

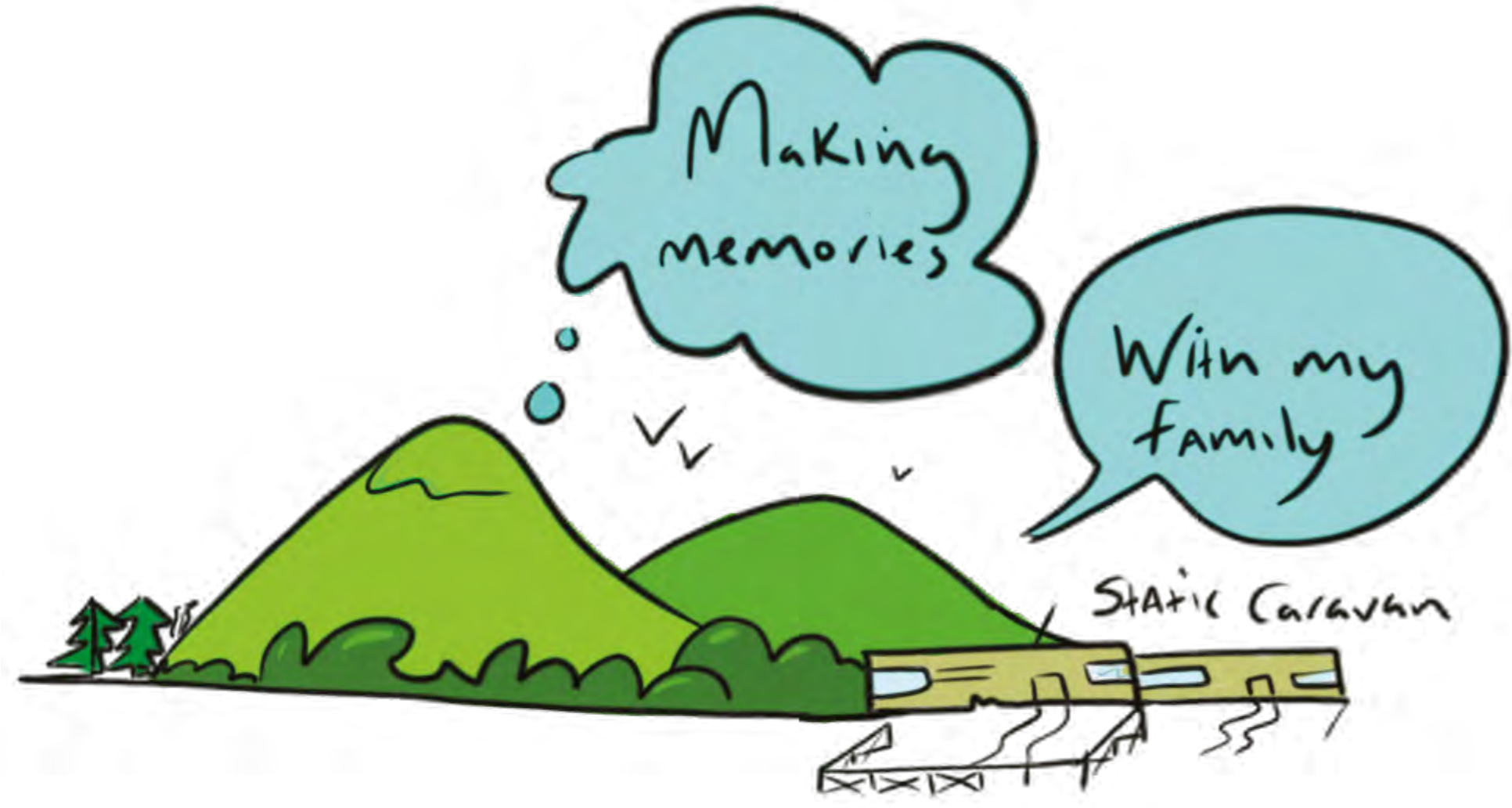


**SPECIAL  
EDUCATIONAL  
NEEDS AND  
DISABILITY  
0-25<sup>IN</sup>  
KNOWSLEY**

**KNOWSLEY SEND AND INCLUSION STRATEGY  
2023-2026**

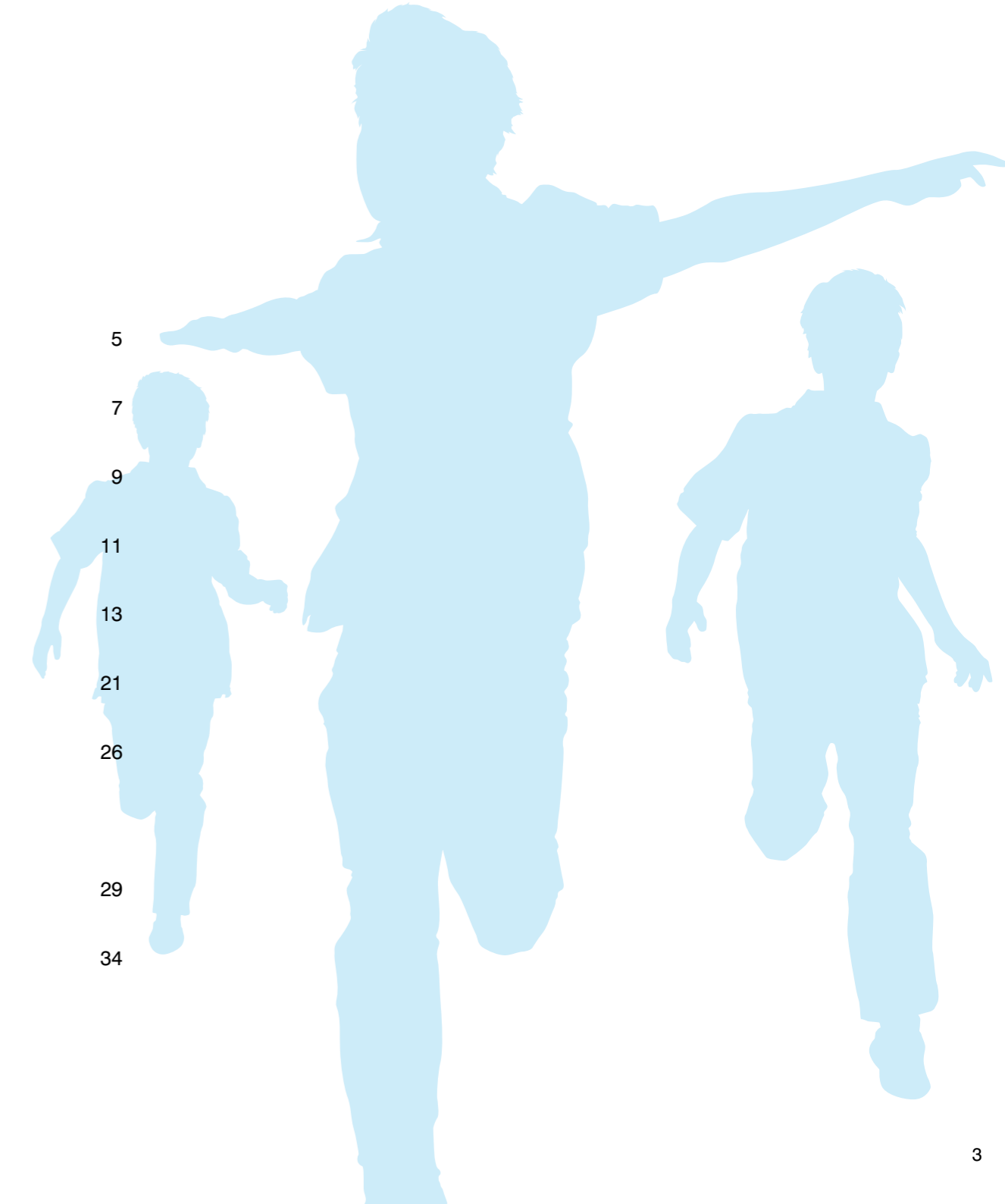


Knowsley  
**CHILDREN &  
FAMILIES**  
Board



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## FOREWORD

As Cabinet Member for Children's Services, I am pleased to introduce Knowsley's SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2023-2026.

We want Knowsley to be a place where all children have the best start in life, where every family thrives and where all young people achieve their potential – including our children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) – who may need some extra support to do so. This strategy therefore provides a real opportunity for the Council and our partners across the Borough to work better together to make a positive difference for children and young people with SEND and their families.

This strategy builds on Knowsley's previous SEND strategy and highlights some of the progress we have made, but also focuses on the challenges continuing to face young people with SEND and their families. And who better to tell us what these challenges are than children, young people and their families themselves – which is why this strategy has been co-produced with them and with them at its heart, to ensure they are always at the centre of everything we do.

