

SCRUTINY REPORT



MEETING: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 7 September 2021

SUBJECT: Report on Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and an update of the Project Safety Valve

REPORT FROM: Councillor Tariq Tamoor, Cabinet member for Children and Education Services

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1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 Bury Council and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are committed to ensuring that all of our children are safe, have the best start in life, fulfil their potential, and are independent; this commitment extends to all, including our children with a disability and/or learning need.

1.2 This report sets out in detail the legal and strategic context within which services are delivered to children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), providing a profile and demography of need in Bury and an outline of the advice, support and services that are available for children and their families.

1.3 In addition, the report how children and their families are influencing and shaping how agencies / services work together so that Bury Council / CCG and partners can improve the experiences and outcomes of children with SEND.

1.4 The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) reforms were introduced in September 2014 under the Children and Families Act. Bury was inspected as a 'Local Area' in 2017 with a follow up visit in 2019. Both visits found that Bury had not been effective in its implementation of the SEND reforms. Clear priorities were identified which Bury, as a Local Area, has been committed to improving.

1.5 Following the 2017 inspection, a 'written statement of action' was produced, setting out how the Council, CCG together with partners and stakeholders, would respond to the recommendations arising from the inspection. This written statement of action has continued to guide the focus of developments and improvements in relation to SEND.

1.6 The Council, together with partner agencies, recognises the need to further improve the outcomes and lived experience of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and their families.

1.7 Whilst progress has been made against the written statement of action, including improvements in multi-agency working, and a strengthening partnership between the Council and CCG (now One Commissioning Organisation), parents/carers, young people, schools, colleges and settings, there is still a need to strengthen strategic leadership and governance.

1.8 Therefore, towards the end of 2020, in partnership with Bury2Gether parents' group, a SEND Assurance Board was established, more recently chaired by Bury's new Director of Education and Skills. The SEND Assurance Board includes senior representation from a range of partners and services including health; Children's social care; schools headteacher; parent representatives from Bury2gether; and Adult Social Care.

1.9 Bury parents and carers, via the constituted, representative Bury2gether, are key strategic partners across the local area, together with our young people, whose voices are heard through the young people's ambassador role which has been a welcome initiative.

1.10 In brief, there has been good progress achieved against each of the priorities in the written statement of action. However, there is a need to ensure a shared strategic vision across all partner agencies and deliver SEND transformation in co-production with our parents and carers through a Local Area Strategic Action Plan, incorporating delivery of the transformation work under the auspices of 'Project Safety Valve'. Details about Project Safety Valve (PSV) are set out below in section 7.

1.11 The report provides a detailed breakdown of the growing population of children and young people with SEND, to enable committee members to understand the local context, and demonstrate how the needs of our children with SEND are being met. In addition, the report details the activity and progress against key priorities.

1.12 A consequence of the 2014 SEND reforms, both locally and nationally, has been an increase in the number of requests for children to be assessed for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This coupled with a reduction in the statutory timescales for completion has placed significant demand pressures on services impacting on the quality of those services to children and young people and their families.

1.13 Our parents continue to raise concerns about our assessment process and the quality of plans. There is a need to improve educational outcomes for children and young people with SEND. As a result, both outcomes and the quality and process about EHCPs continue to be a priority for Bury Council and its partners.

1.14 Bury Education Services and their partners are undertaking an extensive programme of SEND transformation which focuses on improving identification of need; creating an inclusive school system; improved EHCP assessment process and improved quality of plans; growth in special school places; and ensuring a reduction in the High Needs overspend.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 This report provides an update on Bury's progress on embedding the special educational needs and disability (SEND) reforms set out in the Children and Families Act 2014, including the progress against the Written Statement of Action. The report also includes progress on SEND transformation linked to the deficit in the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block which is used to fund educational provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

2.2 A revised SEN Code of Practice, which provides statutory guidance on the policies, procedures and requirements of the Children and Families Act was published in April 2015. The Code of Practice sets out key principles for practice and provision for children and young people with SEND aged 0-25 in local areas. All partners in the local area need to have due regard to the Code of Practice. These principles are:

- Putting children and young people with SEND and their families at the heart of assessment, planning and decisions about their future outcomes and provision.
- Local authorities must publish a Local Offer showing all the services and support that the local area expects to be available to children and young people with SEND and their parents/carers, as well as how to access the provision, how to report gaps and give feedback.
- The local authority must also make sure children, young people and parents are provided with information, advice and support on all matters related to SEND.
- Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs) replaced Statements of SEN. SEN Support has replaced School Action and School Action Plus.
- The timescale for assessing a child or young person and issuing an EHCP is 20 weeks
- Local authorities must help young people with SEND prepare for adulthood from the earliest years.
- Health and local authorities should jointly commission services for children and young people with SEND.

2.3 Local areas are subject to inspection by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) on their effectiveness in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND. There is a strong emphasis, in the inspections, on local areas understanding their strengths and areas for development and being able to demonstrate how the provisions are improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND, and on improving the experience of families in accessing services and support.

2.4 So far, eight local areas in Greater Manchester have been inspected: Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Trafford, and Wigan. Four areas, including Bury, were required to produce written statements of action setting out how they would respond to the findings of those inspections. Bury was first inspected in 2017 and was then subject to a re-inspection in 2019 which found progress had been made on some priorities but not all. More details of the outcome of inspections is provided below in paragraph 3.1 and 3.2.

2.5 Bury has an established SEND Assurance Board, chaired by the Director of Education and Skills, which provides governance of SEND. The Board is responsible for ensuring a shared strategic approach and vision, for evaluating progress, identifying key areas for development, and overseeing improvements.

2.6 Members of the Board are at director level from children's social care, education, early help, health commissioning and clinical leads, together with representatives from Bury2gether and Bury's Parent Carer Forum. The Board reports into the Children's Strategic Partnership Board and links with the Health Charter Groups through the Deputy Director of Commissioning and the clinical lead from the CCG, who sit on both Boards.

3.0 Local Area Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Inspection Update

3.1 In June 2017, Ofsted and the CQC conducted a joint inspection of Bury to judge the effectiveness of the Local Area in implementing the disability and special educational needs reforms. Inspectors raised significant concerns about the effectiveness of the local area in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and identified eight areas of significant weakness:

- the absence of strategic leadership and vision to drive the reforms
- the lack of understanding and practice of co-production at the heart of all strategic considerations.
- the failure to ensure joined up working so that all agencies and services are working together for children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the poor sharing of important information from health services both between different health disciplines and other external agencies
- the widespread unawareness and misunderstanding of the local offer
- the inaccurate and inconsistent identification of special educational needs and/or disabilities at school level
- the ignorance of children and young people's EHC plans by some key health practitioners
- the defective arrangements for joint commissioning.

3.2 The Local Area developed a Written Statement of Action which Ofsted confirmed accurately set out the actions that were to be undertaken to address the identified areas of weakness. This was signed off in November 2017.

3.3 Ofsted and the CQC revisited Bury in May 2019 to decide whether the local area had made sufficient progress in addressing the areas of significant weakness detailed in the written statement of action (WSOA).

3.4 The Local Area was found to have made sufficient progress to address the following five areas of weakness:

- strategic leadership and vision to drive the reforms.
- recognised improvement in the understanding and practice of co-production at the heart of all strategic considerations.
- improvement in joined up working so that all agencies and services are working together for children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- increased awareness and understanding of the local offer.
- improved identification of special educational needs and/or disabilities at school level.

3.5 Whilst progress was seen, it was determined that sufficient progress had not been made to improve the following three areas of weakness:

- the poor sharing of important information from health services both between different health disciplines and other external agencies
- the ignorance of children and young people's EHC plans by some key health practitioners
- the defective arrangements for joint commissioning

3.6 The outcome from the inspection resulted in a series of monitoring visits by the DfE; the final meeting took place on 11 June 2021 when the DfE and NHS England found that the Local Area had made clear and sustained progress against the Written Statement of Action and confirmed that formal progress reviews were no longer necessary.

4.0 Overall School Population with special educational needs and/ or disability

4.1 In order to better meet the needs of our children and young people with SEND it is first helpful to understand community needs. This section of the report provides a detailed breakdown of both numbers of children and young people with SEND, and also a breakdown of the type of need.

4.2 Bury's school population is now experiencing falling rolls across the primary phase, although numbers remain strong across the secondary phase, these numbers will also begin to reduce by 2023. Despite this, the SEND population continues to grow.

4.3 Within the Bury school population, the January 2021 census showed that 16.9% of pupils have SEND (4,979 pupils). This was made up of 12.7% (3,757 pupils) who have their needs met at SEN Support level, and 4.1% of the school population who have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) (1,222 pupils).

4.4 There has been a consistently high number and percentage of children in Bury with an EHCP over time and at a level that is significantly higher than national, regional and statistical neighbour benchmarks; and the gap is increasing. Nationally, the percentage of pupils with an EHCP has increased to 3.7%.

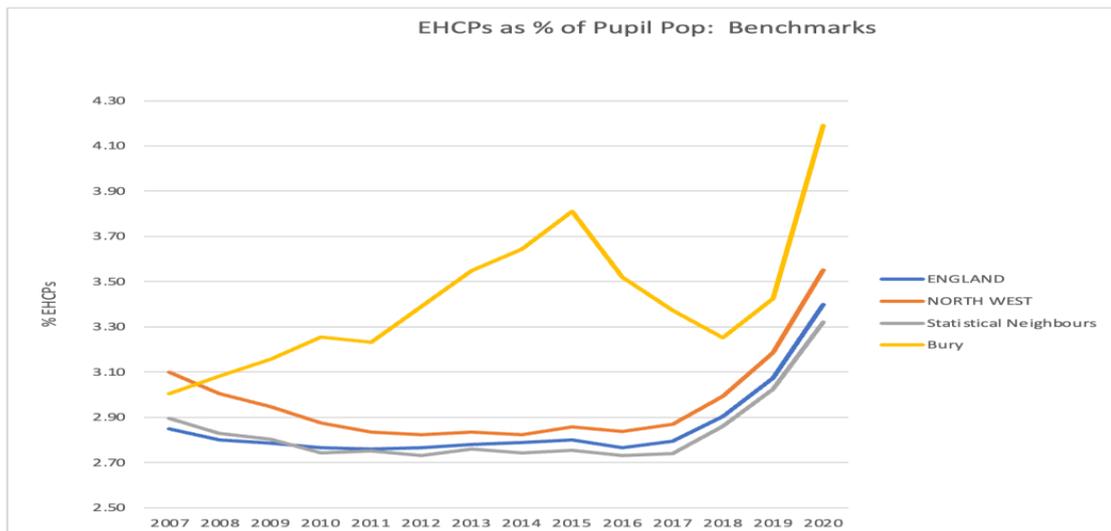


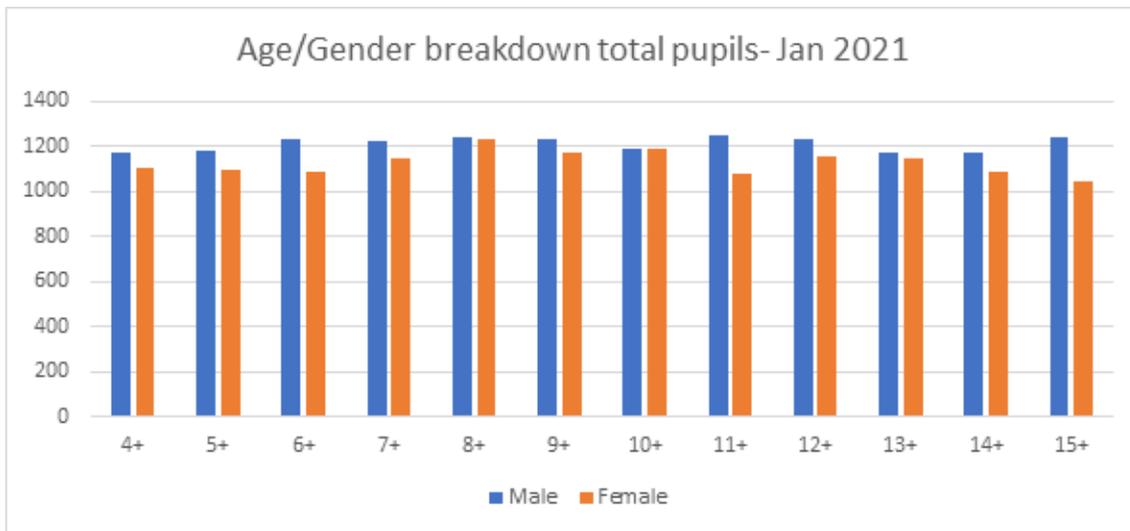
Figure 2: Number of pupils with SEND in Bury schools (School Census)

	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018	Jan 2019	Jan 2020	Jan 2021
EHCP	1165	1088	1029	1000	1050	1131	1222
SEN Support	3577	3711	3830	3649	3910	3957	3757
All SEN	4742	4799	4859	4649	4960	5088	4979
% ALL SEN	16.5%	16.4%	16.4%	15.6%	16.7%	17.1%	16.9%

This table relates to pupils with SEND in Bury schools and does not include under 5's or post 16 or those children educated out of borough.

