Department for Education

NHS England

The Local SEND Reform Plan

March 2026



Annex A: Local SEND Reform Plan

Developing a Local SEND Reform Plan is an important first step for local areas to set out how they will lay the foundation for reform, and design an approach tailored to their local context. A shared plan which focuses on co-designing the local approach as system partners and with children, young people and families will help foster collective responsibility for delivering the reforms.

It is critical that all system partners, including health, education and childcare settings, work together to design and deliver the Local SEND Reform Plan, under the local authority's leadership. It is also crucial that representative family carers e.g. the local Parent Carer Forum, are involved in the development of the plan.

The expectation is that this plan is discussed, agreed, and signed off at your relevant SEND Governance Board. As a minimum, the plan must be formally signed off by the Local Authority Chief Executive (CEO), the Integrated Care Board (ICB) Chief Executive, the Local Authority Director of Children's Service (DCS), the Integrated Care Board NHS Place Director, and the Local Authority Chief Financial Officer (CFO/Section 151 Officer). We encourage other colleagues and partners who have contributed to also review and sign-off the plan, particularly early years, school, college and trust leaders.

Name of Local Authority: **Buckinghamshire Council**

Name of Integrated Care Board: **Thames Valley Integrated Care Board**

Local SEND Reform Plan SRO: **Aman Sekhon-Gill, Service Director, SEND & Inclusion, Buckinghamshire Local Authority**

Signatories

Role	Name	Signature	Email contact	Date
Thames Valley Integrated Care Board (ICB) CEO	Nick Broughton			15 June 2026
Thames Valley Integrated Care Board (ICB) SRO	Sarah Bellars			12th June 2026
LA Chief Executive	Zina Etheridge			11.06.26
Local Authority Director of Children's Services (DCS)	Errol Albert			16th June 2026
Local Authority Chief Financial Officer (CFO/Section 151 Officer)	Dave Skinner			16/06/2026

Executive Summary

A brief summary of your local system 'change story' – your local context, where you are now, where you want to get to in the next 3 years, how you know you are succeeding and how you will know you have achieved your vision for the next 3 years. Please include a brief qualitative summary. This summary should also include your assessment of current and forecast performance against the headline metrics.

Please structure your 'change story' using the following aims:

- *Build a 0-25 system where children and young people receive support to achieve and thrive through (a) more inclusive settings and (b) stronger local partnerships*
- *Improve capacity and capability of the mainstream and specialist workforce to identify and meet need*
- *Improve confidence of children, families, and stakeholders in reform and readiness of the system*
- *Stabilise finances and improve value for money*

Buckinghamshire's Local Area Partnership is delivering a step change in the SEND system to ensure children and young people receive the right support at the right time, within inclusive local settings. While there is strong partnership commitment, improving early identification, and pockets of effective practice, the system has been under increasing pressure from rising demand, workforce capacity challenges, and reliance on statutory processes to access support.

Over the next three years, we will transform the system by shifting from reactive, diagnosis-led responses to a proactive, needs-led model rooted in early intervention and inclusion. Central to this is the development of the Experts at Hand model, providing consistent access to multidisciplinary expertise through locality-based teams, alongside a strengthened universal offer and a coordinated Early Support and Inclusion workstream. This will improve workforce confidence, enable more needs to be met at SEN Support, and reduce escalation to EHCPs.

In parallel, we will expand local provision through our Education Sufficiency Strategy, increasing inclusion bases, specialist capacity, and post-16 pathways to reduce reliance on high-cost independent and out-of-area placements.

Success will be measured through reductions in EHCP demand growth, improved timeliness and quality of processes, increased numbers of children supported in mainstream settings, and improved attendance, participation, and outcomes. We will also measure increased family confidence through feedback and engagement.

This approach will stabilise the system financially, improve value for money, and deliver a more inclusive, responsive, and sustainable SEND system for Buckinghamshire.

Section 1 – Vision and Goals

1. **What the local area partnership is trying to achieve?**

   Please set out your goals for your local system. These should be clear, aligned to the vision set out in the Schools White Paper, small in number and measurable. These goals should include clear reference to:

   - Outcomes for children
   - Confidence of parents, carers and young people in the system
   - Management of finances to secure value for money

Buckinghamshire's Local Area Partnership is committed to delivering a SEND system that enables all children and young people to achieve, thrive, and be supported within their local communities. Our vision aligns with the Schools White Paper and is rooted in inclusion, early intervention, and high-quality support that responds to need at the earliest opportunity. We are building a system where needs are identified and met early, without reliance on diagnosis or escalation to statutory processes, and where mainstream settings are confident and equipped to deliver inclusive practice as standard. Our goals are to:

1. Improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND

We will ensure more children and young people are supported successfully within mainstream and local provision, with improved attendance, reduced exclusions, and stronger educational, social and emotional outcomes. This includes increasing the proportion of needs met at SEN Support and reducing reliance on EHCPs; increasing the proportion of children and young people with EHCPs successfully supported within mainstream provision where appropriate; reducing dependence on independent and out of county placements through greater local sufficiency; improving attendance and reducing persistent absence for pupils with EHCPs; and strengthening preparation for adulthood, including improved post-16 pathways and reduced NEET rates.

This will be underpinned by strengthening inclusive cultures and behaviours in schools, including high-quality adaptive teaching, shared responsibility for SEND and effective early intervention.

2. Increase confidence of parents, carers, and young people

We will create a system that is clear, responsive and trusted, where families feel informed, involved, and confident in local provision, supported by improvements in parent, carer and young people satisfaction. This includes delivering high-quality, timely and effective EHCPs, with the majority rated good or better; embedding co-production and improving lived experience across the system; reducing complaints, disputes and tribunals; and improving communication, participation and transparency across services.

3. Secure value for money and long-term sustainability

We will deliver a financially sustainable SEND system by shifting investment towards early intervention, inclusive practice and local capacity. Our goal is to reduce reliance on high-cost independent and out-of-county placements; increasing in-county sufficiency and mainstream inclusivity; managing demand for EHCPs through stronger early support; and improving system flow, efficiency and use of resources.

We will measure performance in achieving VFM through our 3-year MTFP, including tracking modelling of both growth in EHCP numbers, % of children with EHCPs supported in mainstream provision and the delivery of specific savings initiatives such as the delivery of additional in-county places through the Capital programme.

Progress will be measured through a combination of attendance, exclusions and attainment data, alongside parent and young people satisfaction, inclusive practice and behaviours within schools, and the proportion of children and young people with EHCPs supported in mainstream provision.

Section 2 – Strategy

2. **Where the local area partnership expects to be in the next 3 years**

A description of what your local system would look like in the next 3 years in line with the national vision set out in the Schools White Paper and set within the context of where you are starting from as a local system.

In particular, as commissioning system partners, you should reflect on and agree what your fully fledged **Experts At Hand Offer** model should be and how this will be deployed via mainstream settings and providers (including those not based in your area – e.g. further education colleges attended by your young people) to build their capacity as well as identify and meet the needs of children and young people earlier and without the need for a statutory assessment for Education, Health and Care.

To help you fully consider the scope and scale of change required, you may find it useful to structure your response using these 4 building blocks of an inclusive system, reflecting on what is working well in your system, what you are most worried about, what needs to change, and how the enablers will help you achieve your 3 year vision.

When summarising where your local area partnership currently is, please include an assessment of where you are in reference to the core minimum requirements above and how you bridge the gap, making reference to and attaching additional documents that provide underlying evidence for your summary.

Strengthening inclusion across education settings– organising places and provision to meet as many needs as possible, as close to home as possible, with all settings and providers moving towards a shared understanding and consistent practices around inclusion.

System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production – putting in place the enabling conditions across a local area that ensures planning and provision reflects the local area & is joined up, including strategic co-production with parent carers and children and young people.

Access to specialist support and local placements – improving collaboration between settings and deploying expertise from a range of specialist and expert sources, to support schools and settings to meet the needs of children and young people earlier and locally.

Encouraging inclusive culture & behaviours – using funding and shared accountability towards a system that works for children and families while achieving value for money.

Local blueprint for the next 3 years	Where we are	Where we will be in the next 3 years
Building blocks *Strengthening inclusion across education settings* *Access to specialist support and local placements* *System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production* *Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours* **Enablers** *E.g.* *Capital – investment strategy across EY, mainstream, FE* *Workforce* *Data/digital systems*	*(a short summary of where you are now including a reflection on what is working well, what needs to change and the status of the enablers that underpin your system)*	*(a short summary of the vision for your local system in the next 3 years including the system enablers, reflecting how your Experts At Hand Offer model will underpin this vision, helping you scale and enhance what is working well and change what is not working so well)*

Building Block 1: Strengthening inclusion across education settings ***Early Support and Inclusion (including Experts at Hand)***	The Buckinghamshire SEND & Inclusion Strategy (2025–2030) prioritises “early support and inclusion” as a system-wide priority, with a commitment to needs-led support not dependent on diagnosis. There is a shared ambition across partners that children are supported at the earliest stage with inclusion embedded in education and community life. The Early support and inclusion workstream is aligned to deliver this ambition across a range of partners including parents and carers and schools. Early identification is improving with a 300% increase in early years notifications over the last 3 years. Early years inclusion are system strengths, 96.4% of Early years settings are good or outstanding. Effective programmes such as Little Talkers are delivered in Family Hubs, and the Health Visiting service support delivery of ELIM, supporting language development in Early Years. Schools currently have access to Speech and Language Link in Key Stage 1 and can access advice from the SEND teams and therapy services through advice lines, training and online webinars, supporting whole schools’ approaches. Each school is offered a Team UP multiprofessional meeting to support inclusion. Early years and Inclusion Specialist teachers are supporting inclusive practice. However, support is not yet fully coordinated across the system. It is recognised that schools need more support to implement the graduated approach and inclusion is not yet consistently delivered across all settings.	Our Experts at Hand approach will establish a proactive approach where support is brought directly into settings. Every school will be linked to a named multi-disciplinary team (MDT), enabling consistent relationships and a deeper understanding of individual contexts. Support will be delivered through planned, relational engagement, building on current good practice, but moving away from one-off interventions and towards sustained, meaningful involvement. We will strengthen the universal and graduated offer through the development of a digital Universal Provision framework. This will clearly define expectations for inclusive practice at all levels, aligned with the graduated approach, and will provide accessible guidance, tools, and resources for both schools and families. Central to delivery will be integrated multi-disciplinary expertise. We will establish five locality-based MDTs, each serving clusters of schools and bringing together professionals from Educational Psychology, SALT, OT, and specialist teaching services. Alongside this, there will be dedicated capacity, embedding training and networking across Early Years, AP and FE. Reform funding will allow us to increase system capacity through the recruitment of additional staff as set out in our Experts at Hand draft model. Multi-agency teams will work alongside settings to review environments, practice and inclusive approaches, including learning walks and structured audits. This phase will identify strengths, priorities and barriers to inclusion, forming the basis of a jointly agreed, outcomes-focused MDT action plan for each setting. The outputs from this process will include clear, prioritise and implementable recommendations linked to evidence-