Key to achieving the priorities and outcomes set out within this strategy will be the continued engagement and working with our children and families in Knowsley, allowing them to have a real say in how the services that they use are designed and delivered – so that they can see the outcomes and vision that we have for children and young people with SEND become a reality.

**Councillor Margaret Harvey**  
**Cabinet Member for Children's Services**





# INTRODUCTION

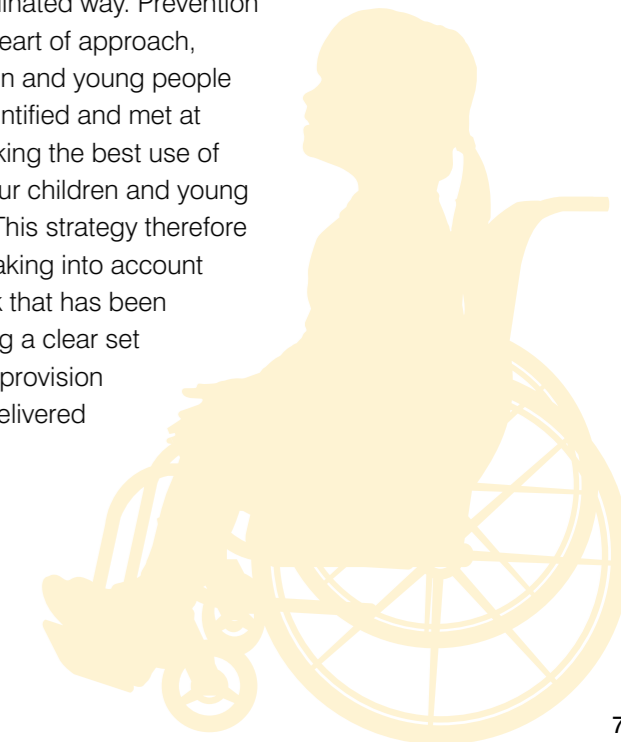
In Knowsley, we have high ambitions for all children who live here, and we know that children themselves are ambitious for their own futures. Children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), however, may need extra support to help them grow up to be happy and healthy and live confidently as part of an inclusive community. The overarching aim of Knowsley's SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2023-2026 is to therefore improve the outcomes for all young people aged 0-25 who have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