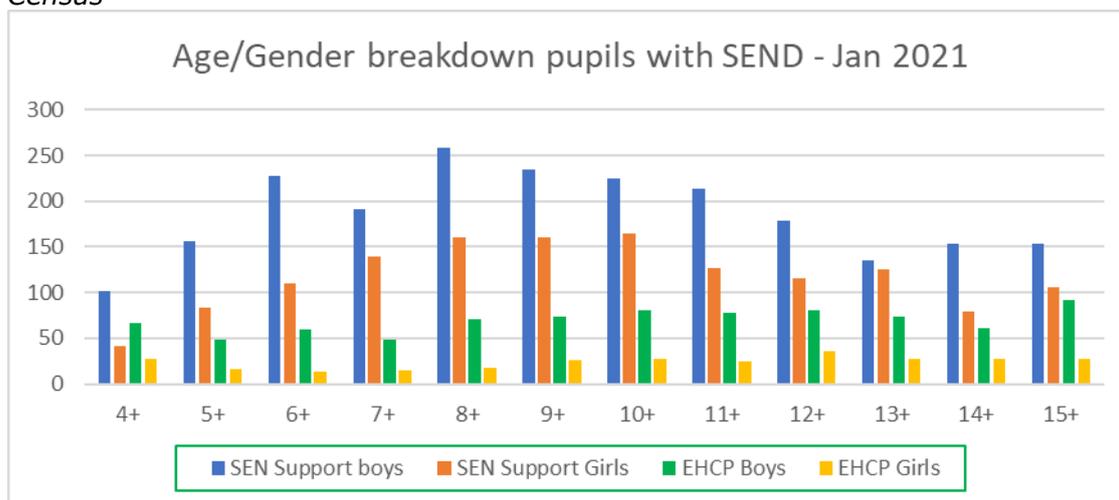
4.5 Between the January 2020 and January 2021 Census there was an increase in the number of pupils on EHCPs of 101 which equates to 0.4%, in line with the increase seen nationally. However, there was a reduction in pupils on 'SEN Support' whereas nationally there was a 0.1% increase.

Figure 2a: Age and gender of ALL pupils in Bury schools January 2021 School Census



4.6 Across all ages there are slightly more boys than girls in the school population, however as the table below shows this becomes more pronounced in the identification of SEND with a greater proportion of boys having identified additional needs than girls. This follows the national trend.

Figure 2b: Age and gender of SEND pupils in Bury schools January 2021 School Census

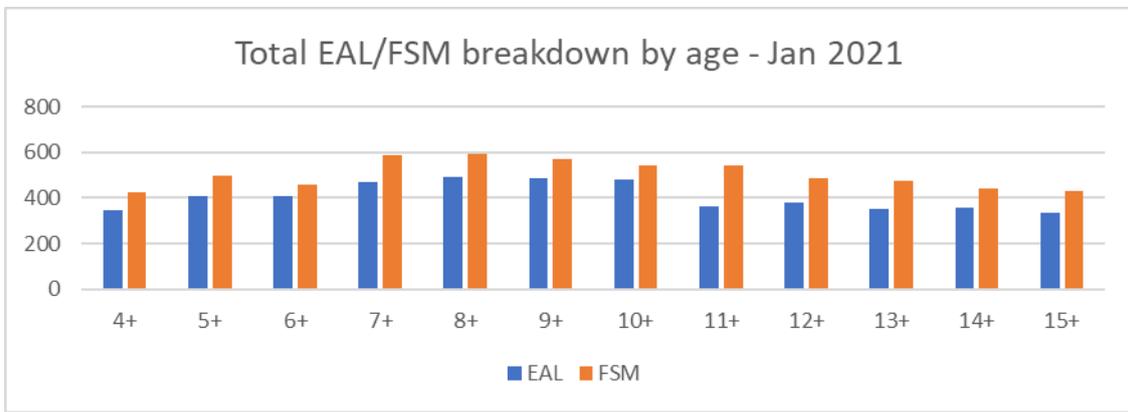


4.7 More boys than girls in Bury schools have SEND – 61% of the pupils at SEN Support level are boys and 74% at EHCP level are boys. There is a similar picture nationally with 64.2% at SEN support and 73.1% at EHCP level.

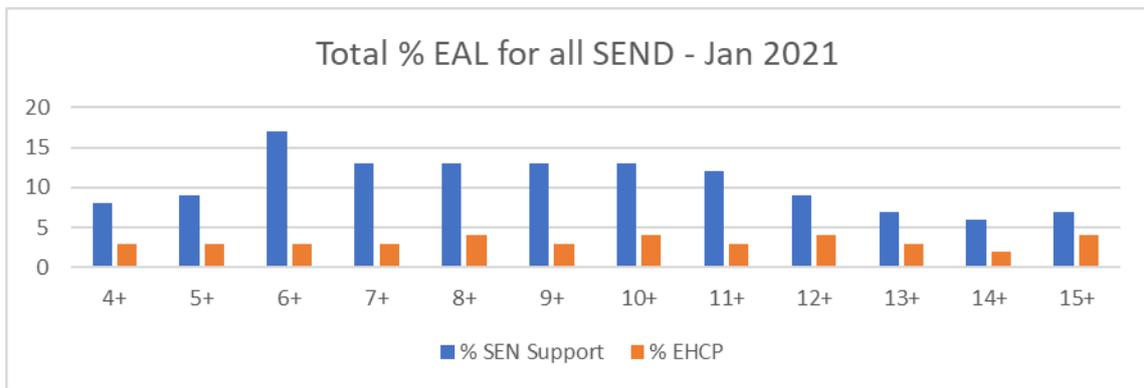
4.8 Across all ages there are more boys on SEN support than girls; the highest numbers being at ages 6+, 8+ and 9+. The number of girls on SEN support increase steadily from age 4+ to 10+. Across all ages there are more boys on EHCPs than girls.

4.9 The age distribution of Bury pupils is also similar to national as higher cohorts of pupils are moving into upper primary and then progressing into secondary schools. All the figures in this section only show numbers in Bury schools, there are additional children and young people with identified SEND in Early Years settings, colleges and training provision and schools outside Bury.

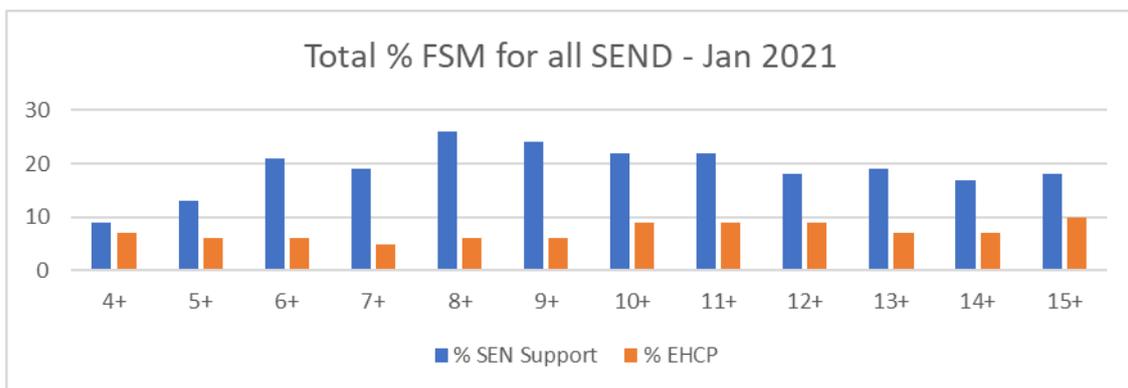
Figure 2c - English as an Additional Language and Free School Meals eligibility (Jan 21 census)



4.10 These tables show the percentages of pupils at SEN Support level and those with EHCPs who have English as an additional language (EAL) and who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM).

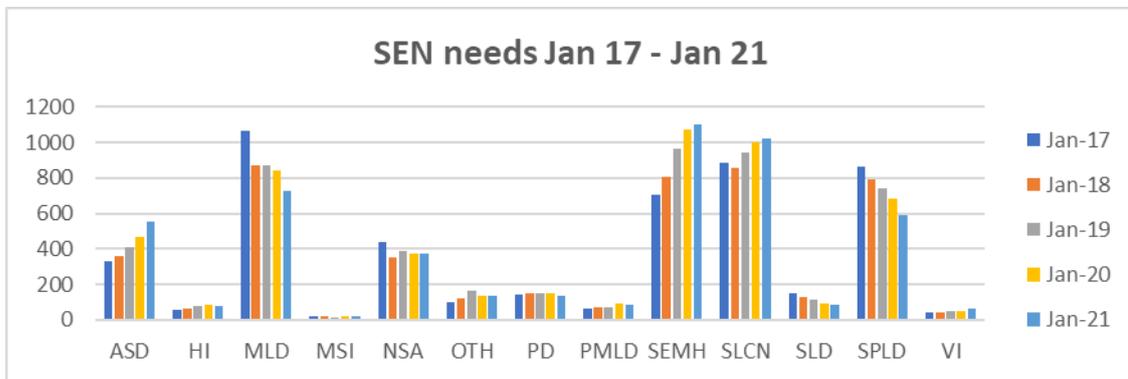


4.11 The majority of pupils with identified SEND have English as first language. Bury pupils with SEND are less likely to have English as an additional language than those with no SEND. Nationally, pupils whose first language is English are also more likely to have SEND than those who have English as an additional language.

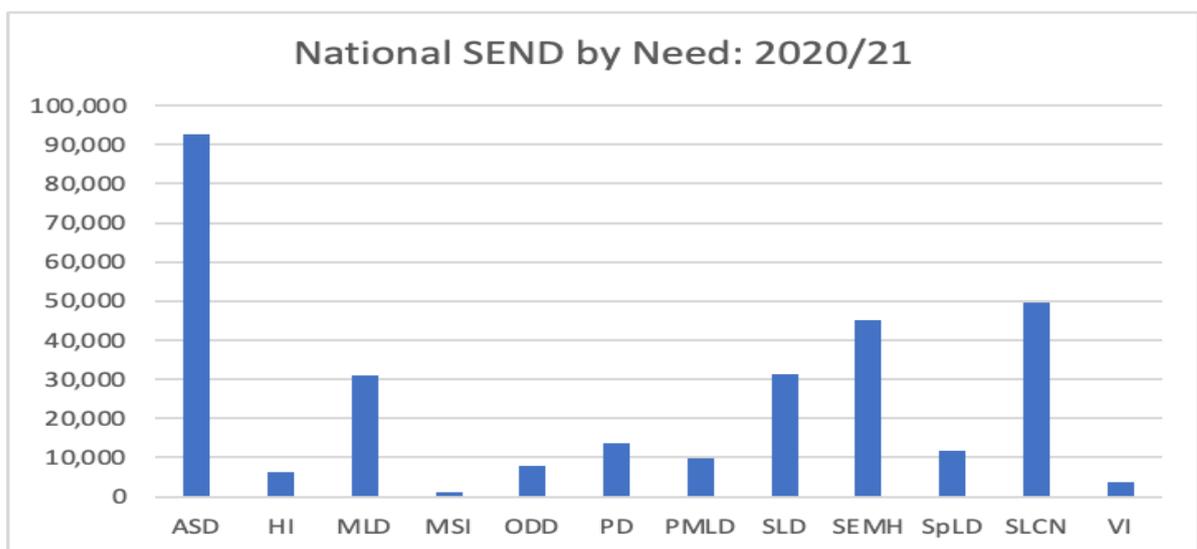


4.12 Bury pupils with SEND are more likely to be eligible for free school meals than those with no SEND. 32% of pupils at SEN Support and 39% at EHCP level are eligible for FSM, compared to 18% of pupils overall. Nationally 34.30% of pupils with SEN Support and 38.0% with EHCPs are eligible for Free School Meals compared to 20.8% of all pupils.

Figure 2d - Number of pupils in Bury schools by SEND Primary Need



4.13 The types of primary need that are most common in Bury are social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) 22.1%; speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) 20.5%; moderate learning difficulties (MLD) 14.7%; specific learning difficulties (SPLD) 11.8% and autism (ASD) 11.1%. The increase in the number of EHCPs is mainly in the categories of ASD, SEMH and SLCN, which is in line with national trends. Nationally, the most common primary SEND need is ASD.