	A revised Universal Provision document has been developed. However, schools report this is not easily accessible in its current format.	informed practice. Our focus will be on building capacity within settings rather than creating dependency. We will prioritise coaching and modelling in classrooms, support the embedding of inclusive strategies into everyday teaching, and develop champions within each setting who can sustain and lead practice. Specialist input will be used deliberately to strengthen long-term capability and resilience. Within the EAH model, Alternative Provision (AP), independent schools and post-16 providers will initially be engaged through a network-based approach rather than core MDT delivery, ensuring a proportionate but inclusive model. These sectors will access support through the digital offer, targeted training and dedicated Communities of Practice, enabling shared learning, reflective practice and access to expertise tailored to their distinct contexts. Delivery will be facilitated by EPs and Specialist Teachers, with plans to develop dedicated roles to strengthen sector-specific support. In AP, the model will further promote outreach into mainstream settings, supporting early intervention and positioning AP within a coherent graduated pathway. Overall, this approach maintains system-wide coherence while allowing for responsive, context-sensitive support across diverse provision. Special schools and PRUs will both benefit from and shape the EAH offer, engaging in more bespoke ways that reflect the complexity of their settings. A key focus is on collaboration, bringing these provisions together to define effective practice, share expertise, and strengthen system capacity while aligning closely with MHSTs to avoid duplication. There is also an emphasis on improving transitions and understanding what these settings need from wider services. In Year 1, work will centre on partnership-based change projects to build insight and inform the ongoing development of the model.

		Finally, we will foster a strong, system-wide culture of inclusion. This will include developing communities of practice across schools, creating opportunities for shared learning and peer support, and promoting consistent approaches across clusters, ensuring that inclusion becomes embedded as a collective responsibility across the system. Further details are set out in our Experts at Hand draft model (Appendix 6) To complement the Experts at Hand model, the Early Support and Inclusion workstream will continue to drive the development of a needs-led approach across the local area as part of Buckinghamshire's Strategic Delivery Plan. The Early Support and Inclusion workstream will drive activity to ensure that the workforce has a consistent understanding of early support and is confident in identifying needs early and signposting to appropriate advice and support. A coordinated communications approach will strengthen stakeholder awareness and increase utilisation of the early support offer, enabling children and young people to have their needs identified and met as early as possible, without reliance on diagnosis or an EHCP. The workstream includes oversight and promotion of a comprehensive training offer across the partnership, with embedded mechanisms to continually review impact and refine delivery in line with learning and stakeholder feedback.

Building Block 2: Access to specialist support and local placements ***Education Sufficiency and Place Planning***	The Council has developed a draft Education Sufficiency Strategy (2027–2031). This recognises significant growth in SEND demand and sets priorities to expand local specialist provision, increase ARPs and units in mainstream schools, reduce reliance on independent placements, and align capital investment with need and value for money. Where proposals include specialist school expansion or free school development, clear justification is provided showing why need cannot be met in mainstream and how investment aligns with long-term demand reduction. The local area faces sustained sufficiency pressures driven by rising EHCP demand, increased complexity of need, and historic reliance on specialist and independent provision. Pressures are most acute in early years (0–5), post-16, and in specific needs such as Communication & Interaction (C&I), Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH). Buckinghamshire's first SEND Education Sufficiency Strategy 2022 - 2027 set out an ambitious plan to deliver 378 places by Sept 2027. To date we have made good progress against this target. Key projects have included opening new specialist units and expanding existing special schools. Feasibility studies exploring opportunities for additional mainstream provision have been undertaken at a number of schools, projects that progress will be planned to reflect local demographic need and priority areas of SEND, with clear expectations on type and quality of provision. Over the past two years, c.270 additional specialist places have been delivered and c.225 are being progressed. Of these c.130 have been/are planned to be delivered through new Units within mainstream settings.	Planned capacity increases across mainstream and specialist settings will reduce reliance on independent and out-of-area provision. Expansion of mainstream inclusion bases developed and commissioned by the Council is designed to enable more children and young people to remain in their local communities, reducing both cost and travel burden, while recognising that some learners will continue to need specialist placements. There is a clear strategic intent to reduce out-of-area and independent placements through creating more places within the county. The School Sufficiency Board will continue to develop projects that reduce reliance on independent specialist provision for pupils who need specialist support and to enable more children and young people to be effectively supported in mainstream provision. Through the development of new specialist inclusion bases over the next three years more pupils will be able to be placed at a mainstream setting thereby releasing capacity within our existing special schools for those pupils with a higher level of need who will continue to require a specialist setting. A further round of Expressions of Interest from mainstream schools looking to develop specialist inclusion bases will have been evaluated, feasibility studies undertaken and future projects identified to progress subject to sufficient capital funding being available. This review will include exploring opportunities to repurpose surplus space within existing provision due to falling rolls in some area. As part of the Service's MTFP bid for the next 4 years it is anticipated if all projects are able to be progressed in line with programme, and if additional capital funding is forthcoming from Government, an additional c.500 places will have been delivered since 2024. A key focus of current and future plans is the delivery of additional Post 16 and Post 19 places. Over the next

	The significant housing growth across the area has put immense pressure on all SEND provision both within mainstream and specialist settings. There is an active focus on expanding provision within mainstream settings. All new schools opening on major housing developments will include specialist inclusion bases. Buckinghamshire's approach to addressing identified gaps in SEND provision for children aged 0–5 is rooted in a strong commitment to inclusive early education and early intervention. Rather than developing specialist bases within early years settings, the Local Authority is prioritising strengthening the capacity and quality of mainstream provision to meet a wider range of needs. The local authority works collaboratively with MATs, stand-alone academies, and neighbouring LAs to identify suitable sites and develop inclusion bases. Expressions of interest are routinely sought and relationships with MATs are strong. There is an expectation that new schools will include provision for additional resource bases, alongside a focus on areas with falling rolls where suitable space may emerge. Network meetings for peer support and challenge have been established and new Units/ARPs in mainstream school are to be supported by expert staff from existing special schools to share expertise/provide advice/guidance. Special Schools have offered to support this process to provide a network of support to new settings to ensure new provision is of high quality and that it meets the needs of the pupils. The Council has also supported over 50 adaptation projects in mainstream settings over the past five years through our Schools Access Initiative capital programme to make mainstream schools more	three years new provision will have been provided for both Post 16 and Post 19 places. This expansion reflects the Council's strategic priority to increase sufficiency and improve pathways for young people with SEND beyond compulsory school age. Over the next three years, development of additional Post 16 and Post 19 provision will focus on creating high-quality, localised opportunities that better meet a range of needs, including those requiring more specialist or supported transitions into adulthood. This will include strengthening partnerships with further education providers, developing flexible and inclusive pathways, and ensuring that provision aligns with Preparing for Adulthood outcomes, reducing reliance on out-of-area placements while improving continuity and progression for young people. Our Early Years service will have developed a range of targeted activities supporting early identification, inclusive practice, and effective SEND provision through funding, workforce development, and strong multi-agency collaboration with families and professionals. Sufficiency will be actively managed through local demand monitoring, provider engagement, and targeted family support, ensuring accessible, sustainable, and inclusive early years provision. The Service will have taken forward a number of opportunities to re-purpose existing buildings to provide additional SEND places. Planned capacity increases across mainstream and specialist settings will aim to reduce reliance on independent and out-of-area provision. Expansion of mainstream inclusion units is designed to enable more children and young people to remain in their local communities, reducing both cost and travel burden, while recognising that some learners will continue to need specialist placements. All new schools opening on major

	accessible for children with disabilities. The key focus of this programme is to ensure that young people are able to remain within a mainstream school and to be access a school within their local community. Existing school premises or surplus corporate buildings are a key consideration in the Council's place planning, particularly in areas of falling rolls. Opportunities to repurpose space for inclusion provision are assessed alongside demographic trends and locality-based gaps, while recognising that surplus capacity is not always in areas of highest need and the location of new provision needs to be carefully aligned with the demand for places and the impact on travel distances for pupils and the subsequent impact on the home to school transport budget. Place planning reflects Buckinghamshire's geography, rurality, and patterns of settlement. Proposals are assessed collaboratively with home-to-school transport to ensure provision remains viable and contextually appropriate across urban and rural areas. Impact assessments of travel arrangements are undertaken for capital proposals and place expansions, including modelling of travel distances, journey times, and potential reductions in out-of-area placements. Mitigations are considered at planning stage. There is close collaboration between the delivery teams and the home to school transport team to review each proposal to ensure that it provides a robust solution to need.	housing developments will include additional resource bases. Two new mainstream primary schools are scheduled to open within the next three years; both will have SEND Units and both are on track for delivery. A package of support will have been put in place for all schools opening specialist inclusion bases to share expertise/provide advice/guidance to ensure new provision is of high quality and that it meets the needs of the pupils
Building Block 3: *System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production* ***System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production***	Buckinghamshire has a well-established SEND governance structure, with clear oversight shared across the Council, Integrated Care Board, and wider partnership. The SEND Partnership Board—	By year 3 the SEND system will be characterised by strong, aligned system leadership, fully integrated partnership working, and embedded, high-quality co-production.