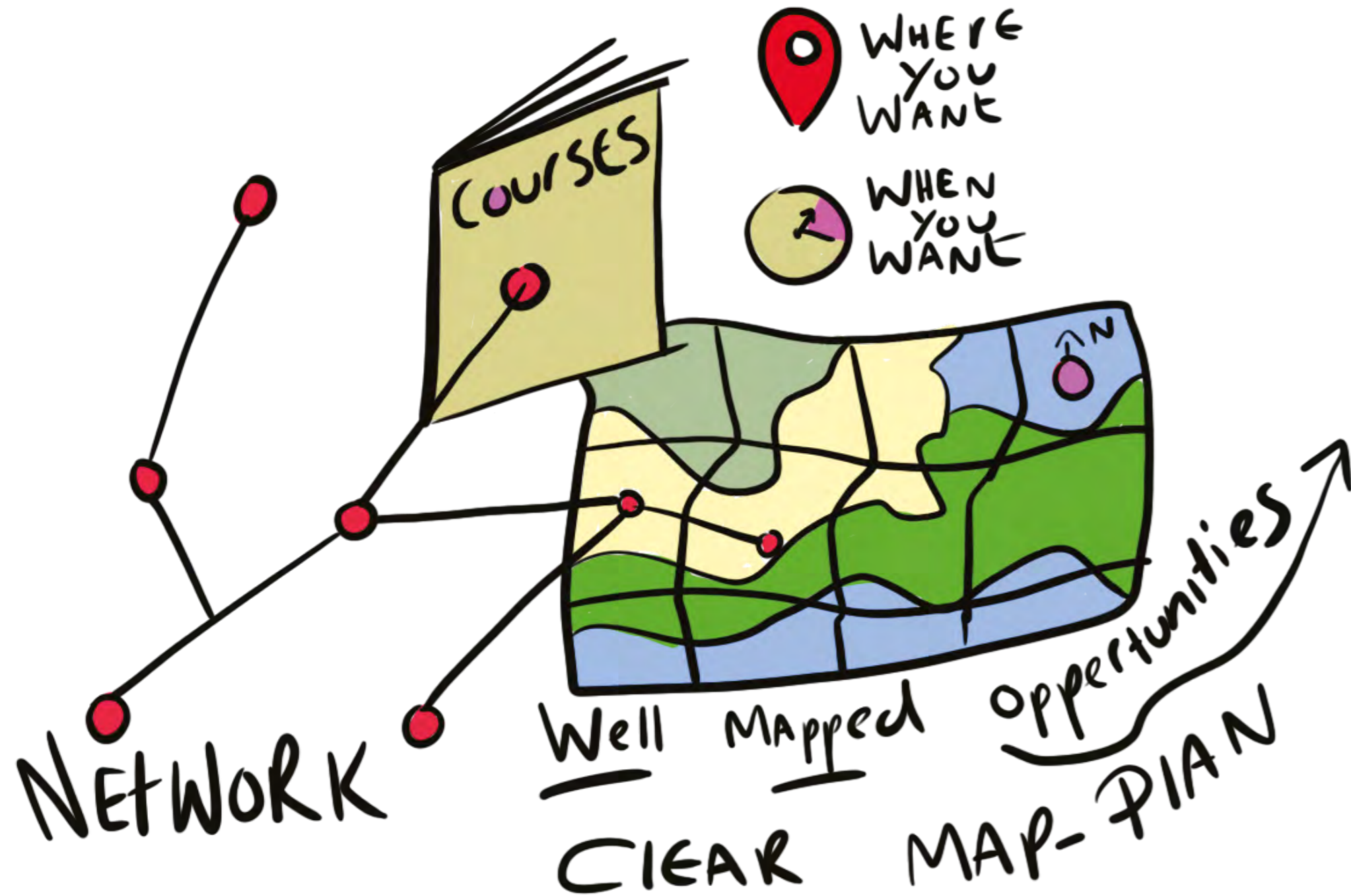
The strategy has been co-produced with the Council's partners, local children and young people and their families and builds on Knowsley's previous SEND strategy. It has also been developed alongside the delivery of the Written Statement of Action following our SEND Local Area Inspection in March 2022, which identified many significant strengths in services for children, young people, and families with special educational needs in Knowsley, and acknowledged the impact of our previous SEND strategy and the effectiveness of co-production in improving some services across the local area.

In addition to the strengths identified, the Inspectorate also identified some areas of weakness locally linked to transitions to adulthood, the 0-25 public health offer and Neuro Developmental Pathway waiting times regarding assessment. This comes amidst our continuing

recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic which caused disruption on the health, learning and development of all children, but especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and the backdrop of the national SEND and Children's Social Care reforms which are currently being implemented by the Government.

This strategy therefore provides an opportunity to build on our success, and address the challenges we face in Knowsley – whilst ensuring service provision and support best meets the needs of our children and young people, and the statutory requirements of the Children and Families Act 2014 in a co-ordinated way. Prevention and early intervention are at the heart of approach, ensuring that the needs of children and young people with SEND in the Borough are identified and met at the earliest opportunity whilst making the best use of resources to effectively support our children and young people and their parents/carers. This strategy therefore provides the framework for this, taking into account and building on the effective work that has been achieved to date – whilst providing a clear set of priorities that enables the right provision and support to be planned and delivered moving forward.





# NATIONAL POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE LANDSCAPE

The Children and Families Act 2014, states that a child has Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) if “they have a learning difficulty or disability, which requires special educational provision to be made for them.” A child or young person is defined as having a learning difficulty or disability if; “they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or if they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities provided for other children of the same age in mainstream schools or post-16 institutions.”

Special educational needs and provision can be considered as falling under four broad areas:



Many children and young people have difficulties that fit clearly into one of these areas; some have needs that span two or more areas; for others the precise nature of their need may not be clear at the outset. It is therefore important that a detailed individual assessment of each child or young person carried out at the earliest opportunity to make an accurate assessment of their needs. Educational attainment is only one factor of development and outcomes for children with special educational needs.

### Children and Families Act 2014

The Children and Families Act 2014 sets out the responsibility to improve services, life chances and choices for vulnerable children and to support families. It underpins wider reforms to ensure that all children and young people can succeed, no matter what their background. The Act also importantly extended the SEND system from birth to 25, where appropriate, giving children, young people and their parents/carers greater control and choice in decisions and ensuring needs are properly met – requiring local areas across England to make significant changes to the way that children and young people with SEND are supported.

This included:

- Giving children and young people with a special educational needs and disabilities, as well as their parent/carers, greater control and choice over how their needs are met
- Ensuring that education, health, and care plans (EHCPs) and annual reviews are used effectively to describe assessed needs and agreed support, for children and young people with complex and significant SEND
- Providing an option for parent/carers and young people to use a personal budget to personalise provision detailed in the EHCP
- Producing a 'Local Offer' to provide information about education, health, and social care services available in the local area for children and young people with SEND
- Requiring the local authority (LA), Health Commissioners, education, health and care providers and the voluntary sector to work in partnership to improve outcomes for children and young people aged 0 to 25 with SEND



### National Disability Strategy 2021

The National Disability Strategy published in July 2021 sets out the Government's long-term commitments aimed at improving the lives of people with disabilities. The strategy is a comprehensive document and contains 120 actions that the Government intend to deliver.

Those most relevant to Knowsley's SEND and Inclusion Strategy include the commitment to improving access to education and transition to adulthood, with funding planned to support workforce development programmes in schools to foster greater understanding of autism and prevent permanent exclusions for young people with autism. Secondly, the Government has committed to improving support into employment for young people, focusing on increasing numbers of apprenticeships and supported employment places.

### The Government SEND Green Paper

In Spring of 2022 the Government launched their Green Paper:

"Right support, right place, right time" which set out ambitious plans to improve the outcomes of children and young people with SEND, acknowledging that the current SEND system is not fit for purpose.

