



Welcome to our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Strategy

2025-2028



Foreword

We are immensely proud to jointly present Lancashire's SEND Partnership Strategy that sets out our ambitions for the next three years, alongside our partners across the county.

Following the joint Ofsted and CQC inspection of our SEND services, this strategy outlines our renewed commitment to overcoming our challenges and thinking differently about how we can ensure that Lancashire becomes a place where our children and young people thrive.

Working closely with colleagues across the Partnership, which includes Lancashire County Council, the Integrated Care Board, Parent Carer Forum, POWAR and our health and education settings we have focused

in on five key priorities to deliver the improvements needed within the timescales set out.

We are clear: this is about real change, rebuilding trust, raising expectations, and delivering results. We will be honest about progress, transparent about challenges, and steadfast in our focus on delivering high quality services and improved outcomes.

We have already started to make improvements to our processes and approach to how we work and we are investing in our dedicated staff to ensure that they have the tools, resources, and resilience to meet the challenges we face and deliver effective and people-focussed services.



We are realistic that big change like this will take time, but we are determined to get there, with our teams across the partnership working relentlessly to make this happen. We want children, and families to know that collectively we are listening, we are embedding co-production into how we improve and develop our services, and we are evaluating how we are doing at every stage of the journey that children and families are on.

Importantly, all of this will ensure that our children and young people, their parents and carers are at the heart of every decision we make.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed their insights and expertise to this process. Your input has been invaluable.

To every parent, carer, and young person affected—we will be relentless in providing the best services possible, and through delivering this strategy, we believe we will.

Jacqui Old

Executive Director of Education and Children's Services, Lancashire County Council

Kathryn Lord

Interim Chief Nurse, Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board

Michelle Pye and Miranda Hyman,

Co-Chairs, Lancashire Parent Carer Forum



Introduction

As Lancashire's SEND Partnership, we work closely to bring together all the services a child or young person with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their family may need.

The local area partnership is made up of:

- Lancashire County Council,
- Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board,
- Health providers,
- Education providers,
- Lancashire Parent Carer Forum and
- POWAR (SEND Forum for children and young people).

We aim to ensure those using our services have the support they need to achieve the best possible outcomes, both in education and their personal lives.

This means that local support for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their families uses the lived experiences of children, young people, and families to continually improve.

We recognise the importance of the voice of children, young people, and their families in having their say about decisions relating to them. This is why we regularly engage with people to ensure their views shape and improve our offer in Lancashire.

Everything we do is based on our core values, these have been co-produced with parents, carers, children, young people, and professionals. We acknowledge that although there are many examples of good practice, there is still work to be done.





Children and young people have contributed to this strategy in various ways, including through the sharing of their designs, showing what being included feels to them.



Lancashire SEND in context

Lancashire currently has

13,402

children and young people
with an Education, Health
and Care Plan (EHCP).

*June 2025



24,473
(13.2%)

children and young people
have SEN support.



20%

have social, emotional and mental health needs.

64888

of children and young people with an EHCP attend mainstream school.



