

The Nottinghamshire Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy Consultation Outcomes

1. A public consultation was conducted between 16th September and 30th November 2019 with responses from 156 participants representing 18 different stakeholder groups. In addition, four consultation workshops were held for key stakeholders, attended by 105 individuals, one being a specific event for parents/carers which was attended by 12 parents/carers.
2. Stakeholders included parents and carers, young people, learning providers, school governors, Public Health and Clinical Commissioning Groups, voluntary organisations and Nottinghamshire County Council employees.
3. The consultation survey questions were as follows:
 - do you agree with proposed vision for Nottinghamshire?
 - how might the vision be improved?
 - do you agree with the Policy's core values / principles?
 - are you able to identify any additional core values / principles which should be included?
 - which of the core values / principles do you consider to be the most important?
 - do you agree that the 12 outcomes identified in the Policy are the correct ones?
 - are there any other outcomes which should be considered?
 - which of the 12 outcomes do you consider to be the most important?
 - do you agree that the Next Steps identified in the Policy are the correct ones?
 - are there any additional Next Steps which should be considered?
 - which of the Next Steps do you believe will make the greatest difference to the lived experiences of children and young people with SEND in Nottinghamshire?
4. Most respondents (**97.44%**) supported the Policy's vision and (**98.72%**) agreed with the Policy's core values and principles. The most important core values / principles were:
 - ensuring early support and timely intervention, following the identification of need, using a graduated response to avoid escalation of difficulties (23.08%)
 - ensuring the child or young person's voice is central to decision making (22.44%)
 - supporting collaborative relationships with key partners and services (19.23%).
5. Likewise, most respondents (91.67%) agreed with the Policy's 12 essential outcomes. The outcomes considered to be the most important were:
 - children and young people access appropriate educational provision with or without an EHC Plan, so that they make continuous and appropriate progress from their personal starting point (25.00%)
 - decisions we make about the education of children and young people with SEND will be shaped by their thoughts and views (16.03%).

6. Nearly 85% of respondents felt that the Next Steps outlined in the Policy were the correct ones. The most important one for children and young people in Nottinghamshire with SEND was SEND Provision (48.72%).
7. Overall, the on-line consultation received 240 free-text comments, which have since been analysed and, where appropriate, used to inform the final amendments to the SEND Policy. Where respondents have made suggestions in relation to the implementation of the Policy, these will be used to develop the Policy's Action Plan.
8. A copy of the consultation feedback will be shared with key stakeholders, including parents and carers, via the Nottinghamshire SEND Accountability Board.
9. For analysis purposes, comments and queries have been grouped under the following themes:

Vision

"The vision is excellent and clearly demonstrates the over-arching aspirations in Nottinghamshire for children and young people with SEND".

While there was strong support for the vision, 65 comments were received in response to the question, *'How might the vision be improved?'* Answers suggested adding:

- voice of the child being central
- being safe, healthy and happy
- timely intervention and appropriate need-based provision
- well trained and equipped staff
- constraints of available resources
- specific mention of education, whereas the majority felt the vision should reflect a broader more holistic aim than just educational attainment.

Many comments or suggestions made in response to this question are addressed later in the Policy or relate to how the Policy might be implemented. These points will be taken into consideration, as appropriate when developing the SEND Strategic Action Plan.

Values and principles

There were 58 responses to the question, *'Are you able to identify any additional core values/principles which should be included?'* The points made in response to this question very much echoed those given for the vision. Suggestions included:

- child, parent/carer's voice central to decision making
- focus on the achievement and progress of those with SEND
- more ambitious expectations and aspirations for those with SEND
- correct assessment and identification of need for children and young people 0-25
- recognise and support all needs regardless of diagnosis
- accountability, particularly for educational settings that are 'results focused'
- appropriate support for children with neurological (behavioural) differences
- Ofsted to assess and inspect SEND provision and support at school
- adequate SEND awareness training for teachers (and pupils) including training on SEN without diagnosis, understanding behaviour, support over punishment.

Essential outcomes

There were 51 responses to the question, “*Are there any other outcomes which should be considered?*” which while varied can be summarised under the following:

- effective EHCP Process – the resolution to issues being experienced in relation to Education and Health Care Plan process from initial application and assessment, through to reviews and provision
- well-trained, equipped and resourced SEND workforce, with appropriate support services available to professionals
- increased parent/carer and child engagement, involvement and confidence with SEND processes
- digital integration – fit for purpose digital hub
- enhanced SEND provision.

Next Steps

There were 66 responses to the question, “*Are there any additional next steps which should be considered?*” Most responses highlighted opportunities to address issues in the SEND process and suggestions to support the implementation of the SEND Policy:

- Quality First Teaching (QFT), as part of graduated response
- joined up working and local information sharing
- mainstream schools to be better prepared for SEND provision (increase flexibility of curriculum)
- increased accountability for educational settings for how SEND funding is being used.
- equipped and well-trained SEND workforce (increasing CPD access, “*the policy needs to reach classroom practitioners*”)
- guidelines for and better understanding of ‘options’ and what provision is available
- early years provision and early intervention
- enhanced response times (timely and appropriate intervention)
- emphasise inclusion rather than segregation
- learn from best practice in other areas of the country.

Summary

The results of the public consultation provide clear evidence of general support for the SEND Policy in terms of what it aspires to achieve. The feedback and comments from both the workshops and online consultation emphasised a wide range of issues which need to be addressed for a successful implementation of the Policy.