An in-depth local response was provided to this consultation. To develop this, the Council engaged with a range of stakeholders including its workforce, Schools, Alternative Provision Providers, and children and young people and their parents. This resulted in a comprehensive response that reflected the issues and barriers facing local SEND children, young people, and parents/carers – as well as providing the opportunity to also share examples of best practice in Knowsley – particularly around the digitisation of EHC plans and our extensive partnership working in the Borough in order to help shape and influence Government thinking in their planned reforms.

# LOCAL STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE

Knowsley's local strategic landscape for SEND is underpinned and directed by a number of key strategies and plans all of which have been developed to improve the lives of Knowsley residents. Underpinning the way that we work in Knowsley is our 'Better Together' approach – a shift in culture that is focused on the Council working in equal partnership with residents, its partners, local businesses, and the voluntary sector.

This strategy also builds on Knowsley's previous SEND strategy and has been developed alongside the delivery of the Written Statement of Action following our SEND Local Area Inspection in March 2022. The Written Statement of Action will further strengthen our approach to transformation across the local area, bring new momentum to our work and provide further opportunities for all partners across the borough to work together to make a positive difference for children and young people with SEND and their families.



### KNOWSLEY 2030

This strategy sets the strategic direction for the council and partners over the next 10 years. Through its development strategic priorities were developed, three of which directly link to this strategy:

We want Knowsley to be a place:

- Where strong and safe communities can shape their future
- Where people are active and healthy, and have access to the support they need
- Where people of all ages are confident and can achieve their full potential

### THE KNOWSLEY COUNCIL PLAN 2022-2025

The Knowsley Council Plan has the strategic vision of 'Supporting Knowsley's people and communities to thrive' and is focused around three key priorities – one of which is 'effective support for those in need'. The plan takes into consideration the future opportunities and ambitions for local people, while dealing with the long-standing challenges facing Knowsley residents and communities as the borough moves into recovery from the pandemic and beyond.

### KNOWSLEY CHILDREN AND FAMILIES PLAN 2021-24

The Children and Families Plan 2021-24 sets the direction for Children's Services in Knowsley and outlines the Knowsley Children and Families Board's vision for positive outcomes for children and young people in Knowsley, with a focus on the priorities of Prevention, Education and Family.

### KNOWSLEY SEND AND INCLUSION STRATEGY 2023-2026

Improving the outcomes for all young people aged 0-25 who have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

### SEND WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ACTION

An action plan to ensure continued improvement at pace.



*"Hopes, aspirations and dreams"*

Illustration by John Ralphs, visual minute taker at the DFE Targeted Preparation for Adulthood Support Event, Jan 2022

## KNOWSLEY SEND PROFILE

With high quality support, children and young people with SEND will achieve well; which is why the priorities in this strategy are important for the local area and our community. The number of children and young people identified as having SEND is strongly correlated to levels of deprivation and according to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, Knowsley is the second most deprived borough in England. This translates to higher levels of children with special educational needs or disabilities in Knowsley than national and regional averages and the 8th highest prevalence of SEND nationally.

As a Council we recognise the strong relationship between SEND and income, however research indicates that children from lower-income families are less likely to receive the necessary support or effective interventions that might help to address their needs, in part because their parents may be less able to navigate the system to seek help. Children with SEND who come from lower-income families often therefore face higher levels of vulnerability and multiple disadvantages from their earliest years.

We also recognise that educational attainment and achievement in Knowsley requires improvement for all children, including those children who receive support for SEND. However, some areas of strength have been identified within SEND:

- In Knowsley, 14.1% of children have SEN Support. This is a reduction of 0.3% points on 2020 and means that Knowsley has the 19th highest rate of SEN Support in England (as opposed to the highest in 2016)
- The gradual decrease in children identified as needing SEN Support is largely due to increased outreach work and collaboration between schools and the local authority to understand the identification of needs better
- Improved results for children who received SEN Support at Key Stage One
- At Key Stage Two, there has been improved performance for children with an EHCP reaching expected standards
- At Key Stage Four, there has been an overall improvement in SEN Support attainment
- While attendance levels have changed through COVID-19, understanding, and addressing persistent absence will continue to be a priority



However, we do still face a number of challenges. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, all children and young people have faced disruptions to their education and there have been a number of changes to assessment processes and exam results as a consequence across all year groups. In light of this, the following snapshot of information focuses on assessment data up to 2020, to allow for more balanced benchmarking to understand the longer-term trends. Updates to assessments and understanding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on attainment and achievement will be shown over the next few years.

Using data provided by the ONS we are able to look at where we are in comparison to Nationally.

Speech Language Communication Needs data	2018	2019	2020	Nationally
Mainstream primary	21.1%	22.4%	29.8%	30.6%
Mainstream secondary	6.0%	7.5%	16.4%	11.5%

Early observations noted a greater impact on our SEND learners who were classed as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable with longer periods away from educational settings. A report published by Ofsted in November 2020, following a number of visits, and use of other methods by inspectors to various educational settings, recorded the reduction in SEND students' attendance was a result of:

- Anxieties about the pandemic felt by parents, carers and the children and young people themselves
- Medical needs that required them to shield
- Problems accessing transport

In Knowsley, high rates of deprivation were aligned with high rates of SEND and speech, language, and communication needs.

In Knowsley, a high proportion of children with special educational needs are also eligible for free school meals, at much higher levels than nationally. This has also increased over the last six years, with 53.9% of children with an EHCP in Knowsley also eligible for Free School Meals, compared to 38% nationally. For children who receive SEN Support, 52.5% are eligible for Free School Meals, compared to 42.8% in 2015/16. National levels have also increased over this time period from 26.3% to 34.3% - at much lower levels. This reflects an increasing trend:

- Knowsley has the 7th highest rate of total SEND in England (a decreasing, improving trend)
- Knowsley has the 19th highest rate of children receiving SEN Support in England (a decreasing, improving trend)
- Knowsley has the 7th highest rate of children with EHC Plans in England (a decreasing, improving trend)

Although there have been changes in the numbers of children receiving both SEN Support and EHC Plans in Knowsley and nationally, Knowsley still has a high rate of both kinds of SEND intervention. For children and young people, a measure of the rates of disability is the rate of SEND support recorded in the national pupil database. The Liverpool City Region has higher rates of learners who need this support than both the Northwest and England as a whole. Knowsley and Liverpool in particular have high rates, with 20% of young people in years 9-11 in Knowsley having some form of SEND identified, and 6% receiving support (Department for Education, 2020).





