



Summer term 2021



## Buckinghamshire's SEND Improvement newsletter

Jointly written by  
**Buckinghamshire Local area**

In Buckinghamshire we are ambitious to continuously improve the support we provide to children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their families.

We recognise we are on an improvement journey, with a clear vision for the future, which is why we felt it was important to share our progress along the way.

We will be publishing our Buckinghamshire's SEND improvement newsletter on a termly basis, which will give an opportunity for us to update key improvement activity.

Yours sincerely,

**Buckinghamshire Local Area**

## **Our SEND and Inclusion Strategy & Improvement Plan**

On 22nd April, the Buckinghamshire SEND and Inclusion Strategy to December 2023 was adopted by the Integrated Services Board for SEND completing its approval process within the local area. This strategy, has been co-produced from its initial concept to its final form. It is based upon the 4 outcomes of Preparing for Adulthood – Health; Employment; Independent Living; and Community Inclusion – and seeks to offer a vision for enhanced outcomes for children and young people with SEND. It can be read in full here:

[Local SEND Improvement | Family Information Service \(buckinghamshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/family-information-service/local-send-improvement)

Alongside it lies our Improvement Plan, which is the roadmap for the improvement of the experience of families and their children/young people in Buckinghamshire. It assigns the strategy objectives to a series of Impact Groups, whose membership underlines the co-production across the area which is essential if the strategy is to have a lasting impact. Each Group has an action plan that is kept under constant assessment and review. It can be read here:

[Local SEND Improvement | Family Information Service \(buckinghamshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/family-information-service/local-send-improvement)

## **Co-Production – making it our way of life**

We are developing a Co-production that puts the needs of the individual at the heart of all the decision-making processes and the support and services that are provided. The SEND reforms made it very clear that all those involved should be doing so in a co-produced way. It is not enough for the opinions of parents and young people to be sought and listened to, but they must be involved from the beginning and throughout. We also want to embed this culture between all professionals involved.

In Buckinghamshire we have prepared a Charter to set out clearly our expectations for co-production at all levels throughout the local area. The principles of that Charter are: everyone is welcome; treated with care and respect; opinions are not only listened to, but are equally valued and included. Everyone communicates respectfully and in a timely fashion; works together to achieve the best outcome, offering compromise where necessary, acting with trust and transparency. Co-production will be embedded within our training to ensure co-production is at the heart of everything we do.

This is not just a Charter for the Council, Clinical Commissioning Group and Parent Carer Forum, it is a blueprint for future engagement and way of working for everyone involved in SEND. The Charter will be published in the coming weeks via the Local Offer.

## How will we know if things are improving?

All this planning and effort will only be worth it if we can see clear improvements in the outcomes of children and young people and in the reflections of the parents, carers and families who support those same children and young people. An element of the Improvement Plan is the delivery of an annual survey of parents and carers of SEND children and young people by FACT Bucks (the parent carer forum) and SENDIAS. The first of these was conducted during March and received responses from over 600 families.

The report arising from the survey has now been published along with the full data report and all the comments offered by those who completed the survey. These can be accessed via the FACT Bucks website [www.factbucks.org.uk](http://www.factbucks.org.uk).

So, what happens next? Firstly, we will be running another survey in 2022 which will provide us with comparison data to track our impact. Secondly, the report is to be considered in detail both by the SEND Integrated Services Board and the SEND Improvement Group to assist in the fine tuning of our action plans. Finally, each comment is to be reviewed and a 'you said, we did' report prepared for circulation later in the year.

## Shout out for SEND reps

**Shout Out Reps** talk to their school/college friends or other young people with SEND in their community to find out about their views and experiences about services and support in Buckinghamshire.

You can work towards a recognised accreditation, and on completion receive a 'Love to Shop' voucher.

To find out more contact

Emily Dover—Youth Participation Worker - SEN and Disability

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[Emily.Dover@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:Emily.Dover@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

### 'You said, we did' video:

Via our Shout Out for SEND groups, young people with SEND have been telling Buckinghamshire Council about how best to involve children and young people with SEND in co-production.

The video can be found on the Buckinghamshire Family Information Service on the following pages:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vIdlgIcMhOg>

## Planning for the education of children and young people with SEND

We want to make sure that local schools and colleges can provide suitable education for children and young people with SEND to meet the demand over the next 5 years. Families tell us they prefer their children to attend local schools and colleges so that they are close to their home and communities and do not have to travel long distances. To achieve this we need to reconfigure or expand some of our schools and colleges so that there are enough places that can meet every child's needs.

We have been working on a draft SEND Education Sufficiency Strategy. This is the document that sets out the proposed plan for making sure there are suitable school and college places for children and young people with SEND.

We would like to hear your views on our plans for providing suitable education for children and young people with SEND. We are holding a public consultation in June that will run for 6 weeks. You can take part by completing the online feedback form, the closing date for you to submit your feedback is **18th July 2021**. You may also be interested in attending one of our virtual discussion groups, to find out more information and share your views. Full details of these can be found here: <https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/b7ef9087>

## When the Inspector comes...

The pandemic put on hold the inspection of every local area's implementation of the SEND reforms but they restart in June and Buckinghamshire is one of the 50 local areas which have yet to be inspected.

In light of the pandemic, there has been an additional focus within the framework which will cover:

- Understanding the experience and needs of children and young people with SEND, and their families, during the pandemic
- Involving children and young people with SEND and their families in co-producing decisions about how best to support them
- Working collaboratively to prioritise, adapt and provide the services and support that children and young people with SEND and their families need.

We have produced a self-evaluation framework to reflect our assessment of current performance and the areas where work is still needed. This will be available by the end of the summer term and published on the Local Offer. There will be opportunities for parents and young people to share their views. There will also be direct visits with schools and settings.