	providing strategic leadership and accountability for the SEND and Inclusion Strategy is complemented by a range of Boards across the LA and ICB. The complexity of multiple boards and workstreams requires ongoing alignment to ensure cohesion and clarity across the system. Overall, Buckinghamshire has a strong foundation of partnership working with active involvement of FACT Bucks and CYP, and a range of engagement opportunities and co-produced initiatives across services. However, the pace of recent change has led to some inconsistency, with co-production not yet fully embedded across all areas and communication identified as a key area for improvement. While there are positive enablers in place—including leadership commitment, a developing Strengthening Co-production Plan, strong relationships/partnership working and pockets of good practice—these require greater consistency, coordination, and capacity to ensure they are fully effective and sustainable.	Governance will be effective, and collectively owned across partners, with leaders working collaboratively and accountably to deliver shared outcomes. Local partnership collaboration will be consistent and well-established, with organisations, including health partners, the education sector (MATs, mainstream, special, independent, AP settings), the VCS and Council services, working seamlessly together through agreed approaches, shared priorities, and integrated ways of working. Co-production will be fully embedded as business as usual, with children, young people, and families recognised as equal partners in shaping services, influencing decisions, and driving continuous improvement. Overall, the system will be more coherent, transparent, and responsive, underpinned by shared data, continuous learning, and a mature partnership culture.
Building Block 4: ***Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours***	The culture across the SEND partnership is currently at an emerging stage of maturity, with clear and visible progress in establishing shared intent but inconsistency in how this is experienced across the system. A strong, shared narrative of inclusion is in place, aligned to SEND reform principles of early intervention, needs-led support and strengthening mainstream provision within a 0–25 system. Leaders are increasingly modelling relational and strengths-based approaches, and inclusion is becoming more explicit across policies, communications and key programmes, including the Universal Provision framework and Experts at Hand model. There is a growing recognition that improving outcomes for children and young people, including their preparation for adulthood, is a shared responsibility across education, health and social	In three years, the culture across the SEND partnership will be mature, embedded and self-sustaining, with inclusion, partnership working and preparation for adulthood fully integrated into everyday practice across a 0–25 system. There will be a strong, system-wide identity, where partners across education, health and social care act as one system with shared accountability for outcomes. Inclusion will be the default expectation, with children and young people's needs met early and locally through confident, skilled and inclusive mainstream and community provision. Preparation for adulthood will be embedded from the earliest stages, shaping planning and decision-making so that children and young people are supported to achieve independence, employment and active participation in their communities. Across the system, behaviours will be consistent and well embedded. Joint working will be routine at strategic,

	care. However, this cultural shift is not yet consistently embedded. Practice remains variable across services, settings and localities, and collaboration is stronger at a strategic level than in day-to-day operational practice. Preparation for adulthood is recognised as a priority but is not yet consistently integrated into planning or reviews, and pathways into adulthood are not always clearly understood or jointly owned across partners. Co-production is active, with improving engagement of children, young people and families, but it is not yet systematically influencing decision-making, and feedback loops are inconsistent. Workforce behaviours are beginning to shift through training and increased access to advice and support, but confidence to meet needs early—and to plan effectively for longer-term outcomes such as independence, employment and community participation—remains variable. As a result, the system continues to rely on escalation and statutory processes. Overall, the partnership is transitioning from individual service responsibility and reactive, education-focused responses towards shared intent, earlier collaboration and a broader focus on lifelong outcomes, with strong foundations in place but further work required to achieve consistency.	operational and locality levels, supported by multidisciplinary working and clear shared expectations. Pathways into adulthood, including post-16 education, employment and adult services, will be clear, coordinated and well understood, with smooth and timely transitions and no gaps between services. Staff will demonstrate high confidence and capability in meeting needs early and planning for long-term outcomes, resulting in reduced reliance on escalation. Statutory processes will no longer be the default route to support, reflecting a system that intervenes earlier and more effectively. Co-production will be fully embedded at all levels, with children, young people and families acting as equal partners in shaping strategy, delivery and evaluation, including defining aspirations for adulthood. Communication will be transparent and two-way, with strong evidence of how lived experience informs decision-making. Leaders and practitioners will consistently model relational, strengths-based approaches, and workforce development will be aligned to system need, ensuring practitioners across all sectors are confident in supporting both immediate needs and long-term outcomes. Continuous improvement will be driven by shared data, lived experience and collective reflection, with clear evidence of improved outcomes, including increased inclusion, improved attendance, and strong, well-established preparation for adulthood pathways and positive post-16 and employment outcomes. Overall, the partnership will demonstrate a deeply embedded culture of trust, inclusion and shared responsibility, where a focus on lifelong outcomes is integral to all practice, and the system continuously adapts to improve the life chances of children and young people with SEND.

Success measures ***Drawing on metrics from the accompanying data template E.g.*** *Improve attendance of pupils in all maintained schools (mainstream and special) with SEN* *Reduce reliance on independent special school places* *Mainstream settings with increased access to Education Psychologists/SaLT/OT* *Reduced NEET rates for SEND YP at age 16*	• *Improve attendance of pupils with SEN by reducing the number of children and young people not in education from 442 in 2025 to around 131 by 2028 and 87 by 2029.* • *Reduce reliance on independent special school places by managing growth from a baseline of 446 pupils in 2025 through increased local capacity and more effective inclusion.* • *Increase access to Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy by expanding reach from around 1,900 children to over 10,000 by 2027–28 and approximately 14,750 by 2028–29, with a similar increase in EP reach from around 1,500 to over 12,000.* • *Reduce NEET and post-16 disengagement by lowering the number of young people aged 16–19 not in education from 202 in 2025 to around 60 by 2028, with corresponding reductions for those aged 20–25.* • *Improve system confidence and parental experience by reducing tribunal appeal rates from 0.88 in 2025 to around 0.67 by 2028 and 0.59 by 2029.* • *Increase local specialist capacity by growing the number of specialist places from 2,207 in 2025 to approximately 2,554 by 2029, supporting more children to be educated within the local area.*

3. **What is the local area partnership's strategy for delivering on the above?**

   A brief summary of your local system's theory of change or reform strategy. Reflect on the output of your **Local Partnership Maturity Assessment Tool**, particularly your *Local System 'change story.'*

Buckinghamshire's Local Area Partnership strategy is rooted in a clear theory of change: that earlier, needs-led support and stronger inclusion in mainstream settings will improve outcomes for children, increase family confidence, and create a more sustainable SEND system over time.

Our Local Partnership Maturity Assessment identifies that Buckinghamshire has strong strategic intent, improving partnership governance and shared ambition, but that delivery impact has been constrained by variable system confidence, reliance on statutory routes, and pressure from rising demand. Our change story therefore focuses on shifting the system from reactive, diagnosis-led responses to proactive, early intervention and inclusive practice.

The core of our strategy is to strengthen universal and targeted provision, build workforce confidence to deliver the graduated approach, improve consistency of practice across early years and schools, and ensure access to support is not dependent on escalation to an EHCP.

Alongside this, we will build sufficiency within local education systems by developing a broader and more responsive range of mainstream and specialist places, so that children and young people can have their needs met earlier and closer to home. This supports both improved outcomes and better value for money.

Strong partnership governance, shared data and outcome-focused assurance will underpin delivery, with co-production central to design and evaluation. By sequencing reform carefully, investing earlier, and aligning improvement activity across education, health and care, we aim to reduce crisis demand, improve lived experience for families, and embed sustainable change across the local system.

4. **Please upload a completed copy of the Local Partnership Maturity Assessment Tool.**

   See Attachment 3

5. **What is the local area partnership roadmap for the next 3 years?**

   Reflecting on the broad timescales and expectation for deliverables set out in the Schools White Paper, key documents and core minimum requirements set out in this document, please provide a high-level roadmap for the next 3 years. Please highlight key milestones and a trajectory to the target metrics identified above, including leading indicators.

   In the 2026-27 column, in particular, please reference how you plan to meet the core minimum requirements in your narrative, including details and evidence in supporting documents.

   You can insert or upload supporting documents including graphics/visuals that illustrate your data trajectory.

Local roadmap for the next 3 years	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**
Building blocks *Strengthening inclusion across education settings* *Access to specialist support and local placements* *System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production* *Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours* **Enablers** *E.g.* *Capital – investment strategy across EY, mainstream, FE* *Workforce*			

Data/digital systems **Success measures** ***Drawing on metrics from the accompanying data template*** *E.g.* *Improve attendance of pupils in all maintained schools (mainstream and special) with SEN* *Reduce spend on ISS places* *Increase # children and young people supported by Education Psychologists/SALT/OT in maintained provision* *Improve overall effectiveness of provision* *NEET data* *Leading indicators*			
Building Block 1: *Early Support and Inclusion (including Experts at Hand)*	**Building the Foundations:** **Experts at Hand** We will establish an agreed delivery model that builds on current practice, ensuring there are clear and effective interfaces into existing services. Alongside this, we will continue to strengthen and develop communities of practice, enabling greater collaboration, shared learning, and consistency across teams. We will design and implement a digitalised Universal Provision platform to improve accessibility, streamline processes, and support consistent delivery. To underpin this work, we will develop and roll out a	**Scaling:** **Experts at Hand** We will scale up the Experts at Hand model to deliver across all included settings, providing timely specialist advice and support to meet a wide range of needs. We will scale up our training offer and expand MDT links to wider services and partners including Family Hubs. We will actively embed communities of practice, creating opportunities for settings to share learning, exchange ideas, and build collective expertise. We will implement a robust quality assurance and evaluation framework, using it to evidence	**Sustainability:** **Experts at Hand** We will ensure that the *Experts at Hand* model is fully aligned with joint commissioning arrangements, enabling a coordinated and efficient approach to planning and delivering support across services. To evidence the impact of this approach, we will strengthen data tracking systems that provide clear insight into outcomes, inform decision-making, and allow us to refine the model through continuous improvement.