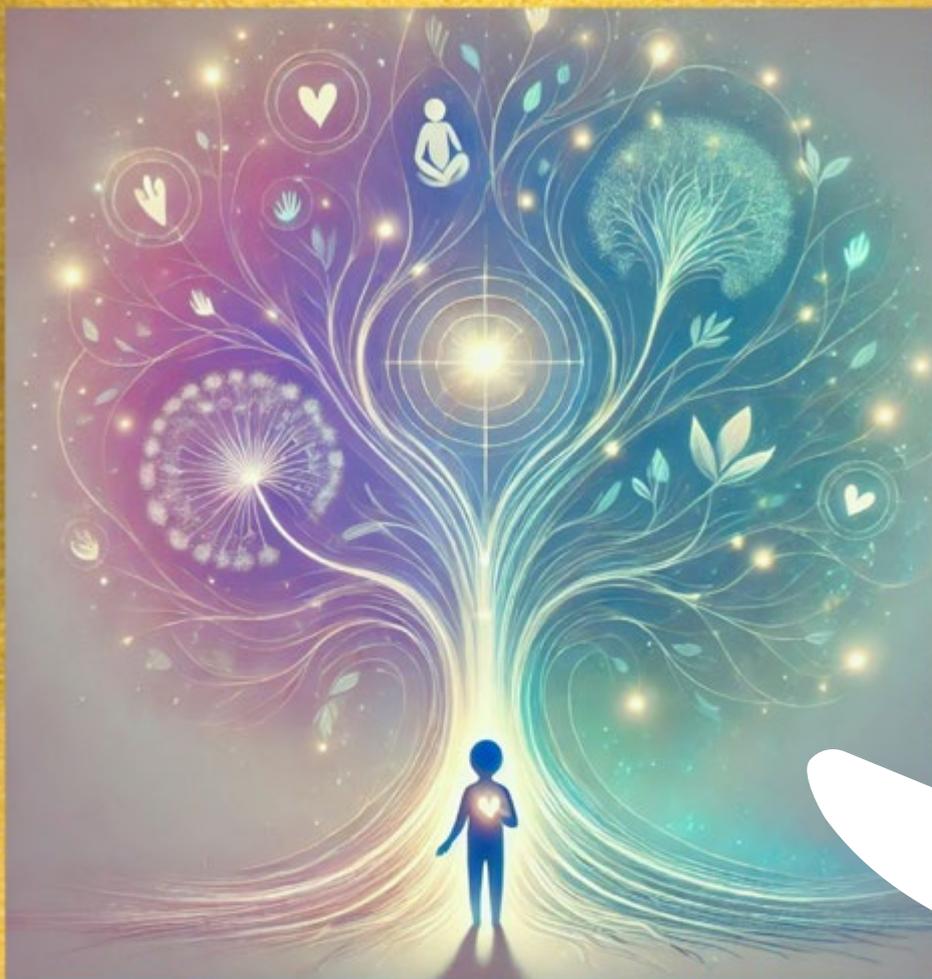
56%

of children and young people with an EHCP have communication and interaction needs, including Autism.



Our vision

Our vision is that all children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities thrive in a nurturing inclusive environment, from birth into adulthood, where they will be safe, happy and healthy, achieving their potential, with the support they need, when they need it.



"Inclusion is not about words: it's about being felt, seen, and embraced in the unspoken language of the heart. When you meet me with kindness, patience and love, you enter my world- where connection flows beyond speech, and every moment shines with understanding"
Veer Age 7



Our Ambitions for children and young people with SEND

- Be Safe, Happy, Healthy, and Achieve their full potential.
- Have their needs identified early, so that they receive the right support, at the time they need it.
- Have their needs met in a mainstream school close to home, so that they can make friends and engage in their local community.
- Experience good physical, social, emotional and mental health so that they are prepared for a fulfilling adult life.
- Achieve educational ambitions so that they can develop independence and fulfil their aspirations.
- Have access to opportunities so that they can achieve the best experiences and outcomes.



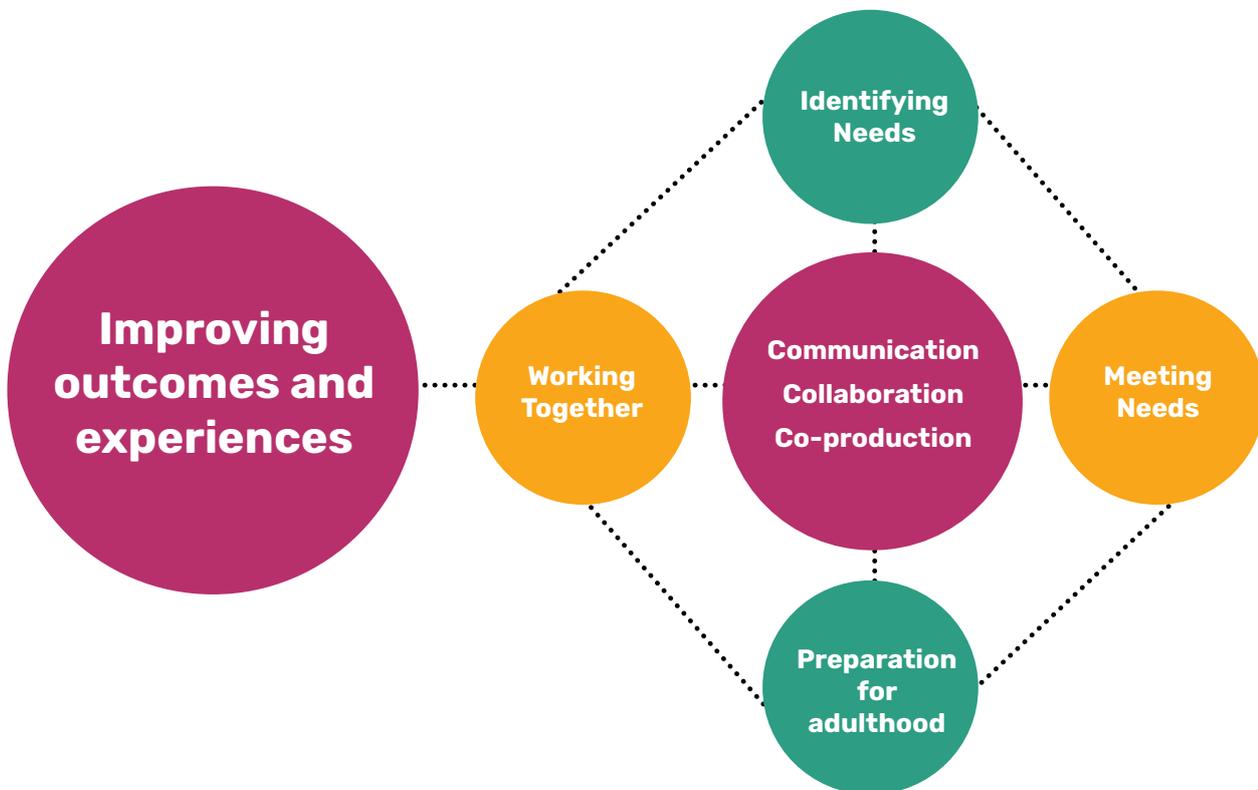
Working Together

We will:

