



Shropshire
Council

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) for 0-25 year olds

2025/26

**Chapter: Scope & Strategic
Context**

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Introduction

This needs assessment provides a detailed understanding of the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and their families in Shropshire to inform the direction and development of local services, with a view to reducing health inequalities through identification, prevention and early intervention.

The 2020-22 Shropshire SEND Joint Strategic needs assessments (JSNA) focused on educational outcomes of children and young people with SEND. This refresh presents a wider scope of intelligence around socio-economic factors impacting our children and young people with SEND and their families, including data on aspects such as the wider determinants of health (housing, deprivation, rurality and transport) as well as mental/physical health and social care.

This refresh shows new evidence of local needs and necessary improvements, encouraging joint commissioning and more efficient use of resources to escalation of need. Our goal is to emphasize early intervention, prevention, and listening to the voices of children and young people with SEND, as well as their families and carers.

Nationally, children and young people with SEND fall behind their peers academically, emotionally and socially and it is important that the current delivery of SEND support across all providers is based on a thorough understanding of current need.

This needs assessment compares the outcomes for children and young people who have SEND in Shropshire with national, regional and statistical neighbours' intelligence to create a more comprehensive picture of local needs for this population. The outcomes of this assessment will support Shropshire's Area SEND inspection as well as informing joint commissioning priorities.

The SEND & AP Partnership Board is the strategic governance board for SEND in Shropshire. JSNAs provides the board with the means to understand the needs of local people and are the basis for the Council's SEND strategy, which sets the local priority actions.

The Special educational needs in England publication for 2023/2024 reports that more than 8,000 children and young people in Shropshire have Special Educational Needs (SEN). Based on the [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#), a child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. This means that the child:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions

Most of these children and young people are supported in state-funded Primary and Secondary school settings (76%), 17% of children are supported in independent schools, and 7% in state-funded special schools or alternative provision. For example, early years and education providers, and their needs will be met through additional help that is put in place in these settings. This is sometimes supported by specialist services who offer guidance and provision for specific needs. These children receive Special Educational

Needs Support (SEN Support). The type of help and support is explained in more detail in the [Shropshire's SEND Local offer](#) section further on in the report.

Children and young people who have higher or more complex needs sometimes require an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This plan replaced what was previously known as a SEN Statement.

As mentioned above, some children and young people with SEN have disabilities, meaning they have physical or mental impairments that will affect their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities for a year or more.

Not all children and young people with disabilities have SEN but a significant number do, and they are also covered under this definition. To reflect these differences in the needs of children and young people whilst recognising their shared experiences and characteristics we use the term SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Objectives

This needs assessment focuses on all children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (both with, and without an Education, Health and Care Plan i.e. on SEN support but without an EHCP) and provision to meet these needs, as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.

The purpose of this needs assessment is to describe the prevalence and data patterns of special educational needs and disability among children and young people in Shropshire. This includes exploring the different domains of SEND and the pathways to support, especially early detection, and the role of assets in the county.

Given the broad range of needs and services for children and young people with SEND aged 0-25, this report is not an in depth review of any one specific service but instead aims to provide an overview.

The objectives of this needs assessment are the following:

- To identify relevant national guidance and local policy in relation to children and young people with SEND aged 0 to 25.
- To describe the population profile of children and young people with SEND aged 0 to 25 and their families in Shropshire.
- To provide an overview of the wider determinants of health and their impact on the children and young people aged 5 to 16 and their families.
- To compare local data with national, regional and statistical neighbours for broader understanding of our local context.
- To identify gaps, barriers, and unmet needs in current service provision
- To provide evidence-based recommendations to ensure that the needs of children and young people with SEND aged 0 to 25 year olds are met in Shropshire

Legislative framework

Children and Families Act

The purpose of the [Children and Families Act](#) 2014 is to improve the welfare, rights, and support systems for children, young people, and families in the UK. It brings together and reforms various laws to ensure that services are more integrated, child-focused, and responsive to modern family needs

SEND Code of Practice

The SEND Code of Practice provides statutory guidance on the SEND system for children and young people (CYPs) aged 0 to 25.¹ It includes guidance relating to disabled children and young people, as well as those with special educational needs.²

Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010, but do not necessarily have SEN. However, there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. As such, these disabled CYPs are covered by the guidance.

A key part of the reform was the introduction of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). These replaced 'statements of SEN' and aim to bring together education, health and social care to provide support for children and young people with SEND. The Act places the duty on local authorities to identify all children and young people who have or may have SEN or a disability and must ensure educational and training provision is integrated with health and social care provision. The Act highlights the importance of:

- Joint commissioning
- Establishing effective partnerships across education, health and care; including partnership with children, young people and parents
- Joint understanding
- Joint planning
- Joint delivery
- Joint review to improve service offer

Source: [SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years](#)

¹ [SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years](#)

Vision and Strategic Objectives for SEND

Shropshire Local Area SEND Strategy 2020-25

[Shropshire Local Area SEND Strategy 2020-2025](#) aims to eradicate inequality and realise the collective aspiration of the Shropshire SEND community to live a life that others have come expect. In addition to the input from providers and commissioners of services for pupils, the strategy is co-produced with parent/carers and incorporates the aspirations of a representative group of pupils with SEND. The strategy provides reflection on progress to date and sets clear priorities for future improvements, with explanation about how services will work jointly towards achieving these.