	comprehensive suite of training materials, audit tools, and supporting resources to embed good practice and maintain quality standards. The use of AI/ Digital tools will be explored to ensure maximum support is available to schools and settings. In addition, we will recruit and appoint core multidisciplinary team (MDT) staff, providing the expertise and capacity needed to drive implementation and support ongoing development. We will also start to deliver the model across the five clusters. Independent schools, FE and AP providers engage primarily through the wider EAH network, accessing the digital offer, training and Communities of Practice. The focus is on building relationships, shared understanding and consistent access to expertise while prioritising core MDT delivery in maintained school-age settings. Early alignment with the EAH framework begins, particularly within AP, through strengthened outreach and system coherence. **Early Support and Inclusion Workstream:**	impact, inform ongoing development, and ensure that our approach delivers meaningful outcomes for children and young people. Engagement across Independent schools, FE and AP becomes more structured through established Communities of Practice, with increased participation in termly cycles of training, reflection and peer learning. Dedicated Specialist Teacher input begins to develop, supporting more tailored practice and strengthening links between AP, FE and mainstream pathways. The model starts to embed more consistent approaches and extend influence beyond school-age provision while remaining proportionate. The Early Support and Inclusion workstream will build on activity delivered in year 1, including but not limited to: **Early Support and Inclusion Workstream:** Workforce development (including Family Hubs) • Majority of Family Hub practitioners trained in identifying need and early support pathways • Measurable increase in workforce confidence	We will invest in building and sustaining a strong workforce pipeline, ensuring we have the capacity, skills, and resilience needed to maintain and develop the model over the long term. The model for Independent schools, FE and AP matures, with more embedded specialist roles and a stronger, self-sustaining network across independent, FE and AP sectors. There is greater alignment with the graduated pathway, particularly in AP, with enhanced outreach and earlier intervention reducing reliance on placements. Based on impact and capacity, consideration is given to extending access and deepening integration with MDT delivery where appropriate. **Early Support and Inclusion Workstream:** Workforce capability • Workforce consistently confident and skilled in delivering the graduated approach • Reduced reliance on specialist escalation due to improved frontline capability Local Offer and communications • Local Offer established as a primary route for accessing support

	Workforce development (including Family Hubs) • Targeted training and upskilling delivered across Family Hub Support Teams confident in recognising emerging needs and providing early advice • Best start inclusion practitioners recruited, and role embedded in the three identified best start family hub centres • Improved quality and consistency of signposting to early support services Local Offer and communications • Information gathering to in relation to the Local Offer to improve accessibility, usability, and relevance • To include specific engagement and usage by children, young people, and families Improved ability for users to navigate and access the right support at the right time Communications strategy • Coordinated communications approach implemented across the partnership • Increased awareness and understanding of the early	(via self-efficacy measures) • Evidence of improved quality of advice and signposting Local Offer and communications • Increased traffic and engagement with the Local Offer • If deemed appropriate in Y1, introduction of an improved digital platform for presenting information • Stakeholders report improved awareness and understanding of early support • Consistent use of early support pathways across services MHST expansion • Additional MHST team mobilised and operational • Increased access to early mental health support across schools Little Link pilot • Pilot completed and independently evaluated • Clear evidence of impact on early language and communication outcomes	• Families report improved experience, clarity, and confidence in navigating the system MHSTs • Full utilisation of expanded MHST capacity • Sustained reduction in waiting times and improved access to early mental health support Little Link (and similar interventions) • Scaled implementation across Early Years settings • Sustained improvements in developmental outcomes Trauma-informed approaches • Embedded across education, health, and care • Evidence of improved wellbeing, engagement, and participation System and reform impact (key outcomes) • Sustained reduction in EHCP demand growth • Reduction in use of high-cost specialist and out-of-area provision • Increased proportion of needs met within mainstream and local provision • Improved attendance, reduced exclusions, and

	support offer among stakeholders • Evidence of improved utilisation of early support pathways without unnecessary escalation MHST expansion • Additional MHST team delivered by 2027 to increase capacity • Access to early mental health support expanded to a further 900 pupils • Improved early intervention and support within school settings Little Link pilot • Pilot completed by January 2027 • Impact evaluated with clear evidence of outcomes in early language and communication • Findings used to inform decisions on scaling and wider rollout Trauma-informed practice • Continued rollout of trauma-informed approaches across the local area • Increased consistency in practice across education, health, and care	• Decision taken on scaling approach Trauma-informed practice • Training delivered widely across settings and services • Evidence of application in practice (e.g. audits, observations) System impact (key reform indicators) • Reduction in EHCP requests where needs can be met at SEN Support • Improved early identification of need • Increased uptake of early help and universal services	fewer placement breakdowns • Positive family and CYP feedback on earlier, more effective support

	• Evidence of improved support for emotional wellbeing, regulation, and readiness to learn		
Building Block 2: *Education Sufficiency and Place Planning*	**Build:** • *We will consult on and finalise the Council's Education Sufficiency Strategy (2027–2031).* • *SEND projections will continue to be refined against trends and actuals to enable future planning to be targeted to areas of highest priority.* • *We will progress our current capital plans taking business cases through our capital boards for approval and undertaking all necessary statutory consultation/approvals prior to implementation of projects.* • *Our Early Years service will have developed a range of targeted activities supporting early identification, inclusive practice, and effective SEND provision through funding, workforce development, and strong multi-agency collaboration with families and professionals.* *Sufficiency will be actively managed through local demand monitoring, provider engagement, and targeted*	**Embed:** • *SEND projections will continue to be refined against trends and actuals to enable future planning to be targeted to areas of highest priority.* • *Next round of Expression of Interest from mainstream schools will have been evaluated, feasibility studies undertaken and recommendations put forward through the Council's capital approval boards.* • *We will have increased the amount of Post 16 and Post 19 provision within the county to reduce the reliance on out of county independent placements.* • *The Service will have taken forward a number of opportunities to re-purpose existing buildings to provide additional SEND places.* • *Support systems will be fully in place to support mainstream schools setting up new provision.* • *Lessons learnt from new Units in mainstream settings will continue to be evaluated*	**Mature:** • *SEND projections will continue to be refined against trends and actuals to enable future planning to be targeted to areas of highest priority.* • *Subject to capital funding being available, new projects will be commissioned and progressed through the capital approval/statutory approvals process to provide additional places.* •

	family support, ensuring accessible, sustainable, and inclusive early years provision. • *We will continue to work collaboratively with all schools and MATs to identify new opportunities to provide additional places within the county.* • *We will undertake a review of surplus accommodation within school settings and corporate properties to identify potential opportunities for new provision whilst assessing this against areas of geographic.* • *Transport planning will be a key focus for this piece of work. A new transport cost calculator is in development to assist with future project decision making.* • *We are reviewing the impact of the loss of our SEND Free School to determine how we can provide the places required within the county, following an appeal which was rejected.*	*to ensure that mainstream schools are provided with expert support both pre and post opening. Special Schools have offered to support this process to provide a network of support to new settings to ensure new provision is of high quality and that it meets the needs of the pupils.*	
Building Block 3: *System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production*	**Year 1: Build** In Year 1, the focus is on establishing strong foundations for system-wide improvement by reviewing and strengthening how partners work together and ensuring that co-production is	**Year 2: Embed** In Year 2, the focus shifts to embedding consistent co-production and communication practices across the partnership, building on the foundations established in Year	**Year 3: Mature** In Year 3, the focus is on consolidating and sustaining the progress made, ensuring that co-production and partnership working are fully embedded as standard practice across the SEND system. Building on the

	embedded as a core principle across the SEND system. This begins with a comprehensive review and refresh of multi-agency SEND governance, ensuring that structures are fit for purpose, aligned across partnership boards, and enable effective, transparent decision-making. Alongside this, there is a deliberate emphasis on strengthening system leadership through clearer accountability and representation across partners. A key priority is the co-development of a Strengthening Co-production Plan with key stakeholders, including the Parent Carer Forum (PCF) and youth voice representatives. This is supported by a review and update of the existing Co-production Charter, aligning it with NHS England co-production guidance and enabling benchmarking against best practice. Recognising that meaningful co-production requires capacity and sustainability, the FACT Bucks PCF funding will be reviewed to ensure that the forum is sufficiently resourced to actively engage in SEND reforms and to broaden the	1. Partners take time to reflect on progress to date, using insight and feedback to strengthen and standardise approaches across the system. A key element of this is the completion of co-production self-assessments against the agreed minimum standards. This will enable each partner to evaluate the quality and consistency of their practice, identify areas for development, and contribute to a shared programme of improvement activity. Through this process, co-production becomes more embedded, measurable, and aligned across organisations. Alongside this, communications activity will be reviewed across the partnership to ensure clarity, consistency, and alignment in messaging. This supports a shared understanding of SEND reforms, strengthens engagement with stakeholders, and ensures that children, young people, and families receive clear, accessible, and consistent information regardless of how they interact with the system. Together, these actions help to embed a more consistent, transparent, and collaborative approach.	consistency achieved in earlier phases, partners will take a reflective and forward-looking approach to ensure that improvements are not only maintained but continue to evolve in response to changing needs. A key priority is to review the areas identified through earlier self-assessment and improvement activity, assessing their effectiveness and ensuring that they are embedded in a way that is sustainable over the long term. This includes strengthening what works well, addressing any remaining gaps, and ensuring that learning is shared across the partnership. Through this approach, co-production becomes an integral and enduring part of how services are designed, delivered, and improved, supported by a strong, resilient partnerships. Success Measures: • Strong culture of collective accountability and continuous improvement • Co-production is business as usual, embedded across all levels of the system

	representation of families, particularly those whose voices are less often heard. In parallel, the findings of recent SENDIAS discovery activity will be reviewed to assess its effectiveness in supporting families, identifying opportunities to strengthen, and expand mediation and dispute resolution through creative solutions. To underpin these developments with strong evidence and insight, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) will be reviewed and updated, and further work completed on developing a partnership data dashboard, providing a shared, data-driven understanding of need, demand, performance, and outcomes across the system. Together, these actions create the conditions for stronger partnership working, more inclusive and impactful co-production, and a more coherent and accountable SEND system. Success Measures: • SEND reforms governance fully operational, with clear decision-making routes and accountability across all boards	Success Measures: • PCF and youth voice groups actively co-designing services, policies, and commissioning intentions • Leader's modelling joined-up, collaborative behaviours across organisations • Co-production model embedded in all key programmes and decision-making forums with evidence of diverse participation and inclusion of harder-to-reach groups • Improved reach and diversity of participation • Data and lived experience used together to track progress	