- Value relationships and working in partnership to ensure support is coordinated and of high quality.
- Make sure lived experiences help us to shape services and are making a positive difference.
- Ensure children and young people and their parents/carers are fully involved in decision making at an individual and strategic level.
- Encourage innovation and digital enhancements.
- Communicate well with our families, communities and partners.
- Have clear monitoring and accountability processes to ensure we review whether we are making a difference.

Our Partnership Priorities

Throughout the engagement events with our stakeholders, the following priorities have been identified to help improve outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND, and their families.



Priority 1:

Children and young people will have their needs identified as early as possible

Our Ambition: Identifying needs early and implementing the right support at the right time.

What we will do:

- Support partners, across education, health and care to confidently implement ordinarily available provision, reasonable adjustments, and the graduated approach.
- Strengthen SEND Service training through the SEND Academy.
- Explore and assess innovative approaches to ensure resources are targeted at supporting needs sooner.
- Provide a wide range of practical early help and support for children and their families through the family hubs.

How we will know we are making a difference:

- Feedback from training demonstrates increased confidence and understanding across health and social care partners.
- Schools and settings report increased confidence in the identification of children and young people with SEND.
- Increased number of children at SEN Support having their needs met without a requirement for an EHCP.
- Families report they feel supported at early help, by schools, settings and family hubs.



Priority 2:

Children and young people will have their needs met as close to home as possible

Our Ambition: Children and young people with SEND have the best opportunity to thrive in Lancashire.

What we will do:

- Improve our joint commissioning arrangements and review the SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) to ensure that we better meet the specific needs of our children and young people with SEND.
- Implement the recommendations in the Joint Commissioning Strategy and Plan.
- Build capacity in the SEND and Educational Psychology service to improve timeliness of ECHPs and Annual Reviews.
- Implement multi-agency audit utilising Invision 360 software tool to improve quality of plans.
- Develop and publish a Capital plan to ensure sufficiency of SEND Units and Special School Provision, together with supporting environmental adaptations in mainstream schools.
- Strengthen support for, and quality assurance of commissioned SEND Units to ensure a consistent offer across the county.
- Improve pre and post diagnostic support for children and young people with neurodivergence and their families across education, care, health and the voluntary sector.
- Review and strengthen decision making for children and young people unable to attend school for health reasons

How we will know we are making a difference:

- More parent carers report that their child or young person gets the right help and support at the right time in the SEND Survey.
- There is sufficient workforce capacity to meet the needs of children, young people and families and ensure statutory compliance.
- Improved timeliness of education, health, and care plans (EHCP) finalised by 20 weeks.
- Improved timeliness of Annual Reviews finalised in 12 weeks.
- Improved quality of good / outstanding education, health and care plans when audited.



- More children educated close to where they live.
- Increased number of special school places and SEND unit places and reduction in reliance on independent sector.
- Less children and young people waiting longer than 18 weeks for an

assessment for the health services they need.

- More children and young people are receiving suitable education and reintegrated into an appropriate school or setting.



Priority 3:

Children and young people are prepared for adult life from the earliest years

Our Ambition: Children and young people are supported to develop life skills, achieve their aspirations and make a valuable contribution in their communities.

What we will do:

- Develop a range of education pathways for children and young people Post 16 and Post 19.
- Further develop partnerships with employers to ensure skills and talents of young people with SEND are promoted and Supported Internships, Supported Employment and Apprenticeships are increased.
- Ensure the Local offer includes information on preparation for adulthood.
- Co-produce transition/preparation for adulthood guidance for children, young people and their families, schools and settings that informs good practice.
- Produce a directory/videos of opportunities for internships, apprenticeships, volunteering, and job opportunities.
- Ensure Preparation for Adulthood outcomes are routinely captured within EHCP plans from early years.
- Improve transition between children's and adult's health and social care services.

How we will know we are making a difference:

- More young people in education, employment or training (EET).
- More young people with SEND successfully completing Supported Internships, Apprenticeships and/or Level 2 qualifications.
- More parent carers report they can access clear information and advice on the Local Offer to help them to support their children and young people to make decisions about their future.
- Increased number of EHCPs, which have captured the voice of children and young people including their aspirations and independence focussed outcomes.
- More young people feel well supported for their transition into adulthood as captured in the SEND survey.
- Families report improved experience of transition from children to adult social care and health providers as reported through the SEND survey.