5.0 Numbers of Education Health and Care Plans Overall

5.1 Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs) for children and young people aged up to 25 were introduced on 1st September 2014 through the Children and Families Act 2014

5.2 In August 2021 Bury maintains 2121 EHCPs, a 43% growth since 2017. Children and Young people with EHCPs attend provision in and outside Bury, in mainstream, special and independent settings, schools, colleges and training. The numbers of young people with EHCPs aged 20-25 is increasing steadily. Please see figure 3 below. The number of children in the early years being assessed is also increasing and there has been a significant increase in the number of EHCPs for under 5s. If this trend continues this will put further pressure on SEND sufficiency as there will be a further increase on demand for places and services.

5.3 Please see the tables below which detail the demography of Bury's Children with EHCPs rather than the school population detailed above.

Figure 3a Age of Bury children and young people with EHCPs.

	31/08/2017	31/08/2018	31/08/2019	31/08/2020
Under Age 5	41	61	60	148

Aged 5 – 10	459	471	515	528
Aged 11-15	554	570	593	628
Aged 16 – 19	348	417	424	458
Aged 20-25	77	98	135	173
Total	1479	1617	1727	1935

Figure 3b Bar chart showing the age of Bury children with EHCPs

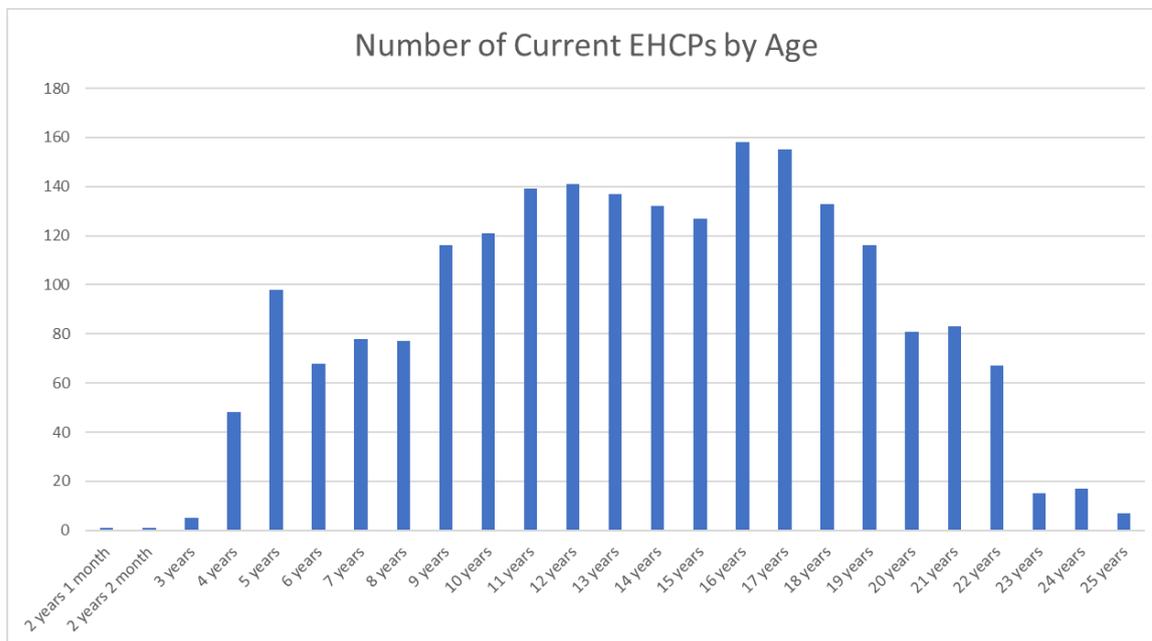
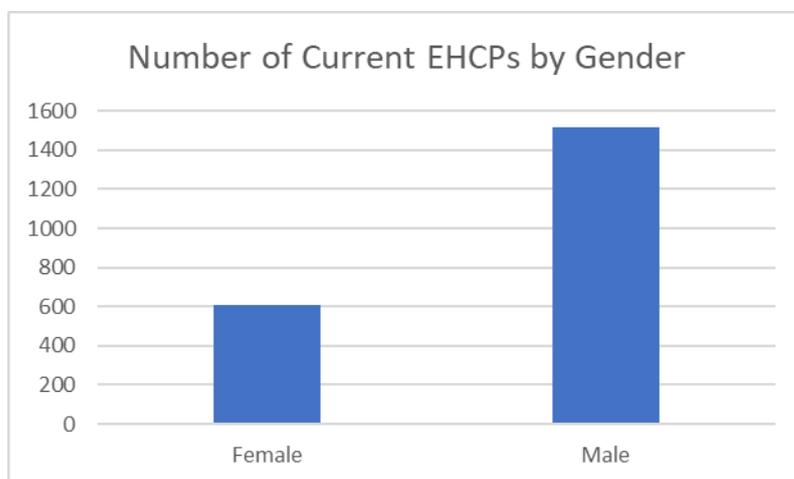


Figure 3c Bar Chart showing the gender split of Bury children with EHCPs as at 25/08/2021



5.4 Therefore it can be seen that Bury’s SEND population as a whole follows very similar patterns to the school population with a similar pattern to national with a greater proportion of Boys having identified Special Educational needs and Disabilities. The types of primary need that are most common in Bury are as detailed in section 3 social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH); speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and moderate learning difficulties. This differs to national when Autism Spectrum Disorder is the most common type of primary need.

6.0 Project Safety Valve and a commitment to SEND transformation

6.1 Bury has seen a significant increase in the number of Education, Health & care Plans (EHCPs) and an increase in the cost of placements, which has resulted in pressure on services to deliver effectively together with escalating costs.

6.2 The Department of Children and Young People is on an improvement journey in all areas of delivery to the Borough's children, young people, and families. The Council has made a good start on this journey with its commitment to Early Help and locality-based working and has made some progress in reducing the number of special school placements in out of borough Independent Non-Maintained Sector. It is important that we build on this at pace, and the Council is engaging with the Department of Education who are working with local authorities with significant deficit balances on their Dedicated Schools Grant.

6.3 Cabinet has received reports setting out the significant deficit carried against the High Needs Block (HNB) of the Council's Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and proposed actions to reduce this. Councils with significant deficits are required to submit deficit recovery plans to the Department for Education (DfE) on an annual basis. Bury has complied with this requirement and has taken actions that demonstrate proportionate reductions to the deficit over time.

6.4 These actions were set out in the detailed DSG recovery report presented to Cabinet in September 2020, at which point it was estimated that Bury's deficit on the DSG would increase to c£25m by the end of 2020/21. Since then, the DfE has recognised the pressures on High Needs Funding nationally and has committed to significant increases in the level of funding available to all local authorities. In addition, DfE has been working with a small number of authorities with the highest DSG deficits nationally, of which Bury is one.

6.5 The outcome of this work has been agreement on an approach that will reduce the deficit, and ultimately achieve a balanced budget; this can only be achieved through SEND transformation which has been captured in the PSV / SEND Transformation Plan.

6.6 The transformation programme is an opportunity to build the foundations over the next two years to truly transform how we meet the desired outcomes for children and young people with SEND in Bury, and raise expectations for families from their Council, their schools and their health services, particularly in respect of inclusivity, co-production and family self-efficacy. The key aims of the transformation will include:

- educating Bury children in their own communities wherever possible
- ensuring most work with families is undertaken in community settings
- empowering communities to act to prevent escalation to statutory services
- reducing dependency on costly and sometimes ineffective provision
- helping people to receive and exit statutory services when needed, as rapidly as possible focusing money where it has most impact
- reducing our financial deficit

6.7 This transformation will be successful if undertaken in partnership, by establishing clear roles and responsibilities across education, health and social care and adopting a true spirit of co-production with children, young people, and their families.

6.8 Bury and the DfE have signed a PSV agreement in which the Council has agreed to implement the action plan that it set out in the funding bid. This includes action to:

- Strengthen the Special Educational Needs assessment and placements process, including clarifying assessment thresholds for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) by March 2022. This will include reviewing

transition arrangements for children and young people throughout 2021-22.

- Ensure robust planning for future provision, including reducing the use of independent school placements by increasing the availability and suitability of local provision within Bury. This will include developing a model for forecasting future needs.
- Improve quality and timeliness of management information to enable the evaluation of impact of central services.
- Support and drive schools in Bury to meet a higher level of need in a more cost-effective way within mainstream settings, while maintaining the quality of provision. Develop a culture in which demand is more effectively managed throughout the authority.
- Remodel financial practice to ensure accurate contributions from appropriate funding sources.

6.9 Revenue Funding: In total, £20.5m additional revenue funding, and £4.3m additional capital funding has been awarded to Bury by the Secretary of State following recommendations from the DfE. The funding will be received over 4 years up to 2024/25, including £6m which was awarded in 2020/21.

6.10 Together with the national increases in high needs funding, this additional grant is intended to remove the cumulative deficit in Bury's HNB by 2025/26.

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
	Cumulative Deficit £m	Estimated Cumulative Deficit £m			
Additional DfE contribution	6.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	3.0
PSV Investment	1.3	1.3	1.3		
Cumulative Deficit	20.8	18.3	15.0	8.9	0.0

6.11 The deficit has arisen for two main reasons. The first is the overall high number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), which is set out in section 3 of this report. The second is the high cost of placements in all types of settings. Work being undertaken as part of PSV will begin to address these issues.

6.12 Alongside the revenue aspects of the PSV, Bury has been allocated £3.78m of additional capital funding to improve and increase specialist provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. This will be used to develop new Resourced Provision within mainstream school settings and will also increase capacity within the borough's existing special schools.

6.13 The Council is also at an advanced planning stage in establishing a new Special Free School, sponsored by the Shaw Education Trust, that will provide 80 additional places for secondary age pupils with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC), with effect from September 2023. This Special Free School will be built on the Unsworth High school site to create an education village. The capital cost of this provision will be met by the DfE and is in addition to the capital funding referenced above.

6.14 In addition, as part of the response to PSV, the DfE has given approval to the establishment of a further Special Free School, targeted at secondary age pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. This school will be delivered as

part of the next phase of the Governments Free School programme and is likely to see provision becoming available in 2024 or 2025. The capital cost of this new provision will be met by the DfE and is in addition to the capital funding referenced above.

6.15 Taken together, these initiatives will see significant capital investment in the development of high-quality specialist provision. There are implications for revenue budgets for creating additional specialist provision and these have been built into the revenue funding modelling of the PSV.

Progress In Project Safety Valve

- 6.16 Through Project Safety Valve the following progress has been made:
- Developed the governance arrangements for the delivery of the transformation programme
 - Developed a communication strategy and plan, mapping out key partners and stakeholders
 - Developed a resource plan, aimed at building internal capacity and capability in key areas including SEND, data and specialist posts.
 - Currently developing a new banding system for allocating high needs funding linked to complexity of need. (Work has shown that Bury is an outlier in funding for SEND in its top ups for both mainstream and special schools).
 - Finalised detailed project briefs for each of the workstreams to enable us to start the implementation phase.

6.17 Progress has also included recruitment of additional capacity to the SEND caseworkers; movement of the SEND EHCP team's line management to Education operations; strengthening of co-production and strategic working with Bury2gether; aligning SEND place planning to all place planning

Section 6 has detailed the specific focus of Project safety Valve and the commitment to reducing the High Needs deficit and a commitment to transforming the experience of children and families with identified Special Educational needs and Disabilities. This will be co-produced with our parents. There is also an acknowledgement that this transformation work will need to sit within a revised Local Area Strategic Action Plan, the priorities of which are detailed in section 14.

However it is important to state that although there continues to be challenges within Bury's provision for SEND there has been progress made. Sections 7 to 12 of the report detail the progress the local area has made towards achieving our aspirations which is to embed the SEND Reforms and improve outcomes and experience for children and young people with SEND.

Sections 7 to 12 include actions from all the partner agencies who continue to work together with a commitment to ensure that the experience of children with SEND and their parents continue to improve and comments will also reflect progress made against the written statement of action.

7.0 Our aim is that Bury's Parents'/Carers' and Children's and Young People's Views Impact on Strategic Decisions

7.1 Co-production with parents and carers

7.2 Bury2gether, Bury's Parent Carer Forum, receives national grant funding to act as the strategic voice of parents/carers of children and young people with SEND in Bury. The Forum sit on the SEND Assurance Board and their members are involved in a wide range of co-production activities with health, education, and social care.

7.3 Bury2gether play an important role in ensuring the voice and experiences of families are influencing service improvements.

7.4 Bury2gether continue to strategically influence and hold the local area to account. This is achieved through attendance by senior officers at the Bury2gether Steering Group; engagement sessions for parents with providers of health and Council services; and through membership of the SEND Assurance Board which is bringing about challenge and accountability.