**DATA FROM 2021 TELLS US THAT 19% OF CHILDREN IN KNOWSLEY HAVE AN IDENTIFIED SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED**

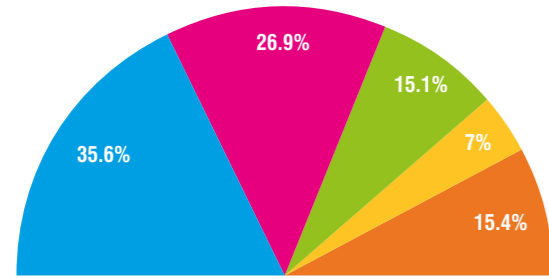
In Knowsley **14.1%** of children have SEN support. This is a **0.3%** reduction on 2020 but still higher than the national average.

Knowsley has the **19th highest** rate of SEN support in England. This is an improvement from being the highest in 2016.

In secondary schools, the rates of children eligible for free school meals has increased to **43.3%** more than double the national rate.

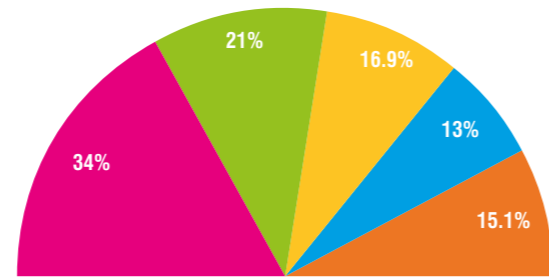


**FOUR AREAS OF HIGHEST NEED WITHIN PRIMARY SCHOOLS**



Speech Language & Communication Moderate Learning Difficulties Social, Emotional & Mental Health Autistic Spectrum Disorder Other

**FOUR AREAS OF HIGHEST NEED WITHIN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**



Moderate Learning Difficulties Social, Emotional & Mental Health Specific Learning Difficulty Speech Language & Communication Other

**1,718 (4.9%)** children in Knowsley have an Education, Health and Care Plan. This is higher than the national average (3.7%), the North West average (3.8%), and statistical neighbours (3.8%).



Moderate Learning Difficulties within Knowsley primary schools is **26.9%** Higher than the national average of 18.3%.



**34%** of secondary school children have Moderate Learning Difficulties compared to the national average of 20%.

**Knowsley's gradual decrease in children identified as needing SEN Support is largely due to increased outreach work and collaboration between schools and the local authority SEN team to understand the identification of needs better**

**Local Offer**

Knowsley's Local Offer provides information about local provision and services for those with SEND [www.knowsleyinfo.co.uk](http://www.knowsleyinfo.co.uk) and was co-produced with parents, carers and young people across the borough. Through the development of the Local Offer webpage, families, carers and young people have access to a one-stop shop for information and guidance on not only the Local Offer, but the distance travelled since the development of our previous SEND strategy. Our Local Area inspection confirmed that the Local Offer website is an effective starting point for children, young people and their parents/carers to begin to find the support or services they are looking for.

**Knowsley Local Offer (SEND) | Knowsley Family Information Service (knowsleyinfo.co.uk)**

SEND area inspection – Written Statement of Action	Monthly SEND Newsletters	Advice & Information (Local Offer)	Educational Psychology	Liverpool & Knowsley SENDIASS
Local Offer (0-4 year olds) Early Years	Local Offer (4-16 year olds) Education, Health and Care	Local Offer (16-23 year olds) Becoming an adult	Local Offer Funding, Travel (inc Blue Badge) and Housing information	Local Offer NEWS
Meet the Employee Raising Aspirations A programme to raise the awareness of work	Play & Leisure (including Short Breaks)	SEND Ofsted Final Report Letter	The Local Offer SEND 0-25 You Said – We Did Feedback	Knowsley Voluntary Children & Young People's Record

As an addition to this we have developed a video explaining the Local Offer to Children and Young People ([Let's Talk About: The Local Offer Website – YouTube](#)) this is to ensure everyone has a clear understanding of what we have to offer.

In partnership with local authorities across the Liverpool City Region, Knowsley's adult social care service has also helped to develop a 'Live Well' online directory that helps people identify services in the community for children and young people in transition and for those with a personal budget.





"What does support look like to you?"

Illustration by John Ralphs, visual minute taker at the DFE Targeted Preparation for Adulthood Support Event, Jan 2022

# ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR: SEND STRATEGY 2018-2022

Whilst the development of this strategy has taken place during a time of great change, progress has been made in a number of areas since the publication of our previous SEND strategy in 2018.



## JOINT WORKING ACROSS ALL SEND SERVICES AND PROVIDERS

### YOU SAID:

- You told us you wanted co-located SEND services with joint processes across all services and providers
- You wanted us to work better with partners and share information so you only had to tell your story once
- You wanted us to consider how to improve governance, performance indicators and workforce development, so that we review and evaluate our effectiveness in improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND

### WE DID:

- Introduction of SEND implementation plan with shared Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)
- Governance framework embedded and risk register created
- Closer partnership working through the SEND Partnership Board and enhanced joint commissioning, both of which were highlighted as strengths by Ofsted.
- Created SENDCO Forums
- Reviewed our SEN Support systems in Schools and created the SEND Graduated Approach document for schools and settings to allow effective demonstration of the assess, plan, do and review framework within a joint working environment
- Published our SEND Workforce development plan and significantly upskilled the workforce
- Significant investment in Information Technology systems to streamline processes and enhance multi agency information sharing to promote joint working
- Produced a joint commissioning strategy and rolled out joint contracts and projects aimed at supporting vulnerable children and adults across the local area
- Using pooled budgets/joint funded packages of care across health, education, and social care
- Restructured services and co-located key teams to enhance joint working
- Commissioned the 'Turnaround' and 'Nurture' programmes through Meadow Park



## CO-PRODUCTION WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND AND THEIR PARENTS/CARERS

### YOU SAID:

- You told us you wanted to have more say in the planning and delivering of services and decisions that affect you.
- You said that you wanted more information about local provision and services so you knew what support you could access
- You said you wanted children to be at the centre of the development of the Local Offer and increased awareness around how to access it

### IN OUR LOCAL AREA INSPECTION IN MARCH 2022, OFSTED TOLD US THAT OUR CO-PRODUCTION WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND AND THEIR FAMILIES WAS A STRENGTH IN KNOWSLEY.