	• Coproduction charter/strategy/plan agreed, baseline established • SEND partnership data dashboard operational and used in decision-making; data-led performance reviews and deep dives have informed activity		
Building Block 4: *Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours*	**Year One: Build** In year one, cultural change is visible but not yet consistent, with a strong focus on establishing shared intent and beginning to shift behaviours. What this looks like in practice: • A clear, shared narrative of inclusion is established across the partnership, aligned to SEND reform principles (early intervention, needs-led support, mainstream inclusion). • Leaders model and communicate a strengths-based, relational approach, beginning to shift language from deficit-led to needs-led. • Inclusion becomes explicit in policies, communications and key programmes (e.g. Universal Provision framework, Experts at Hand, Year of Inclusion).	**Year Two: Embed** In year two, the system moves from intent to consistent, embedded behaviours across partners, supported by clearer structures and expectations. What this looks like in practice: • Inclusion is consistently understood and applied across services, schools and partners, supported by the Universal Offer and MDT working. • Joint working becomes routine, particularly at operational and locality level (e.g. MDTs, Team Around the School, Family Hubs). • Co-production becomes systematic and measurable, with partners self-assessing and improving against agreed standards. • Staff across the system demonstrate greater confidence to meet needs early, reducing reliance on	**Year Three: Mature** By year three, cultural change is fully embedded and self-sustaining, with inclusion and partnership working as "business as usual." What this looks like in practice: • Inclusion is the default culture across the system, with high expectations that needs are met early and locally in mainstream wherever possible. • There is a strong, system-wide identity of shared responsibility, with partners acting as one system rather than separate services. • Co-production is fully embedded, with children, young people and families influencing strategy, delivery and evaluation as equal partners. • Leaders and practitioners consistently demonstrate

	• Partners demonstrate growing commitment to shared ownership, but practice remains variable across services and settings. • Co-production is active but inconsistent, with improving engagement but limited evidence of impact on decision-making. • Workforce behaviours begin to change through training (e.g. trauma-informed, early identification) and increased access to advice and support. Key cultural shift: • From individual service responsibility and reactive responses • To shared intent, early collaboration and emerging inclusive mindsets	escalation and statutory routes. • Communication is more consistent and two-way, with clearer "you said, we did" feedback loops for families. • Decision-making increasingly uses shared data and lived experience, not just professional judgement. Key cultural shift: • From *isolated good practice and variable engagement* • To *consistent behaviours, shared accountability and collaborative delivery*	relational, strengths-based behaviours in all interactions. • Workforce capability is high, with confidence to meet need without escalation, supported by ongoing professional learning and peer networks. • Continuous improvement is driven by transparent data, shared learning and collective reflection across the partnership. Key cultural shift: • From structured collaboration • To deeply embedded trust, collective ownership and adaptive system-wide improvement

6. **What will the local area partnership deliver in the first year?**

   Please outline the key workstreams, milestones and trajectory your local area partnership will deliver and achieve in 2026-27 as well as how you plan to spend the investment allocation that will help fund this year's delivery. Please share key milestones and anticipated dates, success measures, cost breakdown and category. These should incorporate the core minimum requirements, be mapped to the building blocks above and should reflect a more detailed trajectory to the narrative, milestones and target metrics outlined in the 2026-27 column above.

2026-27 Local delivery plan		Q2		Q3		Q4	
Workstream outline – mapped to building block ***Outcome -*** *what you want to achieve with this workstream* ***Success measures –*** *how you measure progress drawing on metrics from the accompanying data template*	***Responsible lead per workstream*** *– accountable for the delivery of the workstream and the identified outcome.*	***Milestones per workstream*** *What key milestones will enable you achieve your targeted trajectory*	***Target trajectory per workstream*** *Where do you expect your data to be?*	***Milestones per workstream*** *What key milestones will enable you achieve your targeted trajectory*	***Target trajectory per workstream*** *Where do you expect your data to be?*	***Milestones per workstream*** *What key milestones will enable you achieve your targeted trajectory*	***Target trajectory per workstream*** *Where do you expect your data to be?*
Building block - Workstream 1 *Early Support and Inclusion* ***Experts at Hand Offer included in here***	*Jenny Feeny – Principal Educational Psychologist*	**Experts at Hand Model:** Develop communication and branding Digitise universal provision document Map interfaces to existing services and offers Develop MDT service standards (start) Develop Communities of Practice approach Develop infrastructure for MDTs	No change to data whilst model is being developed and scoping and mapping is completed	**Experts at Hand Model:** *Digitise universal provision document (complete)* *Map existing service offers (complete)* *Map interfaces to existing services and offers (complete)* *Develop training offer* *Develop evaluation and quality assurance framework*	Increased access to resources and training will begin to impact number of CYP accessing SEN support without EHCNA but this will be limited whilst recruitment is taking place with experts at hand model and wider strategies are embedded	**Experts at Hand Model:** Develop audit tools and resources (complete) Develop evaluation and quality assurance framework (complete) Develop training offer (complete) Recruit to MDT posts (complete) Continue delivery of core training offer	Increased access to resources and training and early support services will impact number of CYP accessing SEN support without EHCNA.

		Recruit to Project Lead post (complete) Recruit to MDT posts (start) ***Early Support and Inclusion Workstream*** *1. Communication strategy developed and activity underway* *2. MHST offer expansion model drafted* *3. Family Centre staff training completed and Best Start Inclusion Practitioners recruited* *4. Little link pilot underway with activity reviewed within the first quarter* *5. Local Offer review activity commenced* *7. Trauma informed approaches training*		*Develop MDT service standards (complete)* *Develop Communities of Practice approach (continue)* *Recruit to MDT posts (continue)* *Start to deliver coordinated core training offer* *Mobilise early delivery in two clusters* *1. Communication strategy developed and activity underway* *2. MHST offer expansion to secure one additional team underway* *3. Best Start Inclusion Practitioners recruited and role embedding across local area*		Continue early delivery in two clusters Start to expand early delivery across all clusters Roll out Communities of Practice *1. Communication strategy for year one has been delivered* *2. MHST offer expansion model has been completed, one additional team in place increasing access to a further 9,000 pupils in Bucks* *3. Family Centre staff are confident in skills and signposting in relation to SEND, Best Start Inclusion*	

		programme underway across settings in Buckinghamshire		*4. Little link pilot underway with activity reviewed at point of second quarter – onboard further settings for programme starting academic year 27/38* *5. Recommendations for local offer improvements agreed and activity underway* *7. Trauma informed approaches training programme underway across settings in Buckinghamshire, increased number of settings engaging in programme*		*Practitioners are embedded in roles and strong relationships held across local area – linking in with EAH model* *4. Little link pilot completed with agreed next steps around sustainable model moving forward* *5. Local Offer improvements have been embedded and revised web platform in place evidenced by positive feedback from families and young people, and increased metrics* *7. Trauma informed approaches training programme demonstrates impact across an increased number of settings*	

Building block - Workstream 2 *Education Places Sufficiency* *Outcome* *Success measure*	*TBC*	• *Statutory consultations on new SEND Units at Buckingham School and Broughton Community Schools to be concluded and Leader Decision taken.* • *Expression of Interest issued to mainstream Schools wishing to establish specialist provision*	• *Projections will be updated as part of annual SCAP submission*	• *Orchard View Primary Academy to open with new 12 place SEND Unit.* • *Great Kingshill SEND Unit to open.* • *Capital projects will continue to be progressed through RIBA stages and any statutory consultation requirements*	• *No change to data*	• *We will consult on our Education Sufficiency Strategy (2027–2031).* • *Expressions of Interest Evaluated and feasibility studies commissioned at key*	• *SEND projections will continue to be refined against trends and actuals to enable future planning to be targeted to areas of highest priority.*
Building block - Workstream 3 *System leadership, local partnership collaboration and co-production* *Outcome* A consistent, system-wide shift towards inclusive, relational and strengths-based behaviours, where practitioners across education, health and care demonstrate shared responsibility for early intervention, inclusion and preparation for adulthood.	Lucy Pike – Head of Transformation and Improvement - **TBC**	1. Establish SEND Reforms leadership/steering group 2. Review Boards and reporting routes to ensure full representation and clarity 3. Coproduce a *Strengthening Co-production plan* with key	n/a	1. Commence regular partnership days to focus on key elements of the reforms 2. Implement findings from SENDIAS and FACT Bucks review 3. Review and update Coproduction Charter to align with	**n/a**	1. 2nd Partnership day held 2. Deliver against the *Strengthening Co-production Plan* 3. Partnership dashboard developed	**n/a**