7.5 Genuine Partnerships, was commissioned by the Council to develop a Bury Voices Model, providing challenge and facilitating a confidence to build a culture of co-production. Some examples include: the parent forum have been on the social worker interview panel for the Children with Disabilities Team; has helped design a survey monkey questionnaire for the SEN Team asking for parent views on the EHC needs assessment; invited to review the health SEND training offer; as member/s of the Joint Commissioning Group, provided scrutiny and challenge to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) process with additional questions in support of further analysis; key partner in the Inclusion Service Team's co-production action planning workshop with 'Genuine Partnerships'.

7.6 The Bury Voices Co-production event (2 February 2021) facilitated by Genuine Partnerships identified actions and themes to further embed a culture of co-production in Bury. Further NHS funding has been secured for continued support from Genuine Partnerships to support a new phase of work; diagnostics to baseline the understanding of co-production amongst key service managers. The outputs of the diagnostics have been very positive and have resulted in targeted actions, including training workshops and practice development. Bury2gether are included in all activities and a co-production action plan is being developed to capture the work going forward.

7.7 Bury2gether are an active member of the NW Network of Parent Carer Forums and link with other forums to co-operate on themes of joint interest.

7.8 Bury2gether has over 400 forum members and has an active face-book page. The forum's action plan captures all member feedback on issues and concerns and these themes are used to improve service improvement for managers and commissioners within the local authority and CCG/health, a recent example is the blue badge service improvement.

7.9 Bury2gether has recently moved to new premises in Radcliffe which offers more space and, in the future, the forum will be able to provide an enhanced venue from which to support the community of SEND families. Bury2gether has been an active partner in the development of summer activities for SEND families (as part of the Holiday Activity and Food programme) on the Local Offer.

7.10 Our Aim is that we will have an excellent 'Local Offer', understood and accessible to all, leading to improved life outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

7.11 Bury's SEND Local Offer was published in December 2013 on the Bury Directory. The Ofsted/CQC inspection in 2017 identified that the Local Offer was an area needing some development. Improvements were needed so that service users were aware of the SEND local offer and was accessible.

7.12 A complete re-design of the Local Offer was undertaken with Bury2gether, and children and young people. The banner, logo and landing pages were all co-produced with families. Bury2gether was a key contributor to the functionality of the landing pages and the website architecture for navigation by families. The website was re-launched in March 2019 with the positive improvements noted at the subsequent Ofsted re-visit in May 2019.

7.13 There is an active Local Offer working group with service leads from SEN, inclusion, social care, commissioning, and health. Technical support is provided by the Bury Directory Team and Bury2gether are advisers/advocates for the service user experience. The focus of the group is to update and improve the quality of information on the Local Offer. Individual services have refreshed their pages. The inclusion service has introduced staff passports/pen portraits which have been positively received by parents/families and it is a priority that this will be rolled out in other services.

7.14 The forward work plan of the working group includes:

- Listening to the voice of young people and parent/carer using mystery shopper through Bury2gether, evaluation and consultation.
- Development of the Practitioner Support section of the website
- Parent/carer groups have put forward suggestions for a "Friends of the Local Offer Group" to be developed.
- In the longer term, Local Offer Drop-ins will be introduced.
- The governance for the Local Offer is part of The Bury Directory Governance structure under The Bury Directory Digital First Group (this is under review).

Young Person's Voice in Bury

7.15 The Inclusion Ambassador/SEND Advocate is a member of the Local Authority Inclusion Services team. The role was created by Bury LA to ensure that young people are not just listened to, but that action is taken based on their views. The focus of the role changes based on the priorities for young people. The postholder works directly with young people with a focus on supporting their wellbeing, while also making sure the views of SEND young people are heard strategically.

7.16 Particular areas of success have been demonstrated through the work centring around self-acceptance for children and young people following diagnosis, along with awareness raising for professionals in respect of Selective Mutism.

7.17 The Inclusion Ambassador was also co-chair of the Northwest SEND Young People's Coproduction Steering Group. Currently the Inclusion Ambassador role is out to advert as the postholder has recently left. It is considered an important role within the Local Area and is a permanent position.

7.18 Over the lockdown period, as many young people and their families were expressing feelings of isolation and loneliness, the Inclusion Ambassador set up virtual Zoom meetings where young people could have a chat, play games, listen to music, and relax in support of their emotional wellbeing. There was also a pilot drama

group in partnership with The Met. There was a positive response with over 60 young people attending sessions with many new friendships developed. These meetings are still running and each Zoom meeting is different dependent on the young people's needs and interests.

7.19 Some of the activities which the Inclusion Ambassador has run recently include:

- free webinar/ Q&A for professionals: Talking to young people about autism: How to do it right
- 1 hour session for autistic young people which aims to explain to them what autism is and share some useful support strategies: What is autism?
- Setting up a gaming and esports club in response to young people's interests
- Promoting local activities/ events for SEND young people to take part in
- A wide range of materials which support this group for whom universal resources are not appropriate, such as
 - Aukids Magazine;
 - Amazing Things Happen video
 - ADHD Foundation Umbrella Gang Comic for neurodivergent young people to promote acceptance of their differences (the Inclusion Ambassador was personally involved with creating the comic)

8.20 Many CPD opportunities have been offered to professionals across Education, Health and Social Care to raise awareness of children and young people's point of view in respect of how they would like to be approached by professionals. One example of a response to this CPD is demonstrated within Inclusion Service where professionals have added their own profiles to the Local Offer pages in response to children and young people saying that they got to know very little about the professionals they were involved with whereas the professionals knew very personal and sensitive information about them.

Bury SEND Information, Advice and Support

7.20 The Bury SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (BURYIASS) is a contracted-out service which provides information, advice and support on: local policy and practice; the Local Offer; EHCPs, Personalisation; the Law as applied to an individual's situation; LA's processes for resolving disagreements, tribunals, complaints etc

7.21 The service was recently tendered in 2020 with Barnardo's awarded the contact until March 2023 (with an option to extend).

7.22 In the last year 352 parents, carers and young people were supported by SENDiass. The majority of enquiries to the SENDiass service related to EHC plans, the level of school support and the name of the placement.

7.23 Barnardo's has invested in developing the role of volunteers to support delivery of the service; and invested in mental health and wellbeing training for staff so to enable conversations regarding individual's mental health and wellbeing which is presenting as a re-occurring theme with families

8.0 Our aim is that Bury's local area is committed to ensuring young people with SEND have their needs met through improving Education, Health and Care services, jointly commissioned where appropriate

8.1 The Graduated Response

8.2 Bury has a continuum of educational provision for children and young people with SEND aged 0-25. The Council, schools, CCG/health and parents are currently co-producing a revised version of the document used in the Local Area to help all partners identify and meet pupils' SEND. This is called 'Bury's Graduated Response'. It sets out the provision schools would be expected to put in place for pupils at universal and SEN Support levels, and the provision schools, the Council and other agencies need to put in place for pupils with an EHCP. This tool helps schools understand when to request statutory assessment and helps parents to have informed discussions with schools and settings about the support being provided for their child and expectations about a graduated response.

8.3 Early Years

8.4 The Early Years delivery model is an integrated pathway for all children from pre-birth to five years of age, supported by health care and early years professionals, leading to earlier identification of need for an increasing number of children.

8.5 The assessment pathway provides an early help support offer for families of young children with identified needs which cannot be met wholly through universal services these include a Speech and Language Pathway and a Parenting pathway.

8.6 Bury recognises that identifying and supporting children at the earliest opportunity, including children who have emerging SEND is essential especially if we are to reduce the numbers of children having manage complex pathways and assessments to receive support when good earlier intervention could prevent this. We need to target this in the early years for children.

8.7 In Bury there are approximately 3500 children attending an early years provision which provides the opportunity to identify those children who may require additional support as early as possible. As more families are supported to access their free child care places then a greater number of children will have access to the early years curriculum to support their learning, development and school readiness.

8.8 Through the work with GMCA, Bury is currently completing a project with the Behavioural Insight Team (BIT) aimed at raising the level of take up of free places for two year olds. Through this project Bury has seen improvement in take up from 73% to 76% of children between spring and summer term but Bury remains 7th out of the 11 other LAs we are a statistical neighbours to, so there is still work to do. Through BIT the team are targeting those areas in Bury which have the lowest take up, namely Sedgley, St Marys and Holyrood. The more families who can be encouraged to take up their free entitlement the more access to learning their children have, but also the greater the opportunity to recognise any emerging needs for children, earlier

8.9 As part of GMCAs school readiness programme and delivery model Bury is working on the pathways to support for children in relation to speech language and communication

8.10 Research tells us that for many children, when they have difficulty expressing their needs, frustrations which is integral to cognitive functioning, they are more likely to require higher levels of additional support as they age, especially if their needs are not recognised and responded to at the earliest opportunity.

8.11 In Bury is part of a GMCA project working across all 10 Localities to raise the standards in speech language and communication. One pathway we are embedding in Bury is Wellcomm which is an early screening tool to help identify speech and

language needs - even before children might be referred to traditional speech and language therapists. Bury has 112 Communication Champions working across Early Years including in schools who can carry out Wellcomm assessments.

8.12 This early screening tool is a significant part of identifying needs early and responding, thus reducing demand through specialist pathways, later. When Wellcomm screenings identify children who require support we are increasing our support pathways through a teletherapy programme which provides intensive help to children to develop better speech language and communication. Bury is also partnered with a programme called Easy Peasy and ICAN which provides intensive programmes that can be used by early years practitioners and parents. There are currently 66 practitioners trained across both early years providers and schools in ICAN and we are continuing to grow this. Early assessment of impact shows that 80% of practitioners trained in Bury, reported improvements for children in speech and communication. In addition, 1993 parents have accessed the virtual programmes linked to this support. If children are supported to order their thoughts and express themselves, for some children this will reduce educational needs arising later. As such this area of work is vital to reducing demand on SEND services as well as reducing the impact on children of intrusive assessment processes where this can be avoided

8.13 Bury Schools Continuum of Provision

8.14 The continuum of support for school pupils with SEND includes:

- Mainstream provision for pupils at SEN Support level and with EHCPs.
- Resourced mainstream provision. Bury currently has five mainstream schools designated as resourced provision for pupils with higher levels of SEND. Two of these are specialist provision for children with Autism.
- Bury has 2 special schools, both of which have expanded their numbers and both of which have been judged as 'outstanding' by Ofsted. Both special schools are highly thought of within the Local Area with a very high expression of parental satisfaction.
- Pupils with visual impairments and who are deaf or hearing impaired in both mainstream and special schools are supported by specialist staff from the Bury Sensory Support Service

8.15 Bury's strategic ambition is for our children and young people with SEND to have their needs met in their local community. However, with only two special schools and limited resourced provisions in mainstream schools this means that currently a number of children with EHCPs are placed in special schools out of borough which has put pressure on the High Needs Block of the Designated Schools Grant.

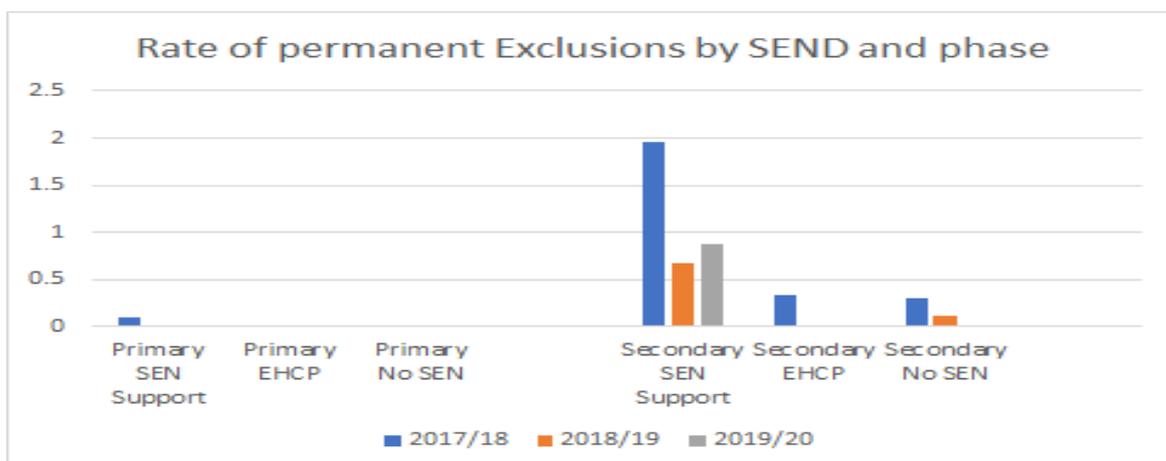
8.16 The Project Safety Valve Delivery Plan focuses on moving away from the historic practice of recourse to placing children out of borough. A new special free school is due to open in Bury in 2023 and the authority has recently received approval from the Department for Education for a further special free school specialising in SEMH. Further Capital bids, as detailed in section 6, were approved to increase Resource Provision within the Local Area Continuum of Provision.

8.17 A place plan is being developed to create additional specialist provision using the additional capital funding provided as part of Project Safety Valve.

