

Nottingham City Council SEND Sufficiency Strategy 2023 - 2025

1. INTRODUCTION

The Council as an education authority has a duty to promote high standards of education and fair access to education. It also has a general duty to secure sufficient schools in their area, and to consider the need to secure provision for children with Special Educational Needs (SEND). These are referred to as the school place planning duties.

The Department for Education (DfE) has announced local authority capital funding to support the provision of new places for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those requiring alternative provision (AP). This is collectively referred to as high needs provision.

Nottingham City Council's allocation of this funding for the financial years 2021-24 is just under £18m. Funding allocation beyond this date is unknown.

The capital funding is intended to create new places and improve existing provision for children and young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities or requiring alternative provision.

The SEND Sufficiency Strategy aligns to the principles of the Nottingham City SEND Strategy. It will also be updated once the Government has published the outcomes of the green paper consultation on the future of the SEND and alternative provision system.

1.1. Purpose of this document

- To outline the Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) context in Nottingham City, to provide a greater understanding of need;
- To set out the City's existing SEND provision and capacity;
- To provide data and evidence to inform the strategy and support the Council's decision making as it seeks to fulfil its sufficiency duty and deliver high quality inclusive provision;
- To develop a SEND Sufficiency Plan to support the SEND Strategy and priorities, by increasing high quality inclusive provision, improving existing provision and supporting all schools and settings to be inclusive.
- To set out the guiding principles for implementing the SEND Sufficiency Plan.

2. Context

- 2.1 In Nottingham, children with additional needs benefit from good and outstanding mainstream and special school provision. However, as is the case nationally, we are experiencing considerable growth in the numbers of young people identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities and there is insufficient capacity

to meet this growing need in primary and secondary settings in the coming years. At the current time, virtually all places in special schools and Specialist Resourced Provisions within mainstream school (SRPs) are currently full. We are committed to supporting our schools and settings within the city as we believe that local provision offers the best outcomes for our children and young people.

- 2.2 The growing SEND cohort also brings financial pressure to the Council's revenue budget. However, with adequate long-term evidence-based planning, the Council can mitigate the impact on its revenue budget through invest to save capital investments that develop the SEND estate and create the capacity within our education system to continue to meet children and young people's needs effectively and as locally as possible.
- 2.3 The LA is forward planning for the High Needs revenue implications associated with the HN capital plans outlined in this strategy. This involves budgeting for the High Needs place and top-up funding associated with the creation of additional specialist high needs places. Other than one Primary Specialist Resourced Provision already approved, it is anticipated that the very earliest any new provision could be agreed, built and ready to open is September 2024. Places in the new provision would be phased in, taking in an extra year group cohort each academic year until full. Over the last 5 years, High Needs revenue funding has been increased at unprecedented levels, but from 2024/25 onwards HN funding increases are expected to be much lower. The LA is therefore earmarking £2.5m from the 2023/24 HN funding allocation for short-term purposes only, in order for this to be available to use to fund the additional high needs places as they come on stream.
- 2.4 The sufficiency strategy will build on the special school expansions and additional Specialist Resourced Provisions (SRPs) within mainstream school, which have already been delivered or are underway. Further increases in both special school provision and SRPs are required to meet growing demand, increase local provision and choice and to maintain the limited number of out-of-city placements commissioned.
- 2.5 It is important that there is a strategic approach to developing proposals to ensure there is appropriate provision across all age groups and needs. The aim is to ensure a continuum of good/outstanding provision for children and young people with SEND, that offers choice and progression and to reflect changing demand. The proposals in the capital plan will be reviewed further in the context of data and affordability.
- 2.6 This strategy is an evolving document and will be reviewed annually or sooner, dependant on the outcomes of the High Needs green paper consultation, to ensure it reflects the changing context and demands. The Council will continue to work with schools, partners, families, children and young people and other stakeholders to deliver high quality inclusive provision, to ensure individual needs are being met and to ensure the best possible experience and outcomes for all children and young people.