Success measure • Increase in workforce confidence (self-efficacy / training evaluation data) • Evidence of consistent strengths-based language in plans, assessments and reports • Increased proportion of needs met at SEN Support (reduced reliance on EHCNA as first response) • Parent/carer feedback showing improved experience of communication and inclusion • Reduction in complaints/escalations linked to communication or unmet need • Increased engagement in training, Communities of Practice and co-production activity		stakeholders, including PCF and youth voice reps **4.** Understand current level of co-production through workshops 5. Establish Performance mtg schedule 6. Review FACT Bucks PCF funding to ensure sufficient capacity to fully engage in the reforms and widen representation of families 7. Allocate resource to JSNA		NHSE coproduction guidance and develop benchmarking approach 4. Deliver against the *Strengthening Co-production Plan*			
Building block - Workstream 4 Encouraging inclusive culture and behaviours *Outcome* *Success measure*	Kerry Lidgett – School Improvement TBC	Develop and agree a shared inclusion narrative and language framework aligned to SEND reforms Audit current culture,	Inclusion narrative agreed and adopted by partnership Baseline established for workforce confidence	Roll out training at scale across education, health and care workforce Embed inclusion language and expectations into policies,	Measurable increase in workforce confidence (early evaluation data) Increased consistency in language used	Evaluate impact of training and workforce development on practice Audit consistency of inclusive behaviours	60–70% of workforce demonstrating increased confidence in inclusive practice Evidence of consistent

		behaviours and language across services and settings (baseline) Embed inclusion principles within key programmes (Universal Provision, Experts at Hand, Early Support) Launch Year of Inclusion approach and initial communications campaign Begin workforce development offer (trauma-informed, relational practice, early identification) Co-produce co-production standards framework with PCF and CYP	and cultural consistency Increased engagement in training and inclusion activity No immediate data shift expected, but improved awareness and shared understandin g evident	templates and communications Launch Communities of Practice to model and share inclusive behaviours Introduce “You said, we did” feedback loops across key services Begin co-production self-assessment against agreed standards Targeted support for services/settings where practice is inconsistent	in plans and assessments Increased engagement from schools/settings in Communities of Practice Early signs of reduced escalation (e.g. slower growth in EHCNAs, increased SEN Support use)	across services and settings Embed co-production standards and publish evidence of impact (“you said, we did”) Refine communications approach based on feedback and engagement data Align workforce development to identified gaps and next phase priorities Share learning and good practice across the system	strengths-based language in majority of audited cases Increased proportion of children supported at SEN Support without escalation Improved parent/carer feedback on communication and involvement Reduction in complaints linked to communication or lack of early support

Projected Investment Spend per quarter *Please specify funding source for each category* *Example categories*: Programme oversight/additional leadership capacity. Workforce Recruitment Workforce training and development Data/Digital **Total Spend**	Q2 EAH Direct Delivery for all settings, staff, children and young people: : £0 (due to consideration to recruitment timelines etc) Q2 Admin costs for delivering the EAH offer: • Experts at Hand Project Lead (fixed term 2 years): £23,774 • SEND Reforms Finance Lead (fixed term 18 months): £23,774 • Infrastructure: £40,000 • Communication, publicity and branding: £35,000 • Implementation of Ripple Effect Monitoring £5000 Q2 LA Transformation Costs: Digitisation of Universal Offer: £50,000 Development and delivery of training, resources and tools: £60,000 SEND Reform Project Lead (fixed term): £25,000	Q3: EAH Direct Delivery for all settings, staff, children and young people: £392,255 Q3: Admin costs for delivering the EAH offer: • Experts at Hand Project Lead (fixed term 2 years): £23,774 • SEND Reforms Finance Lead (fixed term 18 months): £23,774 • Infrastructure: £20,000 • Communication, publicity and branding: £17,500 • Implementation of Ripple Effect Monitoring £5000 Q3: LA Transformation Costs: Digitisation of Universal Offer: £50,000 Development and delivery of training, resources and tools: £63,820 SEND Reform Project Lead (fixed term): £25,000	Q4: EAH Direct Delivery for all settings, staff, children and young people: £784,510 Q4: Admin costs for delivering the EAH offer: • Experts at Hand Project Lead (fixed term 2 years): £23,774 • SEND Reforms Finance Lead (fixed term 18 months): £23,774 • Infrastructure: £20,000 • Communication, publicity and branding: £17,500 • Implementation of Ripple Effect Monitoring £5000 Q4: LA Transformation Costs: Digitisation of Universal Offer: £50,000 Development and delivery of training, resources and tools: £65,000 SEND Reform Project Lead (fixed term): £25,000

7. **How will the local area partnership deliver the first-year plan?**

Please set out how you will ensure the required capacity and capability is in place from organisational corporate functions to support implementation of the plan. This could include reference to how you plan to build or bring in project delivery capability to manage

delivery against the plan, support prioritisation, and effective use of resources; and how you plan to build the capacity and capability in data and analytics to support effective tracking against the measures in the plan and reporting that informs decision making.

Delivery of the first-year plan will be underpinned by a strong programme infrastructure aligned to Buckinghamshire's wider SEND and Inclusion Strategy and broader children's services priorities. A SEND Programme Manager will provide strategic leadership and accountability, ensuring delivery is coordinated across education, health and care and integrated with existing transformation programmes, including early help, inclusion and sufficiency planning.

An Experts at Hand Project Lead will drive operational delivery, ensuring alignment across workforce development, commissioning and service improvement. This will be supported by dedicated project management capacity, enabling robust planning, prioritisation and risk management across the programme.

The approach is designed to maximise existing resource and investment, aligning SEND reform delivery with wider strategic priorities such as inclusive practice in mainstream settings, early intervention and locality working. Corporate services including finance, HR, commissioning and digital will be embedded to ensure resources are effectively aligned and deployed.

Workforce capacity will be strengthened through planned expansion of EP, SaLT and OT services alongside the development of multidisciplinary teams, ensuring sufficient expertise to deliver the model at scale.

Data and analytics capability will be enhanced through development of an integrated dashboard, drawing on existing systems to provide clear performance insight against key measures. This will support regular reporting, inform decision making and enable continuous improvement across the partnership.

8. **Other funding Local Authorities**

Block Transfers: If you have made a block transfer (Schools Block to High Needs Block) for 26-27, please set out how your plans for this funding align with the activities outlined above.

No High Needs Block transfer from the Schools Block was proposed for 2025/2026. A 0.5% transfer was consulted on with Schools Forum and members of the wider school system. Buckinghamshire made the case for a transfer, with the rationale being that any transferred funding would be reallocated to schools, either through EHCP top ups of specialist base funding, and that the transfer would enable a fairer distribution of high needs funding in favour of schools which were educating more than the expected number of children with high needs. Feedback from settings across the county highlighted concerns that a transfer could have a detrimental and counterproductive impact on the delivery and embedding of inclusion initiatives. Further, more detailed modelling of a proposed transfer showed that there would be a disproportionate negative impact on schools with more than the expected proportion of children and young people with additional needs. As such, it was agreed not to proceed with a transfer for 2026/2027. In light of this, and the significant systemwide changes being brought forward as part of the reform agenda, no block transfer is yet scheduled for consultation this year for 2027/2028.

Capital: We have announced at least £3 billion in high needs capital between 2026-27 and 2029-30 to support children and young people (CYP) with SEND, or those requiring alternative provision (AP). This funding is intended to support place delivery across the full 0-25 age range, including early years and post-16. We expect funding to support the following outcomes:

a. Inclusion at the core of high needs sufficiency strategy, resulting in more children and young people with SEND accessing suitable places in mainstream settings, across all phases of education
b. Every child or young person who needs a place in an inclusion base can access one
c. Fewer children and young people with SEND needing to travel a long way to access a suitable placement
d. Improved suitability of the mainstream estate to support children and young people with SEND, with adaptations to improve inclusivity and accessibility of the physical environment

We also welcome innovative uses of high needs capital to drive inclusion, for example, investment in assistive technology for use in mainstream settings.

Please outline your strategy for how this funding will meet the outcomes above, with reference to the core minimum requirements and other workstreams in this reform plan where appropriate. We would like to see detail around your plans to increase capacity for inclusion bases (formerly known as SEN units, resourced provision and pupil support units – SU/RP/PSUs), such as schools, colleges or early years providers identified, engagement with relevant settings and trusts, and target cohort of needs.

If your plans include increases to places in special schools or specialist post-16 institutions, please include a clear rationale, showing the need that is being met, and why it cannot be met through other types of provision, such as inclusion bases.

If you are receiving additional capital funding to replace one or more planned special or AP free schools, please set out how this funding will meet need in your area, and plans for engaging relevant trusts in your sufficiency

planning.

The Education Sufficiency Board provides strong governance arrangements for place planning, capital investment, and resource allocation. Its strategic focus is on increasing in-county provision, reducing reliance on expensive out-of-area and independent placements. The draft Education Sufficiency Strategy acknowledges sustained growth in demand for SEND and prioritises strengthening inclusive mainstream provision through earlier identification of need, consistent application of the graduated approach, timely and effective support. Expanding local specialist provision, increasing inclusion through specialist bases in mainstream schools, and aligning capital investment to areas of highest need while ensuring VfM are also priorities.

The Council continues to face short-term capacity pressures and is actively working with schools and providers to create additional places as quickly as possible. Progress is sometimes slowed by constraints such as funding availability and statutory consultation requirements. Projections indicate that mainstream inclusion alone will be insufficient to meet future need, and additional specialist capacity will be required. This challenge is intensified by planned housing growth (approximately 95,000 new homes expected over the next 20 years). Within this context, expanding special school places is necessary to meet rising and increasingly complex need, reduce reliance on high-cost independent provision, and ensure timely access to appropriate placements while mainstream inclusion continues to strengthen.

To address rising demand, all new mainstream schools will include SEND inclusion bases. Expanding these bases enables more pupils to access education within their local communities, reducing travel distances and costs while supporting inclusive practice. However, the Council recognises that some pupils will continue to require specialist placements.

Buckinghamshire is expanding special school places to meet rising and increasingly complex need, reduce reliance on costly independent provision, and support SEND reforms. Current capacity is insufficient, with pressure for PMLD and SLD. Expansion will also enable special schools to refocus on pupils with the highest needs as mainstream inclusion strengthens.