WHAT MAKES ME FEEL INCLUDED

Inclusion is much more than a simple word,
It's a powerful message that shows people care,
In the darkest of days please don't close the
door on me,
you could be the light that helps me see,
we are all human and our feelings are the same.
If you include me I'm sure too you will feel
some gain,
It's not just me who likes to feel included it
gives you a new purpose when you include
children like us too,
I can hear you asking what can you do?
It's very simple and can be anything from
letting me join in a game, to talking to me
like my opinion matters,
If you see someone different please sit down
and have a natter,
we don't want much just some acceptance
and to know we are not alone,
It's on the hardest days when the sun has not
shown,
we need to feel included by most of society,
I know not everyone can see past the variety,
but next time you see someone who appears
a little different,
show them you care your inclusion may just
be significant,
one simple smile can change someone's day,
you may be the reason someone chooses
to stay.

Priority 4:

Working Together - Children, young people and their families will feel valued and heard through communication, collaboration and co-production

Our Ambition: Good communication is important so that children, young people and parent carers feel listened to, their views inform decisions, and transparency develops trust across all partners.

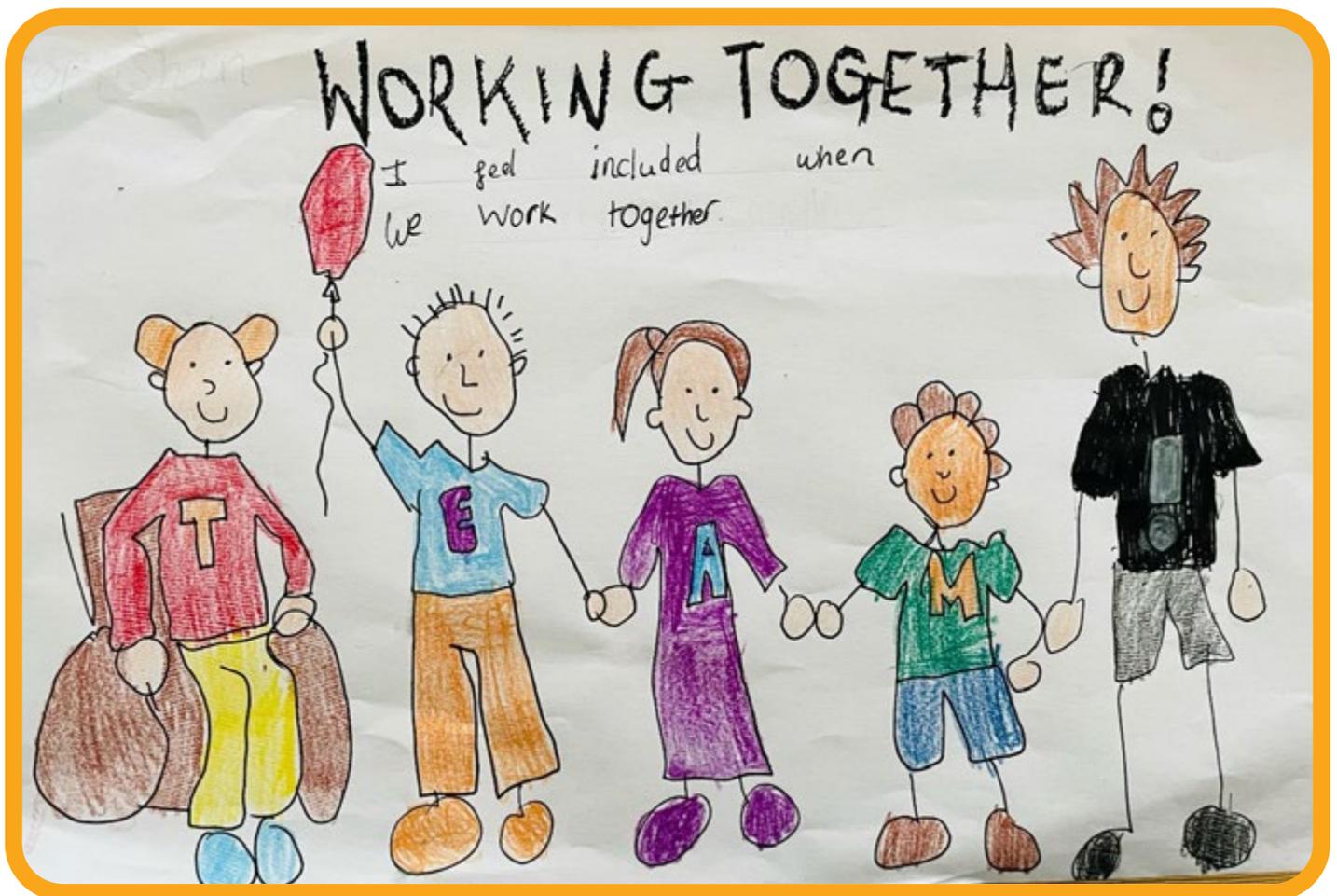
What we will do:

