



## **Improving Outcomes through SEND Transformation**

### **West Sussex's place in the national programme of SEND and Alternative Provision reform**

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In a time of national uncertainty surrounding SEND and Inclusion provision, we are optimistic and prepared for a period of national and local reform. As discussed in the opening article of this edition, we are committed to improving outcomes for children and young people with additional needs in West Sussex. In order to live well in their community, children and young people must be effectively supported through an education system that responds to their individual circumstances, learning needs and

abilities to prepare them for adulthood. It is vital that we provide the right support for children and young people, and that we do so at the right points in their education.

### **Driving National Change in SEND and AP**

In 2019, the Government reviewed the SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) system, concluding their findings in the [SEND and Alternative Provision Green Paper \(2022\)](#). Through the paper, some fundamental issues with the current national system surfaced, including:

- Failing to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people with SEND
- Families not being informed and supported quickly enough
- Families struggling to get support to meet their child's needs

The Government produced a plan to seek to rectify these issues and improve the ways that the system serves children and young people with SEND. Our SEND transformation approach is being underpinned through two key programmes initiated by the Government in direct response to the state of current SEND provision. These two programmes are respectively known as:

[1] The SEND and Alternative Provision Change Programme.

[2] The Delivering Better Value in SEND programme.

This article will explain and explore the purpose and scope of each of these DfE funded programmes, and how they are providing the vital insight and intelligence to deliver long term, sustainable reform to our SEND and AP services. Working in unison, the SEND and Inclusion service is energised and ready for change, as these programmes provide us with a powerful vehicle, through which we are confident that we can make meaningful improvements to the lives and educational outcomes of children and young people. We continue to gather the proof-of-concept evidence required to enable us to change the way we work long term.





Portsmouth City Council, who we continue to work closely with. We have been working collectively with DfE advisors and meet as a local partnership on a weekly basis.

One of our programmes of work under CPP, which we are particularly inspired by, is the Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce (APST), which is a three tier model for Alternative Provision that [the DfE has been testing since 2021](#). This pilot model involves partnership working and strategic planning, with innovation and the opportunity to test what works in local contexts. This involves a small group of multi-disciplinary professionals, co-located at the Alternative Provision College (APC) in Crawley, delivering a range of services and guidance to local secondary schools to support young people who have been identified at risk of exclusion, have been excluded or are receiving off site provision at the APC. The Multidisciplinary Team will support in embedding the three-tier model for inclusion, enhancing interventions at an earlier stage to support children and young people to live well in their communities and achieve success in their education.

The Change Programme will continue to test, evaluate and learn from the implementation of reforms through to the end of March 2025.

## **[2] Delivering Better Value (DBV) in SEND**

### **What does the DBV in SEND programme cover?**

The DBV in SEND programme aims to support local authorities and their partners to improve delivery of SEND services for children and young people whilst working towards financial sustainability. We are currently delivering fifteen pilot projects across three workstreams, the core aims of which are to improve inclusivity in mainstream schools and enable more children and young people's needs to be met. The pilot projects aim to increase parents/carers' and professionals' confidence in our ability to meet the needs of the children and young people in West Sussex.

Some of our pilot projects include:

**L-IncS:** a prospective new way of working, in partnership with schools. Professionals across Children, Young People and Learning, along with partner services, are working together to offer a cohesive package of support. The pilot emphasizes working at a child and whole school level to meet the needs of children and young people.

**Strengthening our Specialist Support Centre (SSC) offer:** we are strengthening our partnership with schools hosting SSCs, to ensure they have the necessary support that they require, and that good practice is shared across all centres. This includes providing more therapeutic support from speech and language therapy services, as well as new Service Level Agreements that give schools clarity on roles and responsibilities and consistency of offer and training opportunities.

### **Review of maintained special schools' top up rates.**

To create a more equitable and sustainable specialist school offer that's fit for the future, we are reviewing the maintained special school top up rates to ensure that they align with needs of the current pupils. This is so that we have a more transparent funding system, lessening the requirement for bespoke additional funding as standard, but providing over and above in exceptional circumstances and where needs permit.



**Outreach from maintained special schools:** support available from maintained special schools to promote inclusion in mainstream settings through training and support. This will involve advice around more specialist programmes, so that they can be confidently implemented by mainstream providers.

**Ordinarily Available Inclusive Practice (OAIP) training and upskilling:** whole setting support to effectively embed the use of the OAIP to promote inclusion in mainstream settings. Working alongside our dedicated educators and providers across the County, we are improving our library of practical support and training, as well as testing out new ways of working using whole school approaches.

### **Continuing to improve**

Whilst the pilot projects are temporary, and not all West Sussex schools will be involved in them, they are vital opportunities for the Local Authority to gauge the types of support that are most effective. We are committed to continue to evolve and improve how we work to support children and young people, and we look forward to keeping you informed as we continue on this journey of change.

For more information on the programmes and initiatives discussed in this article, please use the links below:

- [The SEND and Alternative Provision Change Programme](#)
- [Delivering Better Value](#)
- [Change Programme Partnerships](#) (East Sussex County Council has also published some useful information [here](#))