#### WE DID:

- Recruited a new Children, Young People and Families Consultation Engagement Officer who hosts two SEND Youth Voice Forums (Under 16 & 16+) for young people to attend to discuss any issues or areas of improvement relating to Special Educational Needs & Disabilities and Education, Health & Care Plan support
- Increased the quality and frequency of our Knowsley Parent Carer Voice meetings to enable parents to have easier access to information
- Developed regular consultations with children and their parents and carers including our POET survey to gather your feedback directly
- Improved our Local Offer to ensure the information on offer is up to date and as accessible as possible which Ofsted found informative
- Changed our newsletter format from a quarterly PDF to a monthly e-newsletter to keep you regularly updated on new developments within the SEND community of Knowsley
- Developed a video explaining the Local Offer to Children and Young People (**Let's Talk About: The Local Offer Website – YouTube**). We have also been discussing the Local Offer regularly as part of the youth voice forums and provide feedback where necessary



## IMPROVE EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND

### YOU SAID:

- You told us that improving the knowledge and skills of staff in universal services was important to improving outcomes
- You said you wanted more support for mental wellbeing at an earlier stage with CAMHS linked to provide support in schools
- You wanted increased provision so that children to be able to access services that are local to them

### WE DID:

- Created the Assurance Learning Framework and multi-agency key performance indicators to ensure regular monitoring and scrutiny of outcomes and success measures
- Embedded and delivered our SEND Quality assurance framework across all Knowsley settings
- Embedded out of borough monitoring visits
- Ongoing review and subsequent recommissioning of short break services and short breaks direct payment program
- Ongoing review and subsequent commissioning of the 0-25 public health contract
- Over 60 additional placements crated within our special sector
- Continuous professional development across the partnership
- Creation of 12 place post 19 high needs provision in the Borough.
- Commissioned and rolled out our new Mental Health support services and Mental Health in School Service
- Increased the number of local special school placements
- Reviewed and created the Integrated Early Years Service
- Ongoing review and refinement of the Neuro Developmental Pathway
- Developed the Education Strategy and Education Strategic Partnership
- Redesigned the Educational Psychology Service and recruitment drive





## ENSURE THAT ALL YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND MAKE A SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

### YOU SAID:

- It is important that we work in collaboration with young people and their families to develop transition plans from age 14 and that the views of young people are central in the process
- You wanted us to focus on equipping young people with the skills for independent living and increasing opportunities for young people to live in the local community
- You wanted us to increase accessibility of leisure and social activities for young people with SEND and to ensure there is always a 'safe space' in the community where young people can seek help if necessary

### WE DID:

- Created and delivered pathways for supported internships through local FE provision
- Created the job carving initiative
- Delivery of careers, advice and guidance across all secondary settings
- 'Look to the Future' and 'Job Fare' delivered within secondary specialist settings
- Created the Flourish FE High Needs provision in the borough
- Workshops delivered by the National Development Team for Inclusion on PFA and a data dashboard created in co-production with our young people
- Provision of information to facilitate independent living (housing, finance, employment) included as part of the local offer website



## IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLANS

### YOU SAID:

- Support parents to understand the importance of EHCPs and ensure parents have the right training to co-produce plans with professionals
- You told us that quality was very important and you wanted us to develop a multi-agency quality assurance model and a standards document to set out what a good EHCP Plan looks like
- You wanted us to ensure that parents get regular updates during the EHCP process and that information is shared and transparent

**IN OUR LOCAL AREA INSPECTION IN MARCH 2022, OFSTED TOLD US THAT THE QUALITY OF OUR EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLANS WERE GOOD.**

### WE DID:

- Delivered IPSEA Training for parents
- Commissioned support for Information, Advice and Guidance as well as mediation services
- EHCP Quality Assurance Tool procured (Invision) and dedicated Quality Assurance Officer post created
- Increased the number of SEND Casework Officers to enhance communication and transparency
- Reviewed and enhanced our panel processes to ensure decision making is effective and everyone within the partnership benefits from robust quality assurance
- Annual Review Quality Assurance Tool procured, and new process designed



# CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

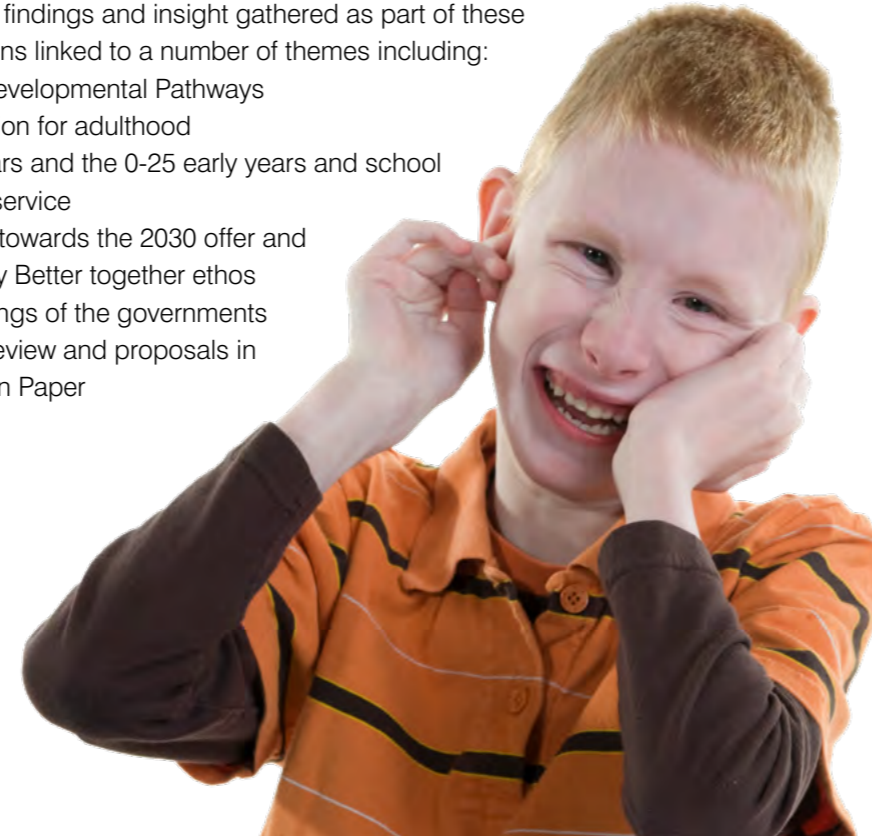
## – WHAT OUR PARTNERS, CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES HAVE TOLD US

Co-production is at the heart of what we do and through our Knowsley Better Together approach, the Council works closely with local children, young people, families, and stakeholders to create services to support children and families with SEND. Knowsley Parent Carer Voice (KPCV) – the local Parent Carer Forum – also engages closely with leaders within the Council and its partner agencies to ensure that the voice of parents and carers is heard. Our Local Area Inspection validated this and told us that co-production is at the heart of all we do across the local partnership.

