved the new SEND Sufficiency Strategy (2026-2029) for Rotherham. The previous SEND Sufficiency Strategy formed part of the Safety Valve Agreement.
- 2.4** The key strategic aim of the Safety Valve Agreement was to enhance mainstream and specialist SEND capacity within the Borough to meet a wider level of need across all schools, promote inclusive practice and mitigate the need for children, young people, and young adults to be educated in settings outside the Borough

Key achievements during the Safety Valve period included:

- Creating Good and Outstanding Local Provision
- The Graduated Response in Rotherham
- Development of SEND School Improvement Offer and Quality Assurance
- Specialist Inclusion Team (SIT)

Rotherham SEND Sufficiency Strategy 2026-2029

2.5 In Rotherham 17.1% of pupils are receiving SEND support with 6.2% of pupils having a statutory plan for SEND known as an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Nationally 14.2% of young people are receiving SEND support with 5.3% having an EHCP



2.6 Current Place Planning

- 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 special 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

2.7 Place Planning Forecast

Forecasting projections from data in 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 changes 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.

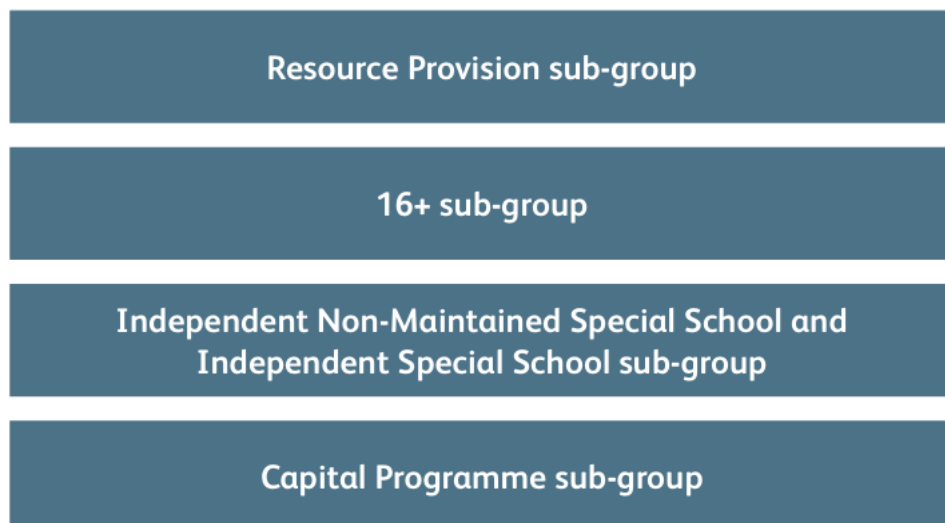
SEND Sufficiency Strategy Ambitions

Ambition	Outcome Measure
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

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.
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.
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.
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.
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.
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.

2.8

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. All groups are currently operational with clear aims, objectives and outcome measures.



2.9

The Local SEND Partnership is currently forward planning for the SEND Reforms as detailed in the Education White Paper 'Every Child Achieving and Thriving'. The Partnership is required to submit a local SEND Reform Plan by the 19th of June.

3. Key Actions and Timelines

- SEND Sufficiency review and consultation – Q3 and Q4 2024/2025
- Approval new SEND Sufficiency Strategy – February 2026
- End of Safety Valve – Q4 2025/2026
- Implementation of new SEND Sufficiency Strategy Q1 2026/2027

4. Recommendations

4.1 For Schools Forum to note the report and provide any supporting comments