Significant progress has already been made, with c.270 additional specialist places created over the past two years and a further 225 in development. This includes 54 new places within mainstream SEND units, with 74 more planned over the next two years. Feasibility studies have identified opportunities to repurpose surplus school space, particularly where falling rolls have created capacity, and a new expression of interest process is being developed to identify further opportunities in areas of highest demand.

The Council's medium-term financial plans include proposals to deliver c.600 additional places over the next four years, subject to funding availability, including plans impacted by the cancellation of the Free School. Effective place planning requires careful consideration of capacity and location to minimise transport costs and ensure accessibility.

Recent projects illustrate this approach, including converting the former Mary Towerton School into a satellite special school and creating a SEND unit at Overstone School. However, delivery remains dependent on High Needs funding, with an estimated shortfall of £10 million over four years, rising to £40 million over ten years. The capital programme is reviewed annually to reassess need, costs and priorities, ensuring resources are targeted effectively and aligned to key strategic priorities.

9. **System partner and stakeholder engagement, and co-production.**

   Please outline how the local area partnership plans to engage system partners and stakeholders to develop and implement the plan – include planned engagement with schools and early years settings, alternative providers, FE and post-16 providers (including those your young people attend that are not within your local area), Parents and Carers and children and young people with SEND, with reference to the core minimum requirements. Consider changing roles and responsibilities in the context of the Schools White Paper and how you work collaboratively to manage the transition. Please indicate where additional support is required to engage partners or stakeholders - senior officials at the Department for Education will be available to contribute to summer term events with education

leaders and parent carer forum leaders.

A joined-up governance approach will be established across all programmes, ensuring consistent messaging aligned to a shared partnership communications plan and a clear understanding of how workstreams connect. Existing strategic partnership boards, and broader focused partnership days will support co-production and continue to strengthen the partnership approach. Formal mechanisms such as an Alternative Provision (AP) provider forum will be created to strengthen links into governance structures, while ensuring that Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARPs) and units, often at risk of being overlooked, are fully embedded as integral parts of the school system.

Engagement with young people will actively shape the most appropriate methods for ensuring their voices are heard, and opportunities will be created to engage with those children and young people who may not have an obvious route into existing youth voice structures i.e. children and young people who are electively home educated (EHE). The Parent Carer Forum will be a key source of lived experience and impact, alongside feedback from wider parent support groups where activities will be re-established to strengthen co-production and broaden representation.

Building on this, the Buckinghamshire Experts at Hand (EAH) model places co-production and system engagement at its core, recognising that effective SEND reform requires shared ownership across education, health and care. While initial engagement has included multi-agency workshops and design sessions, this will be significantly expanded during implementation through established partnership forums such as the SEND Task Force, SEND Partnership Board, Primary Executive Board and the Bucks Association of Secondary Heads, alongside targeted engagement with early years, alternative provision, FE and post-16 providers, including those outside the local area. A structured programme of co-production will support the development of key elements of the model, including digital tools, training, pathways and audit processes, with direct involvement from the Parent Carer Forum, children and young people and lived experience representatives. This will be further strengthened through the model's cluster-based, relational approach, with multidisciplinary teams working closely with groups of schools and settings to co-produce locally responsive action plans and support delivery.

The Strengthening Co-production Plan will capture all engagement and coproduction activities underpinning the programme.

10. Risks and Mitigations

What are the key risks that could affect the successful implementation of your Local SEND Reform Plan, and what mitigation strategies are in place to manage these risks? Please include a maximum of 5 risks with impact and likelihood RAG for each risk. See Annex C for suggested risk matrix.

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	RAG	Mitigation	Residual RAG
Insufficient Capital funding provided to enable delivery of capital programme resulting in Council not being able to meet its statutory duty and continuing reliance on independent placements.	High	High	RED	Delivery against sufficiency strategy seeking opportunities to utilise surplus accommodation and reduce the need for costly new builds where possible.	Amber
Timeline for progressing statutory proposals at mainstream schools is lengthy and burdensome compared with the Academy Significant Change Process	High	High	Amber	Work with DfE to see if statutory proposals seeking inclusion of SEND provision at LA maintained schools can be streamlined as it has been for new nursery provision. Current process takes between 6-9 months from start to finish, whereas Academy Significant Change process is far shorter.	Amber
Continued increase in statutory demand, driven by parental and setting concerns on the implications of the reforms and	Moderate	Highly Likely	Amber	A recovery plan has been in place since January 2026 with additional investment to support current high levels of statutory demand.	Amber

lack of confidence in early support and inclusion. This risk will be most significant in the early stages of the project before the Experts at Hand delivery can begin to have impact.				Existing Early Support and Inclusion workstream has already progressed actions to increase and coordinate training offer, provide further information to families on SEND support, development of the Universal Provision Framework and document. Implementation of Experts at Hand Programme that will support greater confidence in Early Support and Inclusion through greater access to key professionals.	
Experts at Hand - Variation in school readiness and engagement: Schools are at different stages of readiness to engage with and implement a whole-school inclusive approach, and some may not engage proactively with the model, particularly where capacity is stretched or where there is limited experience of system-wide approaches. This may lead to inconsistent uptake and impact across the system.	Moderate	Likely	Amber	A flexible, hybrid delivery model will be adopted, with support tailored to need. Engagement will be proactively managed through the locality model, including targeted outreach to less engaged settings, clear communication of the benefits of the model, and alignment with existing relationships such as SENCo networks. Expectations for engagement will also be reinforced through system leadership and governance.	Green
Experts at Hand - Workforce capacity and sustainability: There is a risk that insufficient workforce capacity – particularly within specialist therapies and psychology – could limit the ability to deliver the model at scale and sustain consistent input across all settings. This includes challenges	Critical	Likely	Red	This will be addressed through phased implementation, maximising the use of existing capacity, and developing a broader, more flexible workforce through training, coaching and the establishment of a workforce academy to support longer-term pipeline development.	Amber

in recruitment, retention and maintaining specialist expertise within the system.					

11. Dependencies

Please detail the key areas of the local area partnership's proposed SEND future state and roadmap that may be impacted by wider reforms nationally and locally and outline how you will manage these. We expect these will include but not be limited to:

- NHS reforms
- Local Government Re-organisation
- Reforms to Children's Social Care
- Best Start in Life, including Family Hubs
- Best Start In Life Strategy
- Curriculum and Assessment Review

Buckinghamshire recognises that delivery of its SEND future state will sit alongside several national and local reforms. These are likely to impact areas such as how services are aligned across education, health and care, how we commission provision, and how we strengthen early help and inclusion.

There are some shared principles across policy that will support delivery:

- Early Identification and intervention
- Person centred and strengths-based practice
- Co- production with children, young people and families
- Inclusion and reducing in equalities
- Joined up pathways and shared outcomes

In Buckinghamshire, to deliver the wider system reforms and policy, we will:

- keep strong alignment between SEND reforms, wider council and system transformation programmes through structured governance across the Local Area, enabling communication and cohesive approach across system partners
- work closely with partners through established Integrated Care System arrangements to ensure coproduction is at the heart of plan developments
- maintain strong joint commissioning and contract monitoring arrangements and strong relationships with partner providers
- build on existing Family Hubs and early help approaches to support earlier identification and intervention, ensuring pathways of support are aligned across transitions between early years, school age and preparing for adulthood, using the workforce flexibly
- maintaining agile phased delivery plans to respond and align to national policy as it develops
- use established partnership governance to regularly review risks, dependencies and progress

A key external factor is the scale of ongoing NHS reform, particularly changes to ICBs. Thames Valley ICB planning and priorities are strongly aligned with the ambitions of the SEND reforms, creating a favourable environment for implementation. While system change presents some risks in relation to capacity and organisational transition, it also offers opportunities to accelerate integration, strengthen early intervention and embed more sustainable, preventative models of delivery across the partnership.

Thames Valley ICB Commissioning Intentions commit to the development of integrated care at neighbourhood level as a core priority, with a strong focus on prevention, early intervention and reducing inequalities. This aligns closely with the key principles of the SEND Reforms, and the Experts at Hand model, which is designed to strengthen universal and targeted support within education settings and reduce reliance on specialist pathways. The ICB's emphasis on collaborative, system-based delivery also supports the Local Area's ambition for jointly owned and delivered SEND provision.

ICB are also progressing therapy transformation plans across the footprint. These plans aim to improve consistency, quality and sustainability of therapy services and are expected to support a shift towards consultative, capacity-building models of delivery, which are integral to the Experts at Hand approach.

The Local Area will actively manage the impact of NHS reform through strong joint governance and partnership working, ensuring alignment between SEND reforms, ICB commissioning intentions and transformation programmes. Risks relating to organisational change and capacity will be mitigated through phased implementation, clear shared priorities and embedded joint accountability between the Local Authority and ICB. This approach will ensure national and local reforms are mutually reinforcing, enabling sustainable system change and improved outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

Section 3 – Monitoring and Evaluation

12. **How will the local area partnership know delivery is on track?**

Please set out how you will monitor and track progress referencing:

- ***Monitoring tools and processes*** - the specific tools, systems, and data you will use to track delivery milestones and measure the impact on outcomes.

> *Some Local Area Partnerships hold data in a central SEND operational dashboard. This is used by teams on a weekly basis to identify trends in demand or inform conversations with local school or setting leaders.*
>
> *In some Local Area Partnerships, a view of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) is reviewed monthly by a SEND Board to take decisions on prioritisation, resourcing and delivery of services informed by regular data.*

Please set out how you will use data to track demand (e.g., EHCP applications for assessment), Service delivery (e.g., Speech and Language Specialists deployment; places created), Service quality (e.g., parental satisfaction) and outputs (e.g., pupil attendance; pupil exclusions)

- ***Feedback and adaptation mechanisms*** - what feedback loops and stakeholder input you will use to review progress and adjust your approach.