- Co-produce and publish an engagement strategy with clear and transparent mechanisms in place for communication.
- Launch the Four Cornerstones model of co-production across Lancashire.
- Ensure the Local Offer is subject to continuous review to ensure it is meeting the need of parents, children and young people, and the wider SEND community.
- Ensure children and young people (CYP) have a clear, active role in influencing service delivery utilising the Participation Strategy.
- Support the growth of POWAR SEND Youth Forum in its reach and influence, enabling all children and young people to contribute and have their voice heard individually and collectively in each district.
- Co-produce the SEND survey for children and young people, regularly reviewing and analysing feedback to shape service development.
- Take steps to ensure that voices of those seldom heard are actively included.
- Deliver a series of SEND Roadshows in partnership with family hubs.
- Develop a termly programme of 'Let's talk' sessions in conjunction with Lancashire Parent Carer Forum (LPCF), that aligns with parents' requirements across the partnership
- Increase the capacity and impact of Parent Carer Forum.
- Review and analyse findings from the co-produced SEND Survey for parent carers to help shape service development.



How we will know we are making a difference:

- Improved consistency and transparency in how we co-produce, embedding co-production as an ongoing cyclical process.
- More parent carers and young people report they are able to contribute fully to the planning/review meeting.
- Evidence within EHCPs and SEN Support Plans of parent and child co-production (working together).
- More parent carers report they can find what they are looking for on the Local Offer.
- More CYP report they feel listened to and valued in the SEND Survey.
- Improved parental feedback, including through the SEND survey.
- Complaints analysis shows they are being addressed at an early stage and with positive results.
- Reduction in the number of cases proceeding to appeal and tribunal.



Priority 5:

Children, young people and their families will have better outcomes and experiences

Our Ambition: Children and young people with SEND will have the best opportunities to live safe, healthy and happy lives and are supported to have high aspirations and achieve their goals.

What we will do:

- Develop the range and capacity of educational provision across the county to ensure children can go to the nearest school.
- Develop a commissioning framework to deliver high quality Post 19 pathways for young people in all areas of Lancashire.
- Review the pathways of support for children and young people at risk of exclusion, ensuring they have their social, emotional, and mental health needs met.
- Embed Early Help pathways for co-ordinated support for children and young people with SEND.
- Further strengthen access to activities and leisure opportunities in the community, including Break Time and family hubs.
- Implement the Neurodivergent Pathway (ND pathway) across Lancashire.
- Improve access to support services without the need of a diagnosis and reduced waiting times for assessments.
- Embed the learning from the Partnership for inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools project.
- Increase inclusivity in schools with better training for staff to understand and meet the needs of neurodivergent children and young people.
- Enhance support for neurodivergent children and young people, reducing the risks of exploitation and serious youth violence.
- Improve public health offers through health visiting and school nursing provision.
- Co-produce an outcomes framework with children and young people with SEND and their families, which will be included in the new co-produced CYP SEND survey.

How we will know we are making a difference:

- Improved attendance for children and young people with SEND in all education settings.
- Less children and young people with SEND are suspended or permanently excluded from an education setting.
- More young people are re-integrated back into mainstream education.
- More pupils with SEN Support or EHCP at all stages achieve expected standards of attainment.
- More parent carers say their children get the right help and support at the right time from education, health and care provider services.
- More families report that their children and young people are able to access clubs, activities or make friends.
- Children and young people with SEND will achieve well at every stage of their learning and progress into adulthood prepared.
- More children and young people report that they feel safe, healthy, happy, included in their community, able to learn, make decisions and feel supported in the SEND Survey.



Making it happen

All statutory services across Education, Health and Social Care in Lancashire will work in partnership with children, young people and their families to ensure our vision, ambitions and priorities are realised. We value our relationships and work together in partnership to ensure support is coordinated and of high quality.

The SEND Strategy is the core framework guiding how we work together to deliver support to children and young people with SEND.



We Will:

- Listen and communicate effectively
- Work together co-productively as equal partners
- Value the contribution of all partners
- Invest in relationships
- Be child centred and focus on actions that will improve experiences and outcomes
- Be ambitious for all children and young people