3. Guiding Principles

To realise the vision, the implementation of the SEND Sufficiency Strategy will be guided by the following principles:

- Aim to enable children and young people to access high quality education in their local area, close to their home and community, whilst providing best value for any investment.
- Work in partnership and consult with education providers in the development of the Capital Plan.
- Ensure that the voices of parents/carers and young people's voice are central to the SEND provision proposals.
- Use all available data effectively to identify the need to inform the Sufficiency Plan.
- Target increased provision in key areas where pressures exist.
- Work closely with providers to ensure that the significant majority of children and young people can have their needs met in their local inclusive mainstream school. For children with the most complex needs the LA aims to develop a range of specialist resourced provisions in mainstream schools and additional special school capacity within its local area.
- Ensure that the findings of the SEND Local Area Inspection and the recommendations from the Government's SEND Review Green Paper consultation, are an integral element of the Sufficiency Plan and that progress towards implementation is monitored over time.
- Alongside the Sufficiency Strategy, develop a "local inclusion plan", clearly communicating to providers and parents/carers about the provision that is available in the local area, including units within mainstream, specialist and AP.

4. NOTTINGHAM CITY HIGH NEEDS COHORT

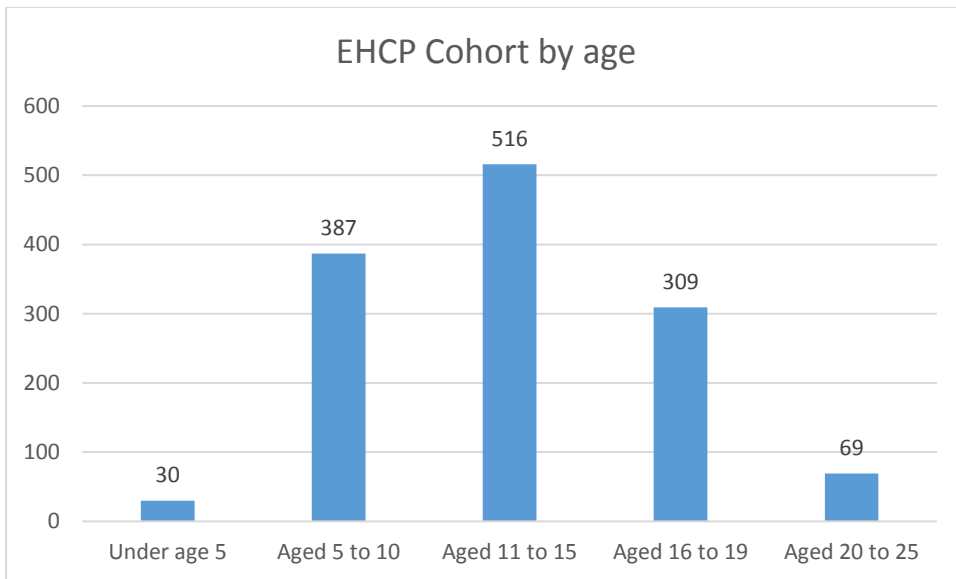
4.1 SEND Support and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

The strategy aims to meet the needs of young people both at SEND Support and with an Education, Health and Care plan, but the cohort data is set out separately below.