8.18 Bury has focused on improving inclusion across its school system through the establishment of inclusion partnerships.

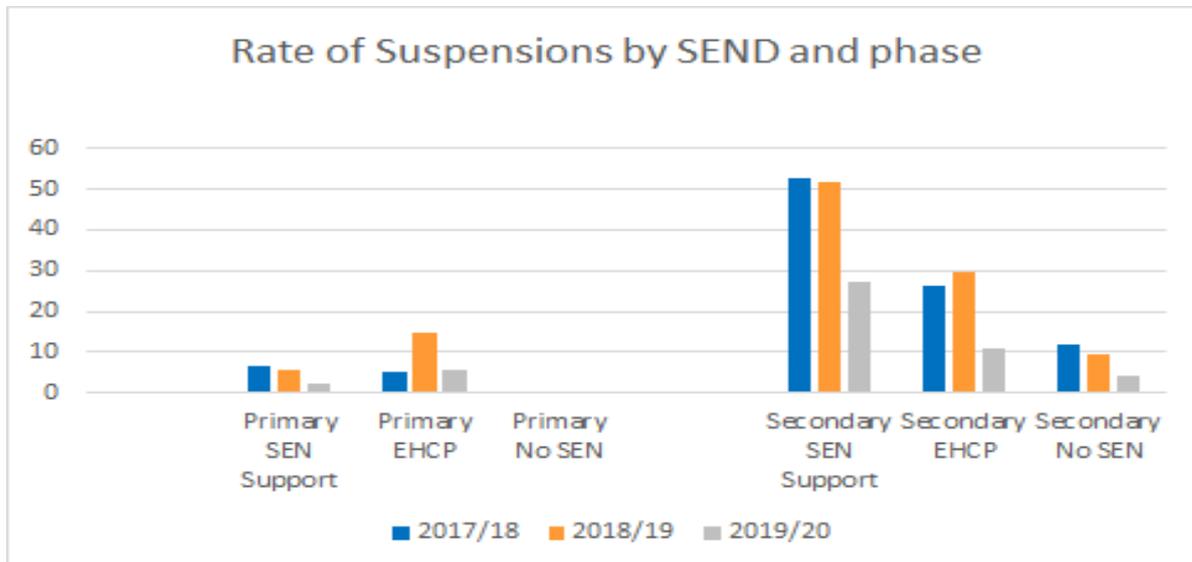
8.19 There were no permanent exclusions of pupils with EHCPs from primary schools over the three years and none from secondary schools in 2018/19 and 2019/20. The rate of permanent exclusions in secondary schools has shown a decline over time

except for pupils on SEN Support which saw a slight rise in 2019/20 following a significant reduction in the previous year. This is an impact of the inclusion partnership work which was established three years ago in response to the high proportion of exclusions in Bury.



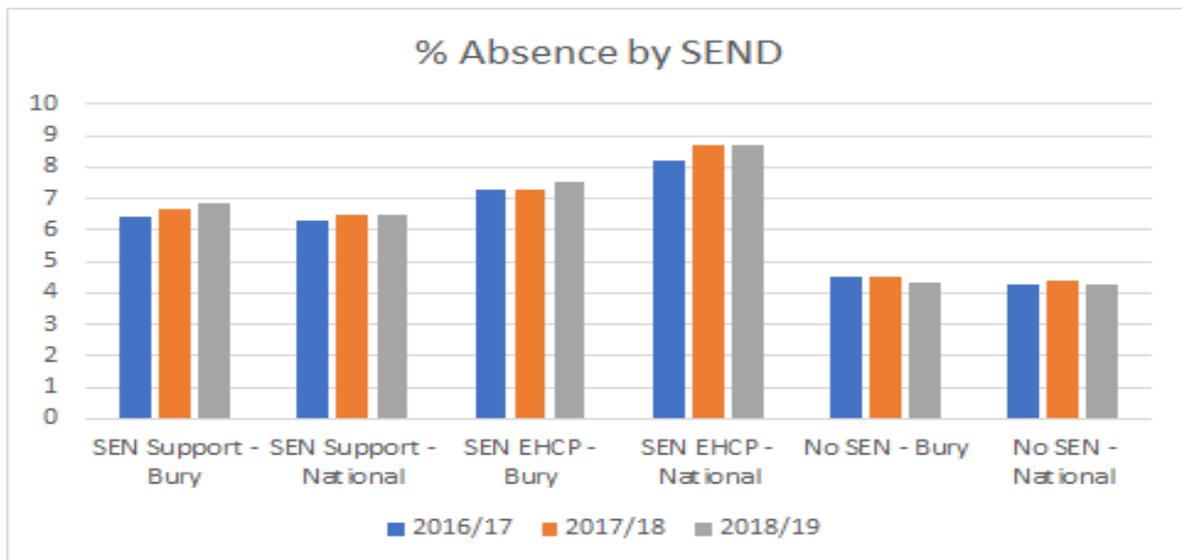
8.20 The rates of fixed term exclusions are higher for pupils with SEND than for those with no SEND. Figures are higher in secondary schools that in primary schools. The figures for secondary pupils on SEN Support are considerably higher than for pupils with EHCPs.

8.21 Bury parents have identified that inclusion is variable across the school system in Bury and the consistent application of Bury’s ‘Graduated Response’ is a priority for the coming academic year and ensuring early identification is also captured within the Project Safety Valve SEND transformation.



Source: DfE

8.22 In addition the percentage absence of pupils on SEN Support has increased over the three-year period and remains slightly above the national average for this group and this again identifies the need to ensure a consistent approach to inclusion across the Local Area to ensure that the continuum of provision within the school system focuses on improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND. A positive impact of the school system is that absence for pupils with EHCPs has stayed steady and remains below the national average for this group. Absences for pupils with SEND is above that of pupils with no SEND. There is a need to focus on promoting good attendance following the impact of the pandemic; this focus will include vulnerable groups including pupils on SEN Support.



Source: DfE

8.23 Outreach

8.24 The Local Authority Inclusion team offers support for mainstream primary and secondary schools and early years settings. This support is highly regarded and helps mainstream staff identify need, develop strategies and practices to better support their pupils with SEND. The outreach offer includes advice on strategies to support individual children, help with whole school curriculum and accessibility strategies, training courses, learning walks and SENCO cluster groups. Bury Sensory Support Service and Cloughside College also provide outreach advice and training to schools on meeting the needs of pupils with hearing and visual impairments and those with mental health difficulties.

8.25 Short Breaks

8.26 There is a continuum of short break provision in Bury. Over the last 18 months commissioners, the children with disability (CwD) team in co-production with families and Bury2gether, have undertaken a large-scale tendering exercise to re-design the Short Breaks Services for Children and Young People with Disabilities and their families with the emphasis on enabling choice, community access and preparation for independence.

8.27 The Council have consulted and engaged with children and young people with disabilities and parents/carers about the current provision since 2019 and how it can be improved. The specification was co-produced with Bury2gether who were on the evaluation and interview panel so to ensure that there was confidence in the process.

8.28 As part of the co-production and consultation phase three new lots now form part of the short breaks local offer. These are the time limited (up to 12 weeks) programmes to enhance the learning of skills in children and young people, and also to increase participation in community activities so that both increase independence and positive outcomes. The other new service is Positive Behaviour Support. This service is to meet the needs of complex high end cases where behaviours are such that the child/young person is on the cusp of residential care. This has been welcomed by professionals and families as a gap previously in provision.

8.29 Children With Disabilities Team

8.30 Bury Children's Services offer a highly skilled and specialist service to children and young people with disabilities and their families through the Children With

Disabilities [CWD] team. The CWD team has recently benefited from significant investment into team infrastructure to increase staff capacity and as a result is currently comprised of a Team Manager, six social workers [awaiting a seventh to join in September] and three family support workers. All staff, with the exception of a newly recruited ASYE Social worker, offer significant experience and have undergone extensive training and continuous professional development which enables them to offer a highly specialist service. The service currently meets the need of 265 children and young people and their families residing within the Local Authority.

8.31 Social workers complete statutory assessment of need for children and young people to identify where need can be appropriately met through services. CWD workers have the ability to signpost to universal and targeted services and in addition request a service from Short Breaks to target and meet need. The current Short Breaks service offer has been reimagined and refreshed as a consequence of a tender process co-produced with representatives from Bury Parents Forum. Referrals are considered within a multi-agency panel which takes place fortnightly. The SEN Manager is an attendee to ensure cohesive planning for children and young people.

8.32 Family support Workers on the team are unique in that they hold a caseload as opposed to having a supportive remit to Social Workers on the team. They hold stable cases and undertake bi annual reviews to ensure that funded provision continues to make need and they act as a key access point for families.

8.33 The CWD team benefits from 2 Transition Social Workers who are allocated the cohort of 16-18 years old on the team to ensure that they complete updated assessments and My Adult Care Assessments to identify the need for ongoing post 18 health funding and /or Adult Social Care involvement. This involves joint working with Health professionals from the Clinical Commissioning Group and Adult social workers. The cases tend to be held at Child in Need to enable a focus on working towards Preparation for Adulthood themes such as Independence, Health, Education and Employment and Social Inclusion using individual plans. There is a recognition that the transitions pathway would benefit from review and this is subject to a multi agency task and finish group meeting monthly. To drive positive change and improve both the journey of transition and the outcomes for young people and their families.

8.34 **Joint commissioning**

8.35 The Joint Commissioning Group is well established with Bury2gether representation at all meetings. Improvements in the joint commissioning arrangements were acknowledged at the DfE/DHSC monitoring visits, including the additional capacity invested in commissioning, and the appointment of the Designated Clinical Officer for SEND and a Children's Programme Manager.

8.36 Examples of joint commissioning activities over the last 18 months include the short breaks local offer, additional health services capacity for a split site special school (Elms Bank Special School), and enhanced access to therapies at Bury College. This latter intervention ensured that high needs young people were offered provision in borough rather than a specialist provider out of borough as Bury College was previously not able to meet their needs for occupational therapy and physiotherapy.

8.37 The joint commissioning workplan includes a range of service reviews which are brought to the joint commissioning group to agree the option appraisals and next steps, examples include the sensory pilot and neuro developmental pathway. The development of the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) is a key area of work which is reported through the Joint Commissioning Group and parents have actively contributed to the scope of the analysis with key questions and the identification of gaps.

8.38 Key themes of the work-plan for the next quarter of 2021/22 is development of a parent/carer strategy: the development of the next parental survey and the implications for commissioning of recommendations emerging from the JSNA.

8.39 **Health**

8.40 The Children's Health Charter & Transformation Programme encompasses:

- Physical health - ensuring children have access to the right support and provision to enable them to lead active healthy lifestyles.
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing - ensuring Bury children can develop positive wellbeing and mental health.
- SEND and Vulnerable Children - ensuring our children with additional needs get the right support and wider system is transforming in an integrated and seamless way
- Maternity - ensuring all children in Bury get the best start to life.

8.41 The Charter Groups cover:

- Physical health, Children who live in Bury who have any identified health inequalities, will have them mitigated and will experience improved health, through the transformation of children services; ensuring smooth and swift access to appropriate services, supported to achieve optimum health.
- Mental Health, working to develop good emotional and mental health in children through the development of a strong robust system and offer. Identifying inequalities and vulnerabilities to meet needs earlier in a child's lifetime.
- Special Educational Needs Disabilities (SEND), working across education and social care to promote and protect children and young people with additional needs. Ensuring good quality processes, provision, and services.
- Maternity, working closely with Starting Well and Early Years. Ensuring the first 1001 days of life are the best they can be.

8.42 Health and social and emotional needs are inherently complex with regards to children; it is unlikely that there will be a single factor which is responsible for any situation or issue. For this reason, it is important that we develop integrated systems across our neighbourhoods to provide the right support. Bury Council and CCG have formed a One Commissioning Organisation (OCO), which will eventually bring together all strands of delivery and commissioning across the two agencies under the leadership of the Chief Executive. Together we can better meet the challenges we face and tackle the priority areas we have identified. The Charter Groups bring together partners in oversight of the wider children health agenda and ensure opportunities for working in collaboration to drive forward transformation are harnessed.

8.43 The pandemic brought about many challenges and opportunities for the Bury SEND system, it accelerated use of digital technology across many health pathways, and this has had a huge impact on the delivery of Health provision as detailed below.

8.44 Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) is an integral component within many of the children's pathways, and as such much work has been undertaken to reduce waiting times and provide a more responsive service. However due to growing demand, the provision is under increasing pressures and a joint commissioning review would be valuable.