Delivery will be tracked through a suite of actions, milestones, and impact measures aligned to SEND reforms and Buckinghamshire's Strategic Delivery Plan (April 2026), enabling consistent and transparent monitoring of progress and system impact

Key indicators are grouped across four core domains:

Demand and system flow

- Reduction in requests for EHC needs assessments where needs can be met at SEN Support, informed by analysis of EHCP demand drivers.
- Reduction in EHCNA backlog and improved timeliness, with more completed within the 20-week statutory timeframe.
- Reduced reliance on high-cost independent and out-of-area placements through sufficiency planning and increased local provision.
- Improved step up / step down pathways, including reduced escalation to statutory services and fewer inappropriate referrals.

Sufficiency and service delivery

- Increased specialist and mainstream places locally, including ARPs, special schools, and post-16 pathways.
- Delivery against the education sufficiency plan and capital programme, including place creation to 2030.
- Increased access to local provision and reduced travel distances.
- Expansion of Mental Health Support Teams, increasing reach and reducing waiting times.
- Increased use of early help and universal services (e.g. Family Hubs, Local Offer, parent portals).

Quality of provision and experience

- Improved EHCP quality, with more plans meeting QA standards across Sections A–K.
- Improved annual review timeliness and quality, including Preparing for Adulthood outcomes.
- Increased workforce confidence and capability measured through post-training self-efficacy.
- More settings achieving the Inclusion Quality Mark.

Outcomes for children, young people and families

- Improved attendance, engagement, and participation.
- Reduction in exclusions and placement breakdowns.
- Improved developmental outcomes (e.g. communication, regulation, engagement).
- Increased positive post-16 destinations, including employment, internships, and independent living.
- Family and young person feedback showing increased confidence, improved experience, and earlier access to support.

Monitoring tools and processes

- SEND partnership dashboard bringing together key metrics on demand, sufficiency, quality, and outcomes enabling regular review and triangulation of data.
- Monthly SEND Partnership Board oversight using KPI reporting to inform decisions on priorities and resources.
- Workstream-level tracking, with accountability for actions, milestones, and impact.
- Performance meeting cycle to refine measures and ensure consistency in evaluating impact.
- Thematic deep dives, audits, and QA frameworks to assess quality alongside quantitative data. (e.g. EHCP QA, annual review QA, provision audits)

This ensures data informs not just activity tracking but understanding of impact on lived experience and system sustainability.

Feedback and adaptation mechanisms

The partnership commits to reviewing and adapting delivery through embedded feedback loops, including;

- Co-production with children, young people, and families, including self-assessment against agreed standards.
- Stakeholder engagement and workshops informing delivery and priorities.
- Workforce feedback through training evaluation, peer review, and practice forums.
- Analysis of user insight and Local Offer analytics to ensure accessibility and responsiveness.
- These mechanisms ensure progress is monitored and the partnership responds to emerging needs, embedding continuous improvement.

Together, this approach ensures progress is effectively monitored, enabling the partnership to respond dynamically to emerging needs while improving lived experience and long-term system sustainability.

13. **Reporting to DfE**

Using the attached data template, the local area partnership is required to provide quarterly data returns to DfE against selected key metrics. DfE will, in turn, provide quarterly data reports with visualised analysis and benchmarking that will support your local delivery, monitoring and evaluation. This will include data the department holds on **Attendance**, **Exclusions**, and **Unauthorised absence**.

Please use the attached data template to upload your initial data return to DfE.

Please see appendix 7

Section 4 – Governance

14. **How will the local area partnership ensure delivery of plans remain on track?**

Please outline the governance structures in place to oversee delivery. Clearly set out who is responsible for overseeing reform delivery, what each governance group or individual is accountable for, and how these arrangements ensure progress is monitored and decisions are made transparently. Please identify where the named SRO for the Local SEND Reform Plan sits within the governance structure and ensure your response incorporates the core minimum requirements.

Delivery of the SEND reform plan is overseen through local area partnership (LAP) governance arrangements, bringing together local authority, ICB, education and wider partners. These arrangements support joint oversight and ensure links into respective organisational governance frameworks.

Further detail on health governance arrangements will be incorporated as these arrangements are finalised.

Governance Mechanism *This may be a governance group, or an individual (e.g. SRO).*	**Purpose/ Responsibilities** *What is the function of this governance mechanism? What are they accountable for overseeing? What information is reported to this governance mechanism?*	**Membership** *Who does this governance mechanism comprise of? [should include health and PCF representation] What stakeholders are represented at this governance mechanism? Please indicate who chairs this. (Include n/a if an individual).*	**Cadence** *How regularly does this governance mechanism meet?*	**Decision Rights** *What decisions can this governance mechanism make?*	**Escalation Route** *Where can this governance mechanism escalate issues or decision to?*
SEND Partnership Board	The SEND Partnership Board provides strategic leadership and governance for SEND across Buckinghamshire, ensuring the Children and Families Act (2014) is embedded and the SEND Strategy is delivered. It drives improvement, holds partners to account, and ensures services work together to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND.	The Board is made up of senior leaders from the local authority, health, education, social care, and parent representatives, alongside key partners and observers. Members are expected to actively contribute, represent their organisations, and have delegated authority to make decisions on their behalf.	The Board meets on a bi-monthly basis with meetings scheduled in advance and supported by standard agenda items and reporting. (Quorum requires at least 25% attendance, including representation from education, health, and social care). *NB - Proposal to move to monthly to enable*	The Board provides strategic oversight and holds partners to account but does not have direct authority over operational delivery within individual organisations. It cannot make financial decisions on behalf of agencies, although it can advise on priorities and may receive delegated authority for specific	Partners escalate strategic issues to the Board through their own governance arrangements where these impact SEND outcomes or delivery. The Board then escalates concerns to appropriate organisational leaders and works within the wider governance structure to

			oversight of reform planning	decisions where agreed.	influence decision-making.
Strategic Education Partnership Board (SEPB)	The SEPB brings together education leaders across Buckinghamshire to strengthen collaboration and provide joined-up strategic leadership. It oversees key priorities and system-wide change, is accountable for our Education Strategy, acting as a central forum for communication and partnership working across all school types.	Membership includes senior leaders from across the education sector and children's services, including local authority leadership, headteacher representatives from primary, secondary and special schools, early years, further education and independent sectors, alongside governors, diocesan representatives, and system partners such as FACT Bucks PCF. It is co-chaired by a headteacher and the LAs Education Director	Half termly	Sector improvements	Schools Forum, LA leadership teams

If you have a diagram to show the relationship between these governance mechanisms, please upload this here.

Please see Appendix 5

Section 5 – Central Government Support

15. **How can we help you?**

Please outline any practical support you need from central government to implement your plan effectively.

This may include:

- Access to specialist expertise or advisory support
- Help with workforce development or recruitment challenges
- Tools or templates to support data collection, reporting, or evaluation
- Facilitation of peer learning or regional collaboration
- Support with system-level coordination across education, health, and care
- Guidance on navigating regulatory or policy barriers

Targeted support to address recruitment and retention challenges, particularly in specialist SEND roles across education, health, and care. This could include national workforce initiatives, flexible funding models to support recruitment, and access to shared or regional workforce solutions to address shortages in key professional groups.

Training workforce and pipeline

Support from DFE for teacher training programmes as well as support for initial qualification, return to teaching and national programmes for aspirant heads. This would support building appropriate skillset to implement reforms. We will replicate our approach to training and developing an academy model much like our ASYE Social Work Model ensuring sufficiency of resources with EAH by working with FE and HE providers. If the government can support this by making it eligible for apprenticeships funding etc then this would support.

Provision of standardised tools, templates, and guidance to support consistent data collection, performance reporting, and impact evaluation across local areas. This would enable more effective benchmarking, reduce duplication of effort, and strengthen the ability of partnerships to demonstrate progress against outcomes.

Support to develop integrated data systems and dashboards, enabling timely sharing of information across education, health, and care, and supporting more robust, outcome-focused decision making at both operational and strategic levels.

Approval timelines

Work with DfE to see if statutory proposals seeking inclusion of SEND provision at LA maintained schools can be streamlined as it has been for new nursery provision.

Annex B - Supporting Documents

Document	Link
The Schools White Paper	Every Child Achieving and Thriving
SEND Consultation Document	SEND reform: putting children and young people first.
LA and Schools Budget 2026-27	Schools Operational Guide 2026-27
Local Partnership Maturity Assessment Guidance and Tool	Included in commission pack
Local SEND Reform Plan – Data template	Included in commission pack
Local SEND Reform Plan Quality Assessment Framework	Included in commission pack
Local Inclusion Partnership Grant 2026-27	To be published Spring 2026
Experts at Hand Guidance	To be published Spring 2026
High Needs Capital Allocations 2026-27	To be published Spring 2026
Guidance on Inclusion bases	To be published Spring 2026

Annex C – Risk Matrix

IMPACT DESCRIPTION	IMPACT LEVEL	PROBABILITY/LIKELIHOOD				
		< 10%	>10% - <30%	>30% - <60%	>60% - <90%	>90%
		Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Very Likely
Cannot deliver Reform Plan; Failure of mission critical activity.	**Crisis**					
Significant impact to objectives; Significant and sustained disruption to activity.	**Critical**					
Delivery targets are compromised; Project delay / budget overrun.	**Moderate**					
Limited impact on delivery targets; Deviations from project resource, timescale or targets.	**Marginal**					
Minimal impact on delivery targets; Minimal impacts to project / programme efficiency.	**Negligible**					

Appendices

Reference	Document	Page Number Referenced
2.	The Local SEND Reform Plan Data Template	
3.	The Local Partnership Maturity Assessment Tool	
A1	Experts at Hand Costing Model Draft	
A2	Maturity Assessment Evidence	
A3	Draft Education Places Sufficiency Strategy 2027-2031	13, 25, 34, 45
A4	Draft Strengthening Co-production Plan	16, 27, 34, 35, 44
A5	SEND Governance	15, 27
A6	Experts at Hand Draft Model	9, 10, 12,16, 21, 29, 31,36, 38