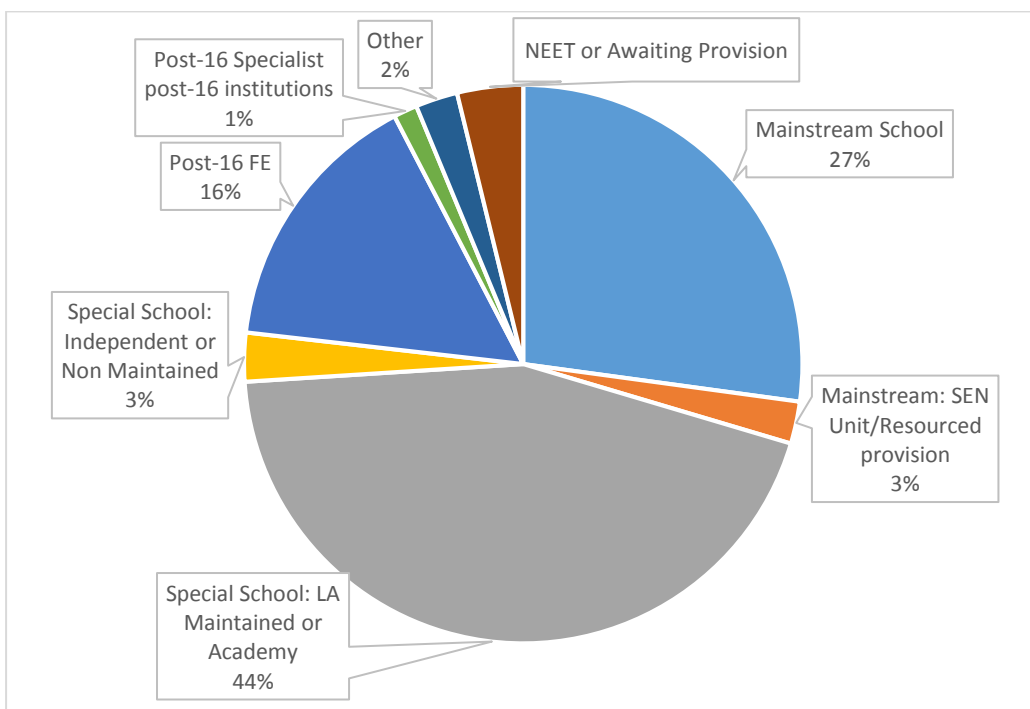
4.2 Current SEND EHCP Cohort

As at January 2022, there were 1311 children and young people for whom Nottingham City maintains an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The graph shows the age breakdown of the EHCP cohort:



The chart below shows a breakdown of the type of establishment named on the current EHC Plans as at January 2022:



Where the Council is unable to meet needs within state school provision, children and young people may be placed in Independent Specialist Placements (ISPs) and Independent or Non-Maintained Special Schools (INMSS). These are typically highly expensive placements. As at January 2022, there were only 37 children placed in INMSS and 18 young people in Specialist Post-16 institutions. Benchmarking data for 2019/20 shows that Nottingham City spent £13 per head of 2-18 population on top-up funding for INMSS compared to a national average of £91.

4.3 High Needs pupils without EHCP

In Nottingham City, pupils do not require an EHC plan in order to receive high needs top-up funding. The high needs pupil cohort in Nottingham City is therefore wider than just the EHCP cohort. As at January 2022, there were 709 pupils at SEN support flagged on the school census as receiving high needs top-up funding.

4.4 School census high needs top-up pupils

It is useful to review the trends of high needs top-up pupils from school census data. This captures those high needs pupils attending mainstream and special schools and academies in the City.

Primary Need	Year						5 Yr Inc/(Dec)	
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022		
ASD	317	336	412	492	570	642	325	103%
HI	27	25	39	41	32	37	10	37%
MLD	65	80	70	78	88	142	77	118%
MSI	3	1	5	2	2	1	-2	-67%
NSA		1	1	1	3	4	4	
OTH	38	19	21	22	21	33	-5	-13%
PD	50	45	55	66	62	73	23	46%
PMLD	51	55	61	70	68	72	21	41%
SEMH	262	219	224	226	255	247	-15	-6%
SLCN	70	68	105	123	139	172	102	146%
SLD	158	158	126	116	114	134	-24	-15%
SPLD	18	21	48	50	57	51	33	183%
VI	15	10	12	18	16	15	0	0%
Grand Total	1074	1038	1179	1305	1427	1623	549	

As can be seen in **Table 1**, the most prevalent primary need is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Numbers of Autism top-up pupils have doubled since 2017, and this increase accounts for nearly 60% of the overall growth in top-up pupils over the 5-year period. The second highest increase, accounting for a further 19% of the growth, relates to pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN).

Table 2 above shows the age profile of high needs children:

TABLE 2: High Needs Top-up Pupils by Year Group

Primary Need	Year Group																	Total
	N1	N2	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
ASD		20	47	60	70	63	50	49	42	42	48	42	49	31	16	8	5	642
HI			3	2	2	4	4	7	2	1	3		5	1	1	1	1	37
MLD		3	8	15	13	10	12	15	13	13	13	5	10	11			1	142
MSI						1												1
NSA		1		1			1	1										4
OTH		3	3	2	3	6	3	4		2	3	1	2		1			33
PD	1	4	8	7	9	6	4	3	7	2	5	5	5	7				73
PMLD		1	10	4	12	6	5	4	5	2	3	4	1	7	4	3	1	72
SEMH		2	3	4	18	17	19	27	33	22	35	21	27	18		1		247
SLCN		13	23	22	26	15	11	11	11	11	5	9	6	4		4	1	172
SLD			4	4	4	7	10	4	18	11	9	6	11	14	14	11	7	134
SPLD				3	5	4	4	3	3	9		4	7	5	2	2		51
VI				2	2	1		2	2	1	1	1				2	1	15
Total	1	47	109	126	164	140	123	130	136	116	125	98	123	98	38	32	17	1623

Children with high needs are being identified earlier and in greater numbers. As can be seen in **Table 2**, most cohorts in the primary phase are currently exceeding the cohort average of 125 demonstrating that overall numbers will continue to rise and additional secondary high needs places will be required as these children move through their education. Having sufficient local places for the growing number of high needs pupils with autism is a key strategic priority for the high needs capital strategy. **Table 2** suggests that based on the differential between the current primary and secondary cohort sizes that an extra 20+ high needs places per year group for young people with autism will be required in the secondary phase over the coming years.