Ensuring that children and young people with SEND and their families are at the centre of everything we do means that they are involved in developing and designing SEND services and provision so that they have improved choice and control over the support that they receive and so that local services meet their needs. This is co-production; a good working relationship between all professionals, children, young people and their parents/carers that draws on the knowledge, skills and resources of all to develop solutions.

In developing this strategy, a number of conversations, workshops and events including a SEND Circuit Workshop held with Knowsley Parent Carer Voice took place to gather the views and experiences from service providers, partners, local children, young people and their families on the ambitions for the strategy. They told us about the things that are important to them, and how things could change in the future. The findings and insight gathered as part of these conversations linked to a number of themes including:

- Neuro Developmental Pathways
- Preparation for adulthood
- Early Years and the 0-25 early years and school nursing service
- Working towards the 2030 offer and Knowsley Better together ethos
- The findings of the governments SEND Review and proposals in the Green Paper



### NEURO DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS



“Clinical partners have been very effective with their communication and feedback”

“Earlier referrals due to improved awareness are speeding up processes and allowing for pre-diagnosis support to be put in place”



“Further SEND training still needs to be given to mainstream teaching and support staff”

“More parent education on diagnosis, pathways and process times are needed to allow for understanding and the fear of stigma to be addressed”



“A quicker triage process would allow for the right signposting to occur in a more timely manner”

### PREPARATION FOR ADULTHOOD



“We have concerns that the preparation process doesn’t start early enough”

“The complexity of service provision can often feel like a postcode lottery in terms of access, often accommodation is the issue”



“Those working on the transition to adulthood have been a great support given the lack of resources”

“The Flourish provision and other newly commissioned services through Alder Hey Children’s Hospital are a great support”



“Start the process no later than age 14 and include every aspect of their lives, parents, carers and schools”

### 0-25 AND EARLY YEARS



“There has been little investment in early years and increasing the education levels of SEND in nursery staff to aid early referrals”

“Schools are often unprepared for children due to limited information being supplied ahead of starting school”

“Smoother transitions are required for an improved service to allow for a supported journey through each children’s development”

“More transparent communication between caseworkers and parents allows for less frustrations”



“More services are needed for young adults. The gap in children’s and adult’s services is too large”



# OUR VISION AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

*“Knowsley – a place where all our children have the best start in life, where every family thrives and where all our young people aim high and achieve their potential”*

Knowsley has a high prevalence of children with special educational needs and disabilities – in 2021, 19% of children in Knowsley had an identified special educational need. This strategy is about supporting and enabling each of them to achieve their aspirations. Our vision in Knowsley is that all children and young people, including those with SEND, will have the best start in life, thrive and aim high and achieve their potential. In order to deliver this vision, this strategy therefore sets out four priorities which reflect our commitment to delivering effective provision and support for children and young people in Knowsley with SEND and their families.



**ONE**  
Improving our information, advice and support offer



**TWO**  
Ensuring our children and young people are supported to be safe and healthy



**THREE**  
Improve the educational experience for pupils with SEND



**FOUR**  
Ensuring all our children and young people are prepared for Adulthood



## PRIORITY ONE: IMPROVING OUR INFORMATION, ADVICE AND SUPPORT OFFER

### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Our consultation work and local area inspection in March 2022 told us that whilst improvements had occurred at pace in the provision of SEND support, this has not always been effectively communicated to our local families. This has resulted in some families not feeling as though they had the necessary and relevant information and advice when they needed it, and were therefore unable to access or request the appropriate support.

When there is an awareness and understanding about what improvements are being made and what advice and support is available, people are often much more able to meet their own needs sufficiently, which promotes independence and better outcomes more broadly.

### WE WILL DELIVER THIS BY:

- Reviewing and monitoring our existing information, advice, guidance and support service contracts to ensure they are effective, communicate and promote themselves well and offer support where necessary to our local residents
- Reviewing the existing local offer website and working with our young people to re-structure its format and accessibility
- Continue our improvements in joint working, co-production and joint commissioning
- Continuing to improve communication through different channels such as social media and newsletters
- Knowsley Advice and Guidance Service and Family and Community Education Service enhancing their communication strategies across the local area
- Continuing to deliver advice and guidance well in our schools, as well as hosting careers fairs
- Short Breaks and Social Care services will review the support available and continue to develop to meet local needs well

### HOW WE'LL KNOW IF WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL

Children, young people and their families will tell us they know what support and guidance is available.

Our contract monitoring of IAG services will demonstrate positive feedback and effective intervention.

A more active social media presence will be seen.

Families will feel confident to meet their own needs well and young people will be supported to remain independent.



## PRIORITY TWO: ENSURING OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE SUPPORTED TO BE SAFE AND HEALTHY

### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Through our consultation and engagement work, children and young people told us that feeling safe in local parks or whilst out and about with their friends was very important to them. We also know that safe boroughs create a sense of belonging and pride in the local area and help to support in the improvement of outcomes for young people progressing into employment, training, and meaningful activity.

A significant body of research exists that tells us children and young people with SEND and their wider families are more likely to have poor health outcomes. This can manifest itself as poor diet, increased obesity, smoking and alcohol misuse as well as wider drug addiction and misuse.

For parents, carers, children and young people it is important to receive the correct diagnosis as a signpost to the correct services and support so the performance of the Neuro Developmental Pathway is key to ensuring our children and young people are supported to be safe and healthy.

### WE WILL DELIVER THIS BY:

- Engaging our safer communities service as a meaningful partner in the SEND Partnership Board and work with them to address anti-social behaviour, criminal activity and improve the sense of safety for our children and young people
- Working with our public health team to ensure work is targeted around smoking cessation, advice and guidance around alcohol and drug misuse and support around health eating and dietary choices are available
- Continuing to monitor and improve our services in relation to breastfeeding, maternal exercise in pregnancy, schools nursing, health visitors and audiology screening
- Achieving the significant action plan for the 0-25 service and the Neuro Developmental Pathway set out in our Local Area Written Statement of Action

### HOW WE'LL KNOW IF WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL

The lived experience of service users improves as demonstrated through service user feedback, waiting times and access to key health professionals such as health visitors. We will measure this by monitoring face to face birth visits; 9-12 month reviews and 2 year developmental check performance data.