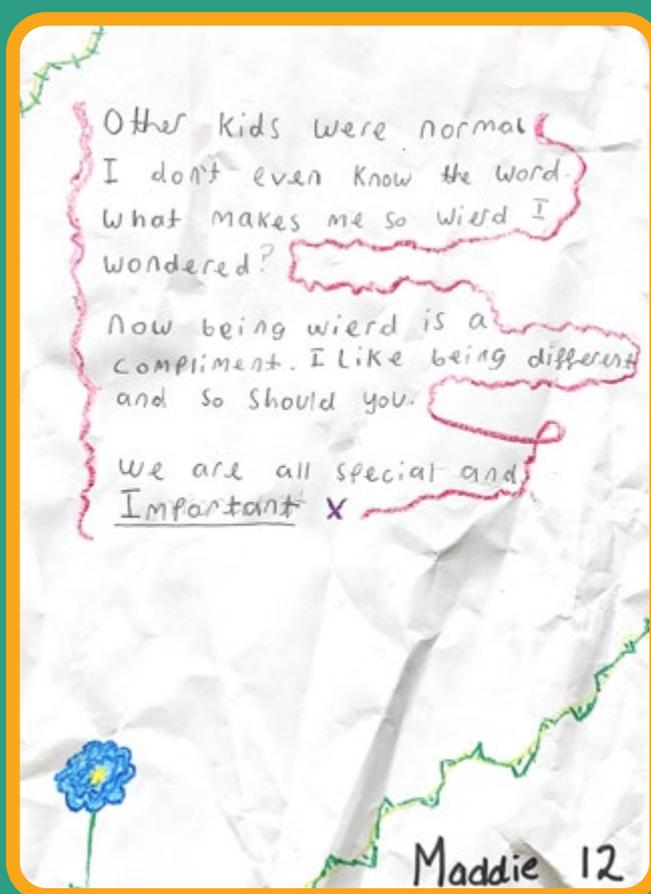
Listening to children and young people

- The Lancashire SEND Partnership engaged with 130 children and young people at the POWAR Take Over Day 2023, and POWAR consultation evening 2024.
- 253 children and young people responded to the SEND Survey 2023-4
- 18 children and young people submitted entries into our design competition 'what makes me feel included' with 7 winning prizes.

Children and young people with SEND shared that it was important for them to:

- Have good mental health and access to emotional support
- Be valued, listened to, and respected
- Have professionals recognise the need for diverse communication channels including digital and face to face
- Be supported by effective parenting
- Be supported during all transitions, particularly between primary and secondary school

- Not feel the pressure of high expectations
- Find their voice, develop independence and daily living skills
- Have accessibility to buildings and transport
- Have effective planning for key life transitions, such as moving into further education, starting employment, or gaining independence
- Have a job and career opportunities
- Have a future rooted in equality and inclusivity, being treated fairly and having equal opportunities in education, employment, and community participation



Listening to parent carers and colleagues

- The Lancashire SEND Partnership engaged with 589 parent carers and partners co-producing what needed further improvement in order to secure the best outcomes for children and young people.
- 9 Working Together Events were held in 2024/5,
- 4 SEND Partnership Development Days 2024/5
- 6 Consultation Events with health, education and social care partners.
- 4 Capital Planning Engagement Events with 578 colleagues in 2025
- 3 Capital Planning Engagement Events with parent carers in 2025
- 882 responses from parent carers to the SEND Survey 2023/4
- 521 responses from parent carers to the new co-produced SEND Survey 2025

Parent carers and colleagues shared that it was important for the SEND Partnership to:

- Improve the quality and relevance of EHCPs, with timely annual reviews.
- Ensure sufficient capacity and specialist resources in post-16 settings.
- Enhance collaborative transition planning.
- Establish the co-location of SEND workers, across children, family and education settings.
- Develop inclusive mainstream schools and establish small schools for children with Autism.
- Involve parent carers in the consultation process.
- Ensure honest reflection and communication with families.
- Ensure health and social care representation at review meetings.
- Provide adequate support and training for practitioners and case workers.

SEND Partnership Governance

The SEND Improvement Board will maintain regular oversight of this strategy, and the underpinning priority action plan.