Table 3 shows the breakdown of ASD pupils by type of provision and phase in 2022 in comparison to 2017.

TABLE 3: Comparison of ASD Top Up Pupils by Phase and Setting Type over Time							
Setting Type	Phase	2017	% of total	2022	% of total	Change	% Change
Mainstream	Primary	122	38%	310	48%	188	154%
	Secondary	32	10%	83	13%	51	159%
	Total	154	49%	393	61%	239	155%
Special	Primary	77	24%	91	14%	14	18%
	Secondary	78	25%	156	24%	78	100%
	Total	155	49%	247	38%	92	59%
Pupil Referral Unit	Primary	2	1%	0	0%	-2	-100%
	Secondary	6	2%	2	0%	-4	-67%
	Total	8	3%	2	0%	-6	-75%
	TOTAL	317	100%	642	100%	325	103%
Mainstream as % of total numbers in phase	Primary	61%		77%			
	Secondary	28%		34%			
	Total	49%		61%			

Table 3 demonstrates that in the primary phase, the majority of high needs pupils with autism are accessing mainstream provision, whilst in the secondary phase the majority attend Special Schools. An extra 92 Special School places have been allocated to pupils with autism as their primary need over the 5 year comparison period, which were mostly (78) taken by secondary aged pupils.

Table 4 below shows the current profile of pupils on roll at City Special Schools.

TABLE 4: Special School Pupils on Roll by Primary Need (Jan 22)							
Primary Need	Special School						% of places
	Nethergate	Woodlands	Rosehill	Westbury	Oak Field	Grand Total	
ASD	92	37	113	3	2	247	40%
HI	3					3	0%
MLD	3	15		1		19	3%
OTH	1	2		1		4	1%
PD	5	1		1		7	1%
PMLD	2	3			53	58	9%
SEMH	7	14		83		104	17%
SLCN	15	5		3		23	4%
SLD	5	4			110	119	19%
SPLD	23	3		2		28	5%
VI	2					2	0%
Grand Total	158	84	113	94	165	614	100%

In the light of the increased numbers of pupils with autism requiring Special School places as identified in **Table 3**, 40% of all Special School places are now taken by pupils with this primary need. A new 40 place autism unit has been built at Nethergate Special Academy. As at January 2022, 5 of the 6 new 8-place classes had been phased in. Oak Field and Woodlands Special Schools have also both opened new autism classes and additional places have been commissioned at Rosehill School.

Table 5 shows the current age profile of pupils in Nottingham City special schools:

TABLE 5: Special School Pupils on Roll by Year Group (Jan 22)																
Special School	Year Group															Total
	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Nethergate	1	2	3	6	10	13	12	24	13	16	16	16	6	13	7	158
Woodlands			3	5	1	5	3	16	18	8	8	17				84
Rosehill		2	4	7	7	10	10	11	15	8	11	11	11	4	2	113
Westbury					3	5	6	9	20	18	19	14				94
Oak Field	8	5	12	9	12	7	20	11	12	8	8	14	17	14	8	165
Grand Total	9	9	22	27	33	40	51	71	78	58	62	72	34	31	17	614
NOR by Key Stage	EY	KS1	KS2				KS3			KS4	Post-16			Total		
	9	31	151				207			134	82			614		
NOR by Phase	Primary						Secondary					Post-16		Total		
	191						341					82		614		
	31%						56%					13%		100%		

As can be seen in **Table 5**, a large majority of special school pupils are secondary aged/post-16 and there has been an increasing shift towards secondary aged pupils.

Given the increase in numbers of young people with autism, development of an additional autism provision is a high priority within the capital strategy.

In addition to this, there will be a significant number of young people with autism whose needs can be met in mainstream schools with the appropriate support and training and an appropriate physical environment. The development of Special Resourced Provisions catering for 8 places per year group could help support the increasing numbers of Autism, SLCN and MLD pupils, providing local enhanced mainstream provision in the pupils' own communities.