Agencies work better together to deliver an integrated care and support offer for child and family.

All children can access the universal Healthy Child Programme within the timescales set out within the Healthy Child Programme as demonstrated in our performance data.

The local area has a good understanding of the Neuro Developmental Pathway, waiting times are reduced and assessments are completed in a timely way. We will measure this through monthly performance monitoring.

The mental wellbeing of parents, children and adults with neurodiversity will improve as shown by feedback, reduction in complaints and surveys.

Parents / carers / young people will experience more detailed and honest communication, earlier support, and associated specialist assessments by March 2023.

Parents will feel more comfortable – able to support their own child better and they will have confidence in the system. They will trust that identification is accurate and not based on available resources. Feedback and surveys confirm improvement by March 2023.

Through ongoing engagement with children and young people we can identify that they feel safe when out in the local area.





## PRIORITY THREE: IMPROVE THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR PUPILS WITH SEND

### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

A positive educational experience for children and young people has lifelong benefits. It reduces absence rates, improves attainment and shows in positive outcomes. More children and young people with SEND can work towards meaningful employment or activity and thrive throughout their lives and less children and young people should be NEET.

We know that when families, children and young people have appropriate advice and guidance, feel safe and healthy then the right conditions are in place for them to attend school, learn and develop.

### WE WILL DELIVER THIS BY:

- Ensuring children and young people have the necessary health and social care support in place to attend school, either through directly commissioned services, universal services or bespoke personal budgets
- Supporting our schools and settings with Education, Social Care and Health commissioned services to maintain children in their settings for longer and meet their needs effectively
- Ensuring our school workforce area well trained in the identification and assessment of special educational needs and disabilities, allowing them to create meaningful SEN plans with achievable and supportive targets
- Ensuring children and young people have a sense of belonging and feel included within their settings
- Supporting our schools to continue the increasing trajectory of positive OFSTED outcomes – generating a culture of positivity and aspiration

### HOW WE'LL KNOW IF WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL

We will continue to demonstrate an improving trend in attainment for children and young people with SEND.

Early Years services will support children at the vital development phases to ensure a good level of development by the end of Early Years foundation stages.

Education, Employment, Training and Social Care destinations will be suitable to the needs of our young people with SEND as this will be demonstrated through a reduction in our NEET cohort.

We will have less suspensions and exclusion for children and young people with SEND.

Attendance rates will be in line with national averages and persistent absence rates will reduce.

Our children and young people will be ambitious, aspirational and supported to achieve their dreams.



## PRIORITY 4: ENSURING ALL OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE PREPARED FOR ADULTHOOD

### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Preparation for Adulthood (PFA) is the biggest concern for many parents and carers in Knowsley. For many children and young people with SEND, preparation for adulthood starts too late. This means that too many children and young people with SEND face uncertainty in their future education, training or employment pathways. Many parents report that they do not have the information and guidance needed to be well informed about the next stages of education, employment or training that are available for their child or young person.

In order to achieve a happy and fulfilling adult life, transition to adulthood must begin early and include support for individuals their aspirations. This transition covers health, relationships, housing, employment and/or purposeful participation in the community with as much independence as possible. It also covers the transition from children's to adult's services.

### WE WILL DELIVER THIS BY:

- Working across all settings (early years, primary, secondary and FE) to ensure the 4 key indicators of PFA are embedded into action planning and relevant paperwork
- Our Education, Health and Care Plans and subsequent annual reviews will contain the four key indicators and focus specifically on long terms goals and preparation for adulthood
- Our social care services will ensure the work they do, and the services they commission are preparing children and young people well for adulthood
- Delivering the actions committed to in our Local Area Written Statement of Action
- Children's social care and adult social care will work together to improve the transition between social care services and provide guidance, support and information where necessary

### HOW WE'LL KNOW IF WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL

Children and Families will tell us that planning for adulthood starts earlier, and that they have a good understanding of the plan for their child and the support available for them to thrive. We will measure this through parental surveys following annual reviews and an annual preparation for adulthood survey.

Knowsley secondary settings are inclusive and meet their child's needs well. We will measure this by tracking inspection outcomes, progress and attainment data at KS4 and KS5, attendance and exclusion data.

Children and Families are supported to choose suitable destinations in education, employment or training and can access the support they need to thrive. We will measure this by tracking the numbers of young people in Education, Employment and Training – known as EET data; and the numbers of young people not in education, employment, and training – known as NEET data.

The transition between children's social care and adult social care will improve and families will feel well prepared for this change from having allocated adult social care social workers involved from 14+.

Internships, apprenticeships and employment for young people with SEND will show an increasing trend.

The Local Area has a Skills and Learning Strategy and implementation plan.

# GOVERNANCE AND MONITORING

The local governance arrangements in Knowsley ensures strong strategic leadership, providing challenge and support to drive improvement and effect change where necessary. Central to our SEND governance structure is the SEND Partnership Board. This Board works across organisations to understand, develop, and coordinate services to support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and their families with a focus on the continuous improvement of outcomes. Parent carer representatives are integral to SEND governance, and this is present through a representation from the Knowsley Parent Carer Voice Forum.

The SEND Partnership Board reports into Knowsley's Children and Families Partnership Board which brings together key partners to work collaboratively to achieve the best outcomes for the borough's children and families. The board includes representatives from health providers, primary and secondary schools in Knowsley, Knowsley's Integrated Care Board, and the local authority (including children's and adult's services).

This also links into other boards such as Knowsley's Health and Wellbeing Board – ensuring that the delivery of this strategy is co-ordinated and complements the wider agenda of supporting positive outcomes for children and young people in Knowsley.

An action plan to deliver this strategy will be developed and delivered through successful partnerships between education, health, children's and adult's care services, parents and carers, young people, voluntary agencies, and other partners.

This plan will also link into the Written Statement of Action and help us meet our statutory duties, as well as improving outcomes for children and young people. Progress against this strategy will be monitored through the performance management framework with update reports being presented to SEND Core Leadership and SEND Partnership Board every 8 weeks.