8.45 **Speech & Language Therapy**

8.46 Delayed language skills lead to under-performance later in life, yet many primary school children have unidentified speech and language difficulties. The WellComm toolkits were developed by Speech and Language Therapists at Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust with the aim of providing easy to use support for everyone involved with children. Requiring no specialist expertise, they quickly identify areas of concern in language, communication, and interaction development to ensure early targeted intervention. Once a profile has been drawn up for each child, The Big Book of Ideas provides focused teaching and intervention activities to meet individual need. During Covid, Wellcomm clinics were established in the Health Visitor teams to support early identification, and support for speech and language delay.

8.47 The team have designed and implementation of a new parent workshop for parents of preschool children with social communication difficulties. Using innovative ways of engagement, the SaLT team implemented use of MS Teams for delivering parent workshops for social communication and Signalong. Developing and implementing use of telehealth as a means of service delivery, using telephone and video appointments, developing resources suitable for use with telehealth appointments

8.48 Community services School Nursing (SN), Health Visiting (HV) and School Immunisations service

8.49 During the pandemic representation on the Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) audit group/panel has been maintained which has ensured that all HV/SNs receive requests for health information to EHCPs swiftly and input is then provided within timescales.

8.50 Enhanced health visiting team has been set up to support families who require additional support, in which they receive enhanced visits, Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQs) and New-born Behavioural Observations (NBOs) supporting better attachment during this pressured time.

8.51 The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) HVs are two part time HVs in post to support families with children with additional needs. They work closely with partner agencies linked to SEND, ensuring vulnerable children and young people with SEND are supported. This has seen the implementation of Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) at 6-8 weeks. The ASQ is a parent completed questionnaire. Combined with the clinical judgement of the HV, we can start to build a rounded picture of a child's development and to identify any needs going forward. The ASQ also encourages parents to try out new activities with their children encouraging positive interaction.

8.52 All missed assessments during COVID have been caught up and those children with identified needs have been referred to relevant services. Ensuring earlier identification, mitigating health inequalities. Building on good partnership working with Early years to record ASQs and improve information sharing. The SEND HVs is also attend the monthly Child Development Centre Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings

8.53 The immunisation service has worked closely with the special schools to ensure all children have received their routine vaccinations and those children in alternative provisions.

8.54 Community Nursing Team -School nurses continued to virtually attend the Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) panels across Bury to ensure Children and young people are accessing the correct support and that the system is connected.

8.55 Paediatric Physiotherapy service continued to see patients face to face if risk assessed as urgent wearing appropriate PPE. The team ensured that children's additional physical needs were met.

8.56 During lock down the service set up a joint orthotic and physiotherapy clinic to improve collaborative working following verbal feedback from families. Orthotic clinics were cancelled in the special school setting, so this has allowed some patients to access a clinic which is not hospital based.

8.57 Throughout Covid lockdown community paediatricians have continued to support EHCP process fully by converting to telephone consultations in order to provide child and family centred EHC medical advice. However, during Covid there has been an increase demand of requests for EHC advice particularly over first lockdown period when middle grade doctors were relocated to work on acute wards. The service is hoping to resume face to face EHC medical assessments from September 2021.

8.58 Reduction in Paediatric waiting list for Social Communication Difficulties

8.59 Earlier this year a waiting list initiative was agreed due to high number of children waiting on the early years list for the Social Communication Difficulties Discussion Group , including a historical backlog. The waiting list initiative provides nine additional clinics to an additional 108 children over the coming months. This will see triage and assessment being delivered to the backlog of children who have historically been waiting for over two years , with the expectation that children will now flow through the system in 6 months . It is expected that this will be accomplished by December 2021.

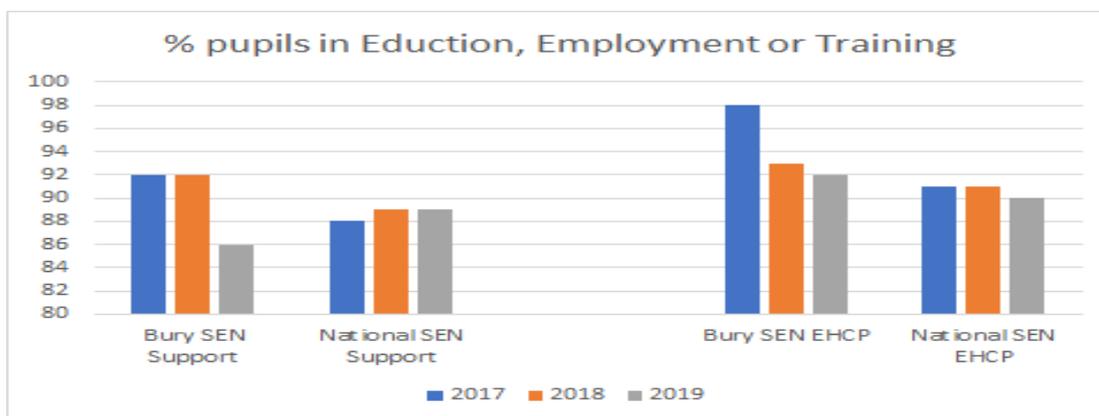
9.0 Bury's aim is that preparing for adulthood (PFA) is embedded in Bury from the earliest years

9.1 Transition

9.2 A success has been the work of the business development/employment officer on the commissioning team who works closely with local colleges for those students with high needs who are in the last year of a vocational course or on a workability/employability programme. This is a targetted service between the officer and tutor whereby the student is matched to the opportunities that the business development/employment officer has sourced by contacting local businesses/networks.

9.3 In 2019/20 of the 33 on caseload, 19 SEND young people have achieved a positive outcome and those continuing in education actively worked with to ensure their transition into a PfA destination when an opportunity is identified.

9.4 Destinations



Source: LAIT

9.5 The percentage of Bury pupils with SEND in education, employment or training (EET) has been above the national average over the three-year period with the exception of pupils on SEN Support in 2019. The percentage of pupils with EHCPs who are in EET has dipped over time.

9.6 At June 2021, of the 2020 Year 11 cohort, who have been tracked across the year as 16–17-year-olds, 3.8% of the full population were not in education, employment or training (NEET) with 0.5% unknown. For pupils on SEN Support, 44 of these were NEET representing 9.1% of the group with 6 pupils (1.2%) being unknown. For pupils with EHCPs 9.8% were recorded as NEET with 2 pupils (0.8%) being unknown. (Source: LA Stats Pack Connexions June 2021)

9.7 Post 16 opportunities

9.8 There is a new £10m European Social Fund (ESF) project for Greater Manchester for 15 -19-year-olds, and up to age 24 years for students with SEND. Students with SEND are a target group for the specification which is now under development.

9.9 There are specific arrangements for SEN students taking up apprenticeships and incentives for employers. These are:

- Additional £1,000 when recruiting 19–24-year-old with EHC on to Apprenticeships
- All training costs paid when recruiting 19–24-year-old with EHC for small employers (less than 50 employees)
- Young people with special needs can join Apprenticeships at Entry 3 in English and/or maths and how far they can progress will be looked at on an individual basis
- Young people with SEN can be part-time Apprentices i.e. less than 30 hours per week e.g. if they cannot work full time due to health reasons, the end date is extended.
- Providers can claim £150 per month from the Learner Support Fund for reasonable adjustments to allow the young person to finish their Apprenticeship
- If costs are over £19,000 the provider can apply for Exceptional Learning Support Costs
- Assessments can be done using British Sign Language
- Employers can apply to Access to Work for their costs in taking on an Apprentice with SEN

10.0 Bury's aim is that transparent pathways allow parents/carers and young people to access services across Education, Health and Care

10.1 Parents, carers and young people have told us that pathways into services are overcomplicated. As a result of pathways are being reviewed. This includes:

- Redesign of Statutory Assessment, through Project Safety Valve Delivery Programme.
- Streamlining routes into requesting Early Help, EHCPs and other SEND services.
- The EHCP as the overarching plan for children with SEND who also have social care plans.
- Reviewing the Short Breaks Statement and improving access to universal Short Breaks. See information in section 7.
- Streamlining assessment for, and provision of, equipment for children and young people with SEND.
- Emotional health and wellbeing transformation, including the social communication diagnostic pathway.

10.2 Progress on the pathways workstreams is ongoing and will reported in the 2022 SEND update.

10.3 **Neuro Disability Pathway**

10.4 There has been commitment and progress in developing the Neuro Disability Pathway which has been a significant improvement in the Local Area.

10.5 The neuro disability pathway covers two areas Mental health and SEND. Bury currently have two neuro pathways – early years and school aged. Speech Communication Difficulties Discussion Groups (SCDDGS) are integral to the preschool ASD assessment. Streamlining the preschool ASD assessment pathway to an integrated one with Speech and Language Therapy team - waiting time for diagnosis and identification of needs have been significantly reduced due to a waiting list initiative which saw the investment in increasing capacity and delivering more clinics. The school aged pathway has also seen increased demand which has resulted in an increase in waiting times and work is in development to address this via the Health Charter groups.

10.6 Emotional health and wellbeing. We know that the pandemic has impacted on children's wellbeing and mental health. Much work has been ongoing in Bury to try and address these needs, and much more is to be done. As part of the Mental Health Charter group will redesign our provision to align it with the iThrive model.

10.7 Bury is co-developing an iThrive model in response to the Future in Mind report on mental health and wellbeing. It is an integrated, person centred, and needs led approach to delivering mental health services for children, young people and their families.

10.8 The aim is that services will offer flexible holistic support based on needs not diagnosis.

10.9 The aim is to increase capacity across the system and support children, young people, their families and professionals to be resilient, to be informed about support available, the choices they have, and to understand what they can do to help themselves. A number of activities have been initialised to support this.

10.10 Early Break built on the learning from the GM Mentally Healthy Schools and Colleges pilot and currently provides 2 dedicated Emotional Health and Wellbeing (EHWB) workers to support high schools across Bury. EHWB support will offer all schools an identified worker who will wrap-around and offer tailored 1:1 support for those young people who are experiencing difficulties such as increased anxiety, stress, depression etc. some of which becomes displaced in behaviours into education

and wider family conflict. EHWB workers will also provide targeted group work and wider support to pastoral staff and mental health leads. This will prepare the way for the wider role out of Mental health in Schools Teams which is scheduled for the next financial year.

10.11 As part of the Healthy Young Minds pathway there is also the development of school link workers, who are in place to support schools to effective channels of communication and support to schools. In September there will also be a launch of a 6-month Pilot professional advice line, whereby professionals will be able to get advice and guidance from a CAMHS professional regarding children who are not in the known to the service.

10.12 September 2021 will see the launch of the Professionals help line, piloting and building intelligence on how best to build capacity and confidence in the wider system approach to supporting emotional health and well-being and mental health this help line will be available for all professionals working with Bury Children to access swift mental health advice for children via the advice and guidance help line.

10.13 Further development will see the establishment of the keyworker role to support capacity for those CYP with learning disabilities and autism who are either already in residential care placements or at risk of going into residential care – supporting families more proactively and in a coordinated way. The ultimate goal is that CYP are enabled to live their best life, within their communities, in a place which meets their needs and wishes, be that with their families/carers or in another suitable home such as foster care, their own home or supported living etc. Linking closely established Designated Clinical Officer in the CCG the key worker role will help hold the system to account and ensure services and provision is family centric.

10.14 The Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) will play a key role in implementing and embedding the SEND reforms and in supporting joined up working between health services, Council and other SEND partners. Bury CCG is the only GM CCG to invest in a full time DCO role. The purpose of role is to support health colleagues across the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Northern Care Alliance and wider children's system to ensure children and young people 0-25 with SEND have the right health support to achieve the best outcomes they possibly can.

10.15 The CCG are currently piloting provision to further understand what service is needed in Bury. Looking at wider system understanding as well as assessment of those who need it, this work is progressing and developments will be refined over the coming months to ensure those children with associated conditions such as ASD, that are impacted most by SPD will have provision and parents and schools will have a better understanding of how best to support and make reasonable adjustments for children and young people.

11.0 Bury's aim is to have highly effective Education, Health and Care Plans and reviews improve life outcomes for children and young people

11.1 Bury Local Area accepts that parents experience of EHCP process has been challenging and is committed to improving this.

11.2 The number of requests for EHCPs continues at a high rate, with over 370 new requests for assessment in 2020/21. The number of requests refused and the number where it was decided not to issue an EHCP were lower than national and regional benchmarks. The increasing number of requests for assessment has put pressure on the team and the timeliness of completion of EHCPs is not what we would want. This is a key area identified for improvement and progress has already been made in strengthening the EHCP and Assessment team. Figure 3 below show that Bury agrees

to issue a far greater number of EHC plans than are agreed nationally. The process around both the panel and assessment will be reviewed under the implementation stage of project safety valve detailed in section 5 above.