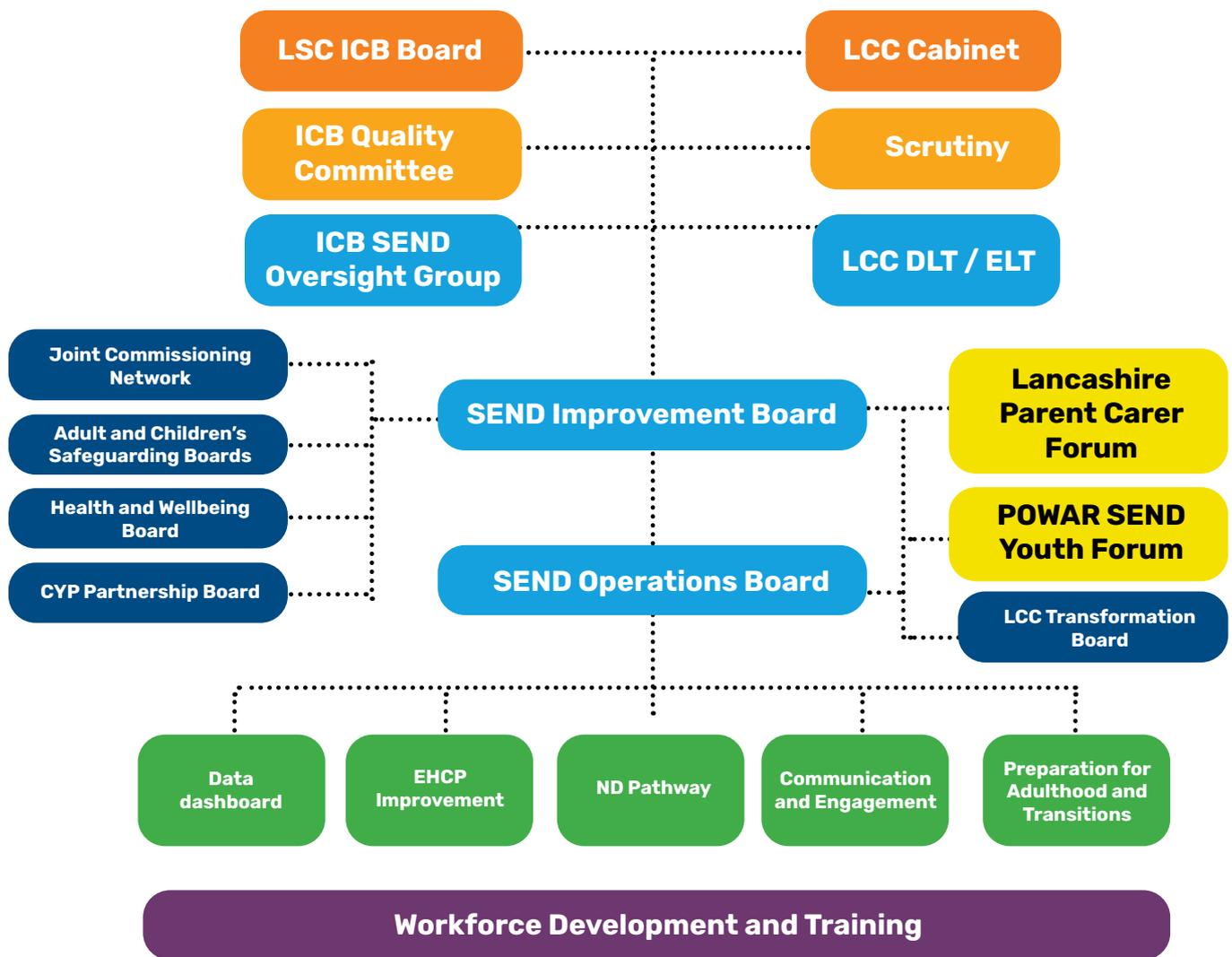
The Strategy and any subsequent action plans will be reviewed and published annually.

Each review will utilise quantitative and qualitative feedback from statutory partners and stakeholders before being published.



In line with our statutory duties we have also set out the key decision making routes for both the Local Authority and Health Partners below.