In order to identify which areas of the City will have greatest demand for such places, numbers of pupils in the primary phase currently attending mainstream schools receiving high level needs (HLN) top-up funding in the range of B1-C1 for primary needs of autism/SLCN or MLD have been analysed. Pupil numbers are shown by year group and primary planning area in **Table 6** below:

TABLE 6: HLN Pupils B1-C1 (ASD/SLCN/MLD) by Primary Planning Area (B1 – C1 allocations are high level funding allocations reflecting the complexity of young people’s SEND)									
Primary Planning Area	Year Group								
	N2	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Bestwood / Top Valley	8	3	2	9	3	2	1	5	33
Bilborough / Broxtowe	6	10	15	22	9	6	3	5	76
Bulwell	6	10	6	5	7	2	1	4	41
Clifton	3	7	10	6	4	2	1	3	36
County	1	1	2	3	1				8
Forest Fields	11	12	14	12	3	1		3	56
Lenton	1	2	3		1	2	1		10
Meadows	2	1				1			4
Sneinton	7	3	1	3	4	1	2	2	23
St Anns	6	8	8	3	7	2	2	1	37
Wollaton	1	4	1	3	1		1		11
Total	52	61	62	66	40	19	12	23	335

The above shows that the priority areas of the City for Specialist Resourced Provisions should be:

1. Bilborough/Broxtowe
2. Forest Fields
3. Bulwell5
4. St Anns

‘Specialist Resourced Provisions’ (SRP) within mainstream schools

In Nottingham City, we have invested in a number of SRPs within mainstream schools, enabling a greater proportion of children and young people with complex needs to access their community schools.

The table below shows the current numbers of high needs places in SRPs attached to mainstream schools:

Specialist Resourced Units	High Needs Places AY22-23				
	Pre-16	Post-16	School	LA commissioned	Total
Bluecoat Primary Academy - Autism	5			5	5
Bluecoat Aspley Academy - Autism	6	10		16	16
The Bulwell Academy - Autism	6			6	6
Mellers Primary School - Deaf	13			13	13
Nottingham University Samworth Academy - Deaf	12			12	12
Fernwood Primary – Autism/learning	2		8	2	10

Key strategic SEND capital priorities

To increase capacity we have outlined out strategic priorities to meet the increasing need for places:

Priority 1

Creating additional specialist capacity in the mainstream primary phase, to meet the needs of primary aged pupils with Autism and learning difficulties in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Priority 2

Creating additional specialist capacity in the mainstream secondary phase, to meet the needs of secondary aged pupils with Autism and moderate learning difficulties in Key Stages 3 and 4.

Priority 3

Creating additional special school capacity to meet the needs of pupils with complex needs, primarily Autism Spectrum Disorder.

5. SEND capital prospective schemes for consultation

- 5.1 In line with these priorities and requirements evidenced by the data, we have identified a number of possible schemes for how we may invest the funding, which will create a combination of additional special school provision and Specialist Resourced Units within mainstream schools. Where specific settings and sites are not yet determined, proposals may invite expressions of interest from Nottingham City schools.
- 5.2 A full commissioning review of alternative provision is undertaken to inform sufficiency requirements for young people excluded from school or who require additional and different support from that available in mainstream school. This strategy will be updated to reflect any prospective schemes that are identified through the commissioning review.

6. Capital investment

- 6.1 LAs are expected to make use of the High Needs capital investment to improve the suitability and sufficiency of high needs provision in their areas over the next three years. In Nottingham City we aim to enable all children and young people to access high quality education in their local area, close to their home and community, whilst providing best value for any investment.
- 6.2 In addition to our High Needs capital allocation, we will take a strategic approach to allocating funding and maximising best value for any investment. This will incorporate the use of S106 funding linked to housing developments where it can be aligned to specific proposals. Disability Access Grant from 2023/24 may also be invested to support proposals.

- 6.3 No final decisions have yet been made regarding funding for 2024-25, although it is expected that there will be a continued approach of a mix of LA capital allocations, targeted capital support and free school delivery. It is currently unknown as to whether there will be any additional capital funding allocations to support the AP system and the aims of the SEND Green Paper to make AP an integral part of local SEND system and deliver an improved service focused on early intervention.
- 6.4 Funding beyond 2025 is contingent on the outcomes of future Spending Reviews and additional capital funding beyond this period cannot be guaranteed; it is therefore critical that prudent decisions are taken now to ensure the sustainability of the system for the longer term.

This strategy has been subject to a comprehensive consultation undertaken in January and February 2023. Feedback on proposals was received from parents, carers and young people as well as schools and settings. The feedback gathered has been used to shape the priorities for capital development in the Phase 1 programme plan.