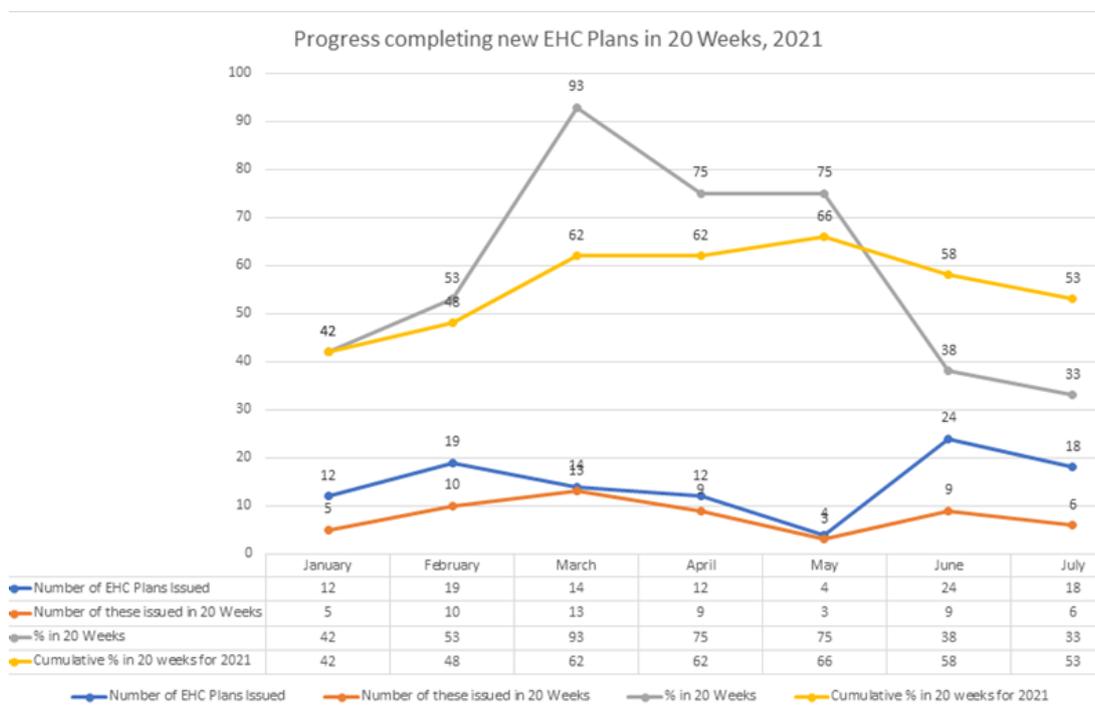
Figure 3 Requests for statutory assessment

	England	North West	Bury
Percentage of assessments during the calendar year where it was decided not to issue an EHC plan	4.90%	3.60%	0.30%
Percentage of initial requests for assessment for an EHC plan that were refused during the calendar year	21.60%	18.60%	15.10%
Rate of EHC plans excluding exceptions issued within 20 weeks	58.00%	62.50%	27.40%
Rate of EHC plans including exceptions issued within 20 weeks	55.60%	60.30%	27.20%

11.3 Ensuring improved pathways, assessment processes and improving the timeliness and quality of EHCPs is a key priority for SEN transformation and will be driven through the project delivery board within Project Safety Valve which is detailed above in section 7. Any changes to the EHCP process plans and Quality assurance will be co-produced with parents through Bury2gether, Bury’s parent carer forum.

11.4 Pleasing to note is that so far in 2021 there has been an improvement from 27% in 2020 to 53% in timeliness. Although there is still need for significant improvement the improved timeliness has been facilitated by the wide adoption of an electronic portal for Health colleagues to be able to share their advice for the EHCP team and brings the Bury SEN EHCP timeliness more in line with national which is currently 58%.

Figure 4. Progress for completing new EHC Plans in 20 weeks 2021



11.5 Currently EHC plans are moderated at the EHC assessment panel and then monthly through a multi agency moderation and Quality Assurance process

11.6 As has been stated previously, improving the quality, timeliness and experience of the assessment process remains a key priority for Bury Local Area. This work is one

of the key deliverables through Project Safety Valve which will focus on strengthening the Council's Special Educational Needs assessment and placements process, including clarifying assessment thresholds for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) and will also include a focus on Quality Assurance. This to be completed by March 2022 and will be co-produced with parents.

12.0 Bury is working towards improved outcomes and standards across education and training

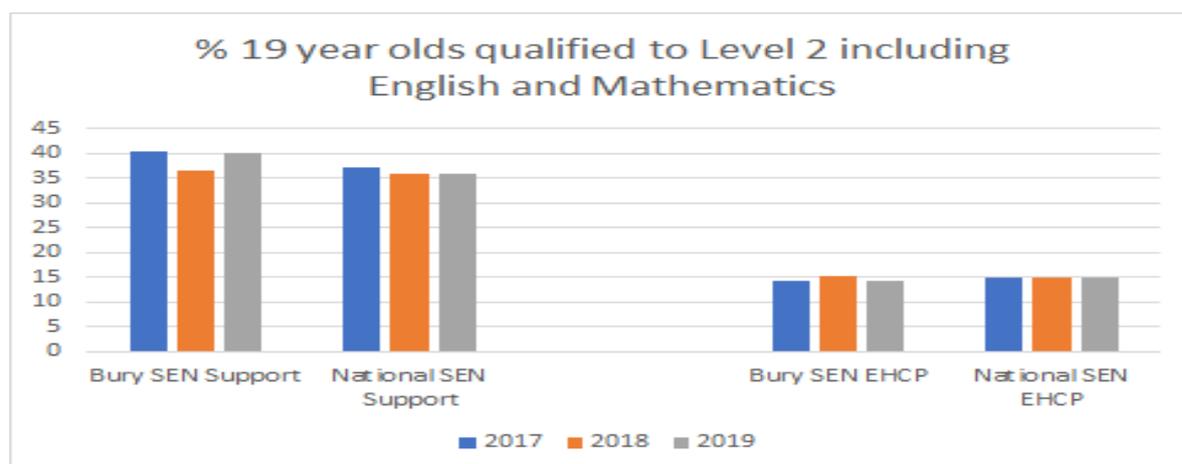
12.1 Bury has high expectations and aspirations for children and young people with SEND.

12.2 Educational outcomes for children and young people in Bury continue to show an inconsistent picture across age ranges and across different types of need. The last validated Data is from 2019 due to the disruption on assessments from COVID-19.

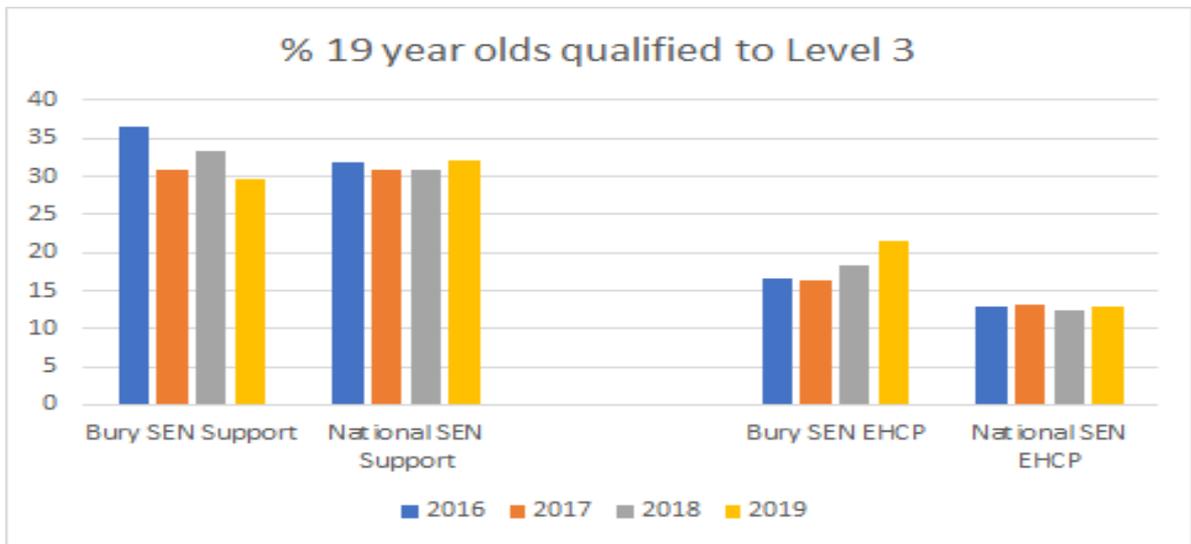
12.3 Improving outcomes for children at SEND Support and for those with an EHCP is a priority for Bury. Bury's inclusion team provides outreach support to mainstream schools and early years settings.

12.4 The following tables look at educational outcomes, progressing down the age ranges:

Attainment at Age 19

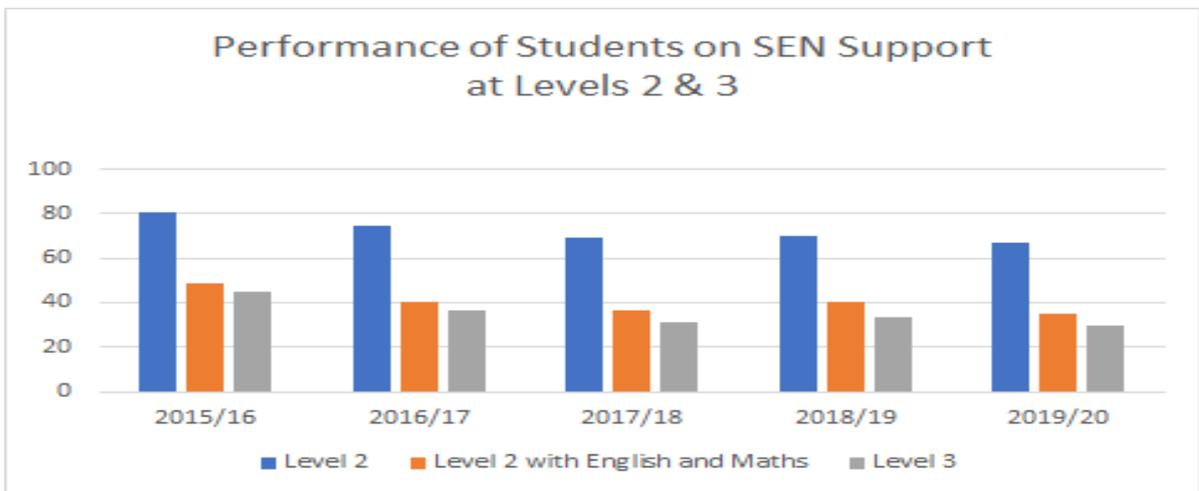


12.5 The percentage of Bury's 19-year-olds on SEN Support qualified at Level 2 (equivalent of GCSE Grade 4 and above) including English and mathematics is above national over the three years. For students with EHCPs the figures are in line with national.

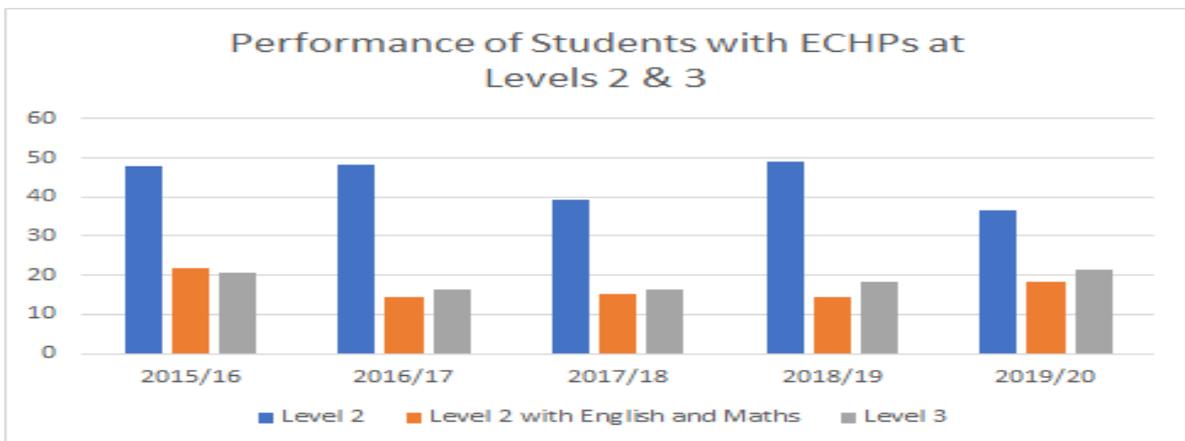


12.6 The percentage of Bury’s 19-year-olds qualified to Level 3 (equivalent of A level) is variable against national for students on SEN Support however, it is above the national average, and improving, for students with EHCPs.

Attainment over 5 years at Level 2 and Level 3 Qualifications



12.7 Across the five years fewer students on SEN Support attained a Level 2 qualification including English and mathematics and those attaining Level 3 are slightly lower, and show a declining trend.



12.8 The percentage of students on EHCPs attaining a Level 3 qualification has been increasing since 2016/17 and is above the percentages attaining Level 2 qualifications including English and mathematics.