Governance structure



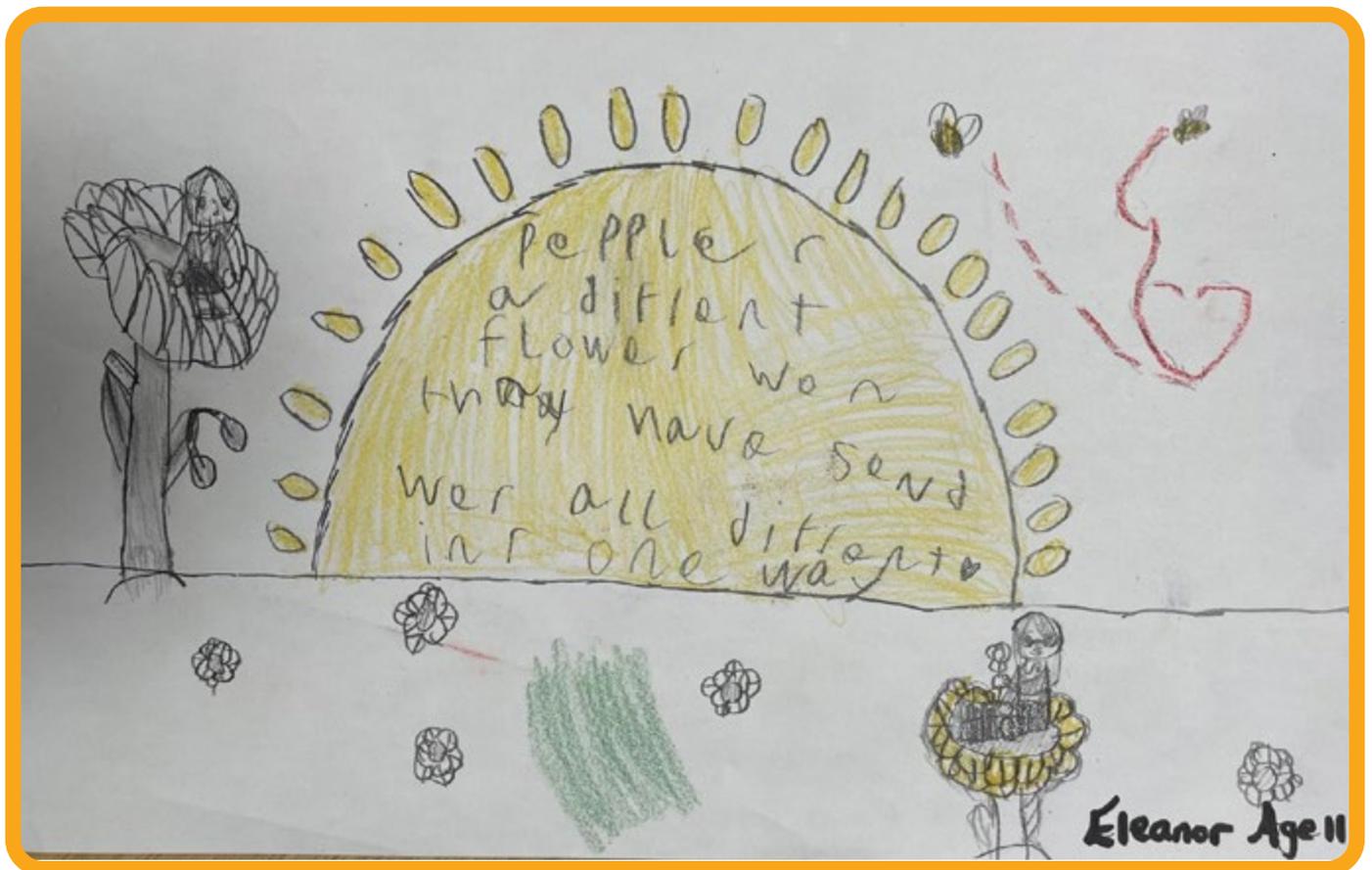
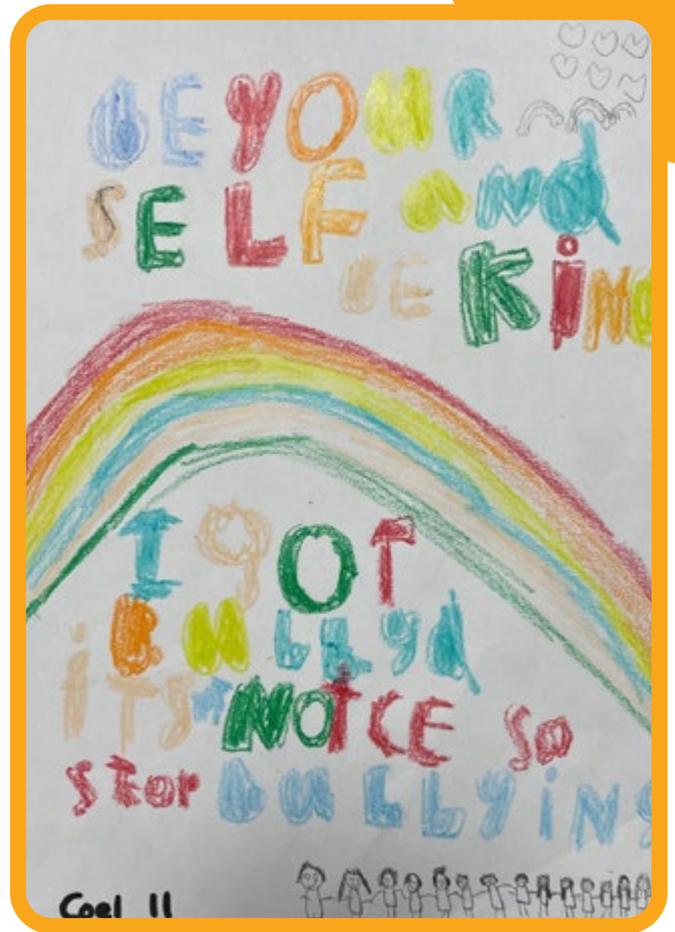
Key to governance

- Organisational lead
- Executive
- Oversight
- Priority Workstream
- Stakeholder

Glossary and Useful Links

- **Special Education Needs Co-ordinators (SENCO)** provide Support at school making sure the needs of children and young people with SEND are met.
- **Designated Clinical Officers (DCO)** support NHS health services to make sure they meet your health needs.
- **Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO)** support social care staff to make sure they meet your care needs so you can access the community.
- **Lancashire Parent Carer Forum (LPCF)** represent all parent carers who have children with SEND.
- **POWAR participation group SEND Youth Forum** (participation, opportunity, win, achieve and respect) represent all Children and Young People (CYP) with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- **An Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP)** is a legal plan identifying the special educational, health and social needs, and the support (provision) needed to meet the needs.
- **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)** is a way of finding out what the health and wellbeing needs are, to make sure decisions are made to meet those needs.
- **SEND Information, advice and support (SENDIAS)** is a statutory service providing free, confidential, impartial advice to you and your family.





YOU smile like a sunflower