“Shropshire children and young people with SEND to be healthy, happy and safe, and able to achieve their potential to lead a fulfilling life. We want them to have, and to expect, the same opportunities in life as other children and young people.”

The 5 year strategy aims:

- identify and understand the challenges faced across the local area.
- embed co-production across all aspects of work so that parent/carers and children and young people with SEND are recognised as equal partners and are fully involved in decision making.
- challenge preconceived expectations where these may place a ceiling on what can be achieved.
- embrace new ways of working to support innovative practice.
- work in partnership to promote transparency and consistency in decision making and delivery of support.
- commit to the principles of personalisation and embed these across all aspects of SEND commissioning so that the Shropshire SEND system is informed by accurate data; can effectively respond to local need; provide a diversity of choice, is financially sustainable and makes best use of all resources available.

Aspirations of children and young people with SEND. Source: [Shropshire Local Area SEND Strategy, 2020-2025](#)



The current [Shropshire Local Area SEND Strategy 2020-2025](#) was launched in April 2021.

The draft [Shropshire SEND and AP Strategy](#) and the [Shropshire SEND Outcomes Framework](#) are now out for consultation. The documents set the direction and commitment from the area SEND Partnership to develop a system that supports not only those with SEND but also those accessing alternative provision (AP). It builds upon previous strategies and incorporates feedback from various inspections and plans.

The Outcomes Framework outlines our shared commitment to ensuring that all children and young people with SEND in Shropshire are healthy, happy, safe, and able to achieve their potential. It details the framework we aim to use to measure our performance and the impact of our work on children and young people over time.

We encourage families and professionals to review these draft documents and share your thoughts with us. We welcome your feedback and suggestions. Your contribution will help us refine our strategies to better meet the needs of our community. Join us in making a positive difference in the lives of our children and young people.

Shropshire SEND and AP Outcomes Framework 2024 -2029

This strategy currently in draft for public consultation, sets the direction and commitment from the Area SEND and AP Partnership to develop an inclusive system where everyone can thrive. It aims to improve outcomes for children and young people aged 0-25 in Shropshire with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those accessing alternative provision (AP). It builds upon the SEND Strategy co-produced with children, young people, families and professionals in 2021, incorporates feedback from the Ofsted/CQC Area SEND re-visit inspection from November 2022, the work completed to date through the Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) and the national SEND and AP Improvement Plan published March 2023.

Priorities as set out in the SEND and AP Outcomes Framework, 2024-2029. Source: [Shropshire SEND and AP Outcomes Framework 2024-2029](#)

1 Develop local, high quality, inclusive provision across the system. Strengthen the graduated response and Shropshire ordinarily available provision (SOAP), whilst ensuring consistency and effectiveness of the emotional health and mental wellbeing offer in mainstream education settings, across all phases.

2 Enable early identification and the right help at the right time, including reducing waiting times for speech and language therapy and neurodiversity assessments.

3 Enable children and young people to communicate confidently, contribute to decisions, and feel visible and valued members of their community.

4 Develop a proactive, supportive and clear alternative provision offer.

5 Develop a system that makes sense and works together, improving co-production, communication and engagement with families and professionals from all services. Including improving the quality and timeliness of EHC plans, annual reviews and transition pathways.

6 Develop a data informed and intelligence rich approach.

7 Enable children and young people to feel visible and valued members of their community, ensuring they are supported to be as socially and economically independent as possible to achieve their next steps in life.

Additional local policies and guidance

Below are other local policies that have been published that are particularly relevant to the needs assessment.

Local policies and guidance.

Local policy and guidance	
Local area SEND inspection report	Outlines the main findings of a local area SEND inspection to investigate how effective all partners are in identifying the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) of children and young people aged 0 up to 25, as well as any health and care needs that relate to their special educational needs.
Shropshire SEND Accelerated Progress Plan	Review provides details on progress in each of the areas of action highlighted in the local area SEND inspection report.
Local Offer Annual Report	Outlines information about provided across education, health and social care for children and young people in their area who have SEN or are disabled, including those who do not have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans.
Shropshire Plan 2022-2025	Presents Shropshire Council's priorities for residents for the period from 2022 through to 2025.
Early Help Strategy 2023-2025	Sets out approach to strengthen relationships in communities and to provide

	a whole family approach to families in need of help.
Housing Strategy 2020-2025	Sets out immediate objectives, opportunities and an action plan with regards to different housing solutions.
Independent Living and Specialist Accommodation Strategy	Outlines council's commitment to ensuring fair access to appropriate housing.
Holiday Activities and Food Programme	A programme in Shropshire that provides free holiday activities and food for eligible children and young people.
Outdoor Partnerships Strategies 2018-2028	
Shropshire Free School Transport Guidance	