Key stage 4 in 2019 (Age 16)

Group	Cohort	Progress 8		Attainment 8		% Eng & Ma 9-5		% Eng & Ma 9-4		% Ebacc Entry		Ebacc APS	
		LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat
SEN Support	228	0.74	0.43	29.7	32.6	13	17	29	32	26.3	16.9	2.5	2.6
SEN EHCP	102	1.04	1.17	17	13.7	6	6	15	11	4.9	4.0	1.3	1.1
No SEN	1807	0.19	0.08	46.8	50.1	42	48	69	71	58.2	44.6	4.1	4.4
All	2135	0.29	0.03	43.5	46.8	37	43	62	65	52	40	3.8	4.08

Source: NCER

12.9 The Progress 8 score (the main accountability measure) of all pupils in Bury at the end of KS4 is below average and there has been a three-year decline in the borough's overall Progress 8 figures between 2017-2019. For SEN Support, Progress 8 in 2019 has improved by 0.11 but is still below national. However, for SEN EHCP, Progress 8 was 0.13 better than national.

12.10 SEN support pupils' English Baccalaureate (Ebacc) entry is significantly above national by 9.4%. Attainment 8 has improved by 2.6pts from 2018 but is still below national by 2.9pts. Achieving a strong pass in English and Maths has improved significantly by 5.2% but is still 4% below national.

12.11 SEN EHCP pupils were above SEN EHCP pupils nationally in all areas except for a strong pass in English and Maths where Bury's pupils were in line with their peers nationally.

Key Stage 4 by Primary Need

Primary Need	Cohort	Progress 8		% Eng & MA 9-5		% Eng & MA 9-4	
		LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat
Autism Spectrum Disorder	31	-1.07	-0.75	3	20	23	33
Hearing Impaired	4	-1.08	-0.16	0	29	50	48
Moderate Learning Difficulty	55	-0.44	-0.57	4	5	7	13
Multi-sensory impairment	1	0.06	-0.24	100	30	100	44
Other	15	-0.45	-0.40	53	19	73	35
Physical Disability	11	-0.53	-0.48	36	24	55	40
Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties	4	-1.74	-1.43	0	-	0	1
Severe Learning Difficulties	12	-0.78	-1.40	8	0	17	1
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	79	-1.53	-1.19	9	13	22	26
Specific Learning Difficulties	77	-0.37	-0.18	8	18	26	35
Speech, Language & Communications Needs	28	-0.62	-0.44	14	10	32	21
Visual Impairment	3	-1.84	-0.27	33	30	33	49

Source: NCER

12.12 When breaking down the KS4 SEN results by primary need (and focusing on cohorts of more than 10 pupils due to statistical significance), pupils with autistic spectrum disorder, specific learning difficulties, Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs and speech, language and communication needs have made less progress than their peers nationally. The Progress 8 figures for moderate learning difficulty and severe learning difficulties are above the peer national average.

12.13 Physical disability, other and speech, language and communication needs are above the national average for attainment of a good pass (5+) in English and mathematics.

12.14 In addition, physical disability, other, severe learning difficulties and speech, language and communication needs are above the national average for attainment of a standard pass (4+) in English and mathematics.

Key Stage 2 in 2019 (Age 11)

Group	Cohort	% RWM EXS+		Reading Progress		Writing Progress		Maths Progress	
		LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat
SEN Support	373	22	25	-0.25	-1.00	-1.94	-1.70	-0.23	-1.00
SEN EHCP	85	14	9	-1.14	-3.60	-2.51	-4.30	-1.73	-3.90
No SEN	1916	75	75	1.08	0.30	0.63	0.50	0.93	0.40
All	2376	65	65	0.79	0.00	0.11	0.00	0.66	0.00

12.15 In 2019, 14% of pupils with EHCPs achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics (RWM) combined; this was 5% above the national average. However, these figures are well below the national average of 65% for all pupils. 22% of SEN support pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined. This represents a 1% decrease in 2018 and is 3% below the 2019 national for this group.

12.16 Progress scores of SEN support pupils in the borough are above the progress of SEN support pupils nationally in reading and maths.

12.17 In terms of progress, pupils with EHCPs made more progress than the national average for this group. Progress in all subjects was significantly better than that of their peers nationally.

Key Stage 2 by Primary Need

Primary Need	Cohort	% RWM EXS+		Reading Progress		Writing Progress		Maths Progress	
		LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat
Autism Spectrum Disorder	32	41	28	-0.33	-1.70	-2.41	-2.70	-1.90	-2.00
Hearing Impaired	7	57	43	0.33	-0.7	-0.57	-0.50	2.49	-0.40
Moderate Learning	93	3	11	-0.77	-1.90	-1.85	-2.10	-1.46	-1.90

Difficulty									
Multi-sensory impairment	2	0	39	-4.88	-0.00	-1.99	-2.20	-7.54	-1.3
No specialist assessment	55	20	21	0.09	-1.00	-2.09	-1.40	-1.62	-1.20
Other	14	43	29	2.9	-0.80	-1.06	-1.80	1.17	-1.50
Physical Disability	12	8	38	-1.07	-0.30	-4.24	-1.80	-0.08	-1.80
Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties	4	0		-1.56	-2.90	-2.75	-2.90	-1.39	-3.30
Severe Learning Difficulties	8	0	1	0.67	-2.90	-1.95	-3.10	1.54	-3.30
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	83	29	35	-2.1	-1.20	-3.52	-2.70	-1.19	-1.90
Specific Learning Difficulties	87	22	21	0.71	-0.90	-1.07	-2.20	1.06	-0.90
Speech, Language & Communications Needs	54	19	19	-0.35	-1.80	-1.54	-1.80	0.83	-0.70
Visual Impairment	6	67	46	2.43	0.40	-0.13	-0.10	-0.96	-0.50

Source: NCER

12.18 When breaking down the Key Stage 2 SEN results by primary need (and focusing on cohorts of more than 10 pupils due to statistical significance), a higher percentage of pupils with autism spectrum disorder and other attained the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined compared with their peers nationally.

12.19 Progress in reading is better than their peers nationally for all sizable groups except physical disability and social, emotional and mental health. Progress is positive for pupils with specific learning difficulties and other.

12.20 Writing progress for sizable groups is better than or equal to their peers nationally with the exception of pupils with no specialist assessment, physical disabilities and social, emotional and mental health. Progress of pupils with specific learning difficulties is well above their peers nationally.

12.21 Progress in maths is better than their peers nationally for all sizeable groups except pupils with no specialist assessment. Progress is positive for pupils with specific learning difficulties and for those with speech, language and communication needs.

Key Stage 1 in 2019 (Age 7)

Group	Cohort	RWM EXS+		Reading EXS+		Writing EXS+		Maths EXS+	
		LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat
SEN Support	368	21	21	36	33	24	25	39	36
SEN EHCP	64	8	7	14	13	9	9	14	14
No SEN	2025	71	73	80	83	76	78	82	84
All	2484	61	65	72	75	67	69	74	76

12.22 The percentage of pupils with SEN support reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics (RWM) is in line with the national figures for their peers, reading and mathematics 3% above, writing in line. For pupils with EHCP,

RWM and expected standard in reading are above national and the expected standard in writing and maths are in line with national. Figures in all subjects are well below those for all pupils nationally.

Key Stage 1 Primary Need

Primary Need	Cohort	RWM EXS+		Reading EXS+		Writing EXS+		Maths EXS+	
		LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat	LA	Nat
Autism Spectrum Disorder	32	13	20	19	29	13	22	16	31
Hearing Impaired	10	30	40	40	49	40	44	60	53
Moderate Learning Difficulty	62	13	7	29	17	15	10	37	19
Multi-sensory impairment	1	0	27	0	42	0	30	0	43
No specialist assessment	44	9	14	18	27	9	17	18	29
Other	10	20	22	40	34	30	25	40	35
Physical Disability	9	33	30	44	45	33	34	44	42
Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties	4	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	2
Severe Learning Difficulties	3	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	2
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	55	36	28	56	45	38	32	56	46
Specific Learning Difficulties	56	18	11	34	22	21	14	32	26
Speech, Language & Communication Needs	135	19	21	32	31	24	24	37	37
Visual Impairment	8	25	38	38	52	25	43	50	53

Source: NCER

12.23 When breaking down the Key Stage 1 SEN results by primary need (and focusing on cohorts of more than 10 pupils due to statistical significance), moderate learning difficulties, social, emotional and mental health and specific learning difficulties are consistently above national in all subjects. Autism spectrum disorder and no specialist assessment are below national figures in all subjects. Pupils with speech, language & communication needs are broadly in line with national figures.

Year 1 Phonics in 2019 (Age 6)

Group	Cohort	Working at Expected Standard	
		LA	Nat
SEN Support	251	47	48

SEN EHCP	44	9	20
No SEN	2056	88	88
All	2379	82	82

Source: NCER

12.24 The percentage of SEN Support pupils 'passing' the phonics screening check is 1% below national for this group whilst pupils with SEN EHCP are below the national average for this group.

Phonics Primary Need

Primary Need	Cohort	Working at Expected Standard	
		LA	Nat
Autism Spectrum Disorder	31	31	37
Hearing Impaired	7	71	57
Moderate Learning Difficulty	27	33	32
Multi-sensory impairment	0	-	51
No specialist assessment	31	29	44
Other	8	63	46
Physical Disability	10	50	51
Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties	4	0	3
Severe Learning Difficulties	3	0	4
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	35	50	52
Specific Learning Difficulties	22	33	36
Speech, Language & Communications Needs	117	47	47
Visual Impairment	1	0	59

Source: NCER

12.25 When breaking down the Year 1 Phonics SEN results by primary need (and focusing on cohorts of more than 10 pupils due to statistical significance), the picture is variable with pupils with autistic spectrum disorder and no specialist assessment being below their peers nationally whilst pupils with moderate learning difficulties and those with speech, language and communication needs are broadly in line with their peers.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in 2019 (Age 5)

Group	Cohort	% achieving GLD	
		LA	Nat
SEN Support	181	26	29
SEN EHCP	45	9	5
No SEN	2059	77	77
All	2326	71	72

Source: NCER

12.26 The percentage of pupils on SEN support achieving a good level of development (GLD) is 3% below national for this group whilst the percentage of pupils on EHCP achieving a good level of development is 4% above national.

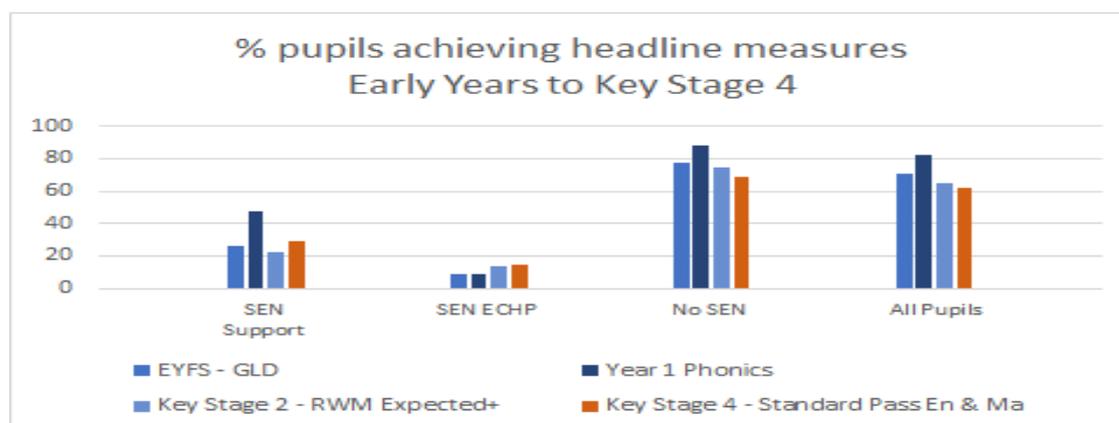
EYFS Primary Need

Primary Need	Cohort	% achieving GLD	
		LA	Nat
Autism Spectrum Disorder	29	10	12
Hearing Impaired	5	40	40
Moderate Learning Difficulty	12	25	14
Multi-sensory impairment	-	-	30
No specialist assessment	17	35	24
Other	4	25	31
Physical Disability	7	14	31
Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties	3	0	1
Severe Learning Difficulties	2	0	1
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	29	17	27
Specific Learning Difficulties	12	0	16
Speech, Language & Communications Needs	105	28	29
Visual Impairment	2	0	47

Source: NCER

12.27 The percentage of pupils with moderate learning difficulties and no specialist assessment achieving a good level of development are above national; moderate learning difficulties achieving the GLD was 11% above the national figure. No pupils with specific learning difficulties achieved GLD.

Attainment of Bury pupils with SEND from Early Years to Key Stage 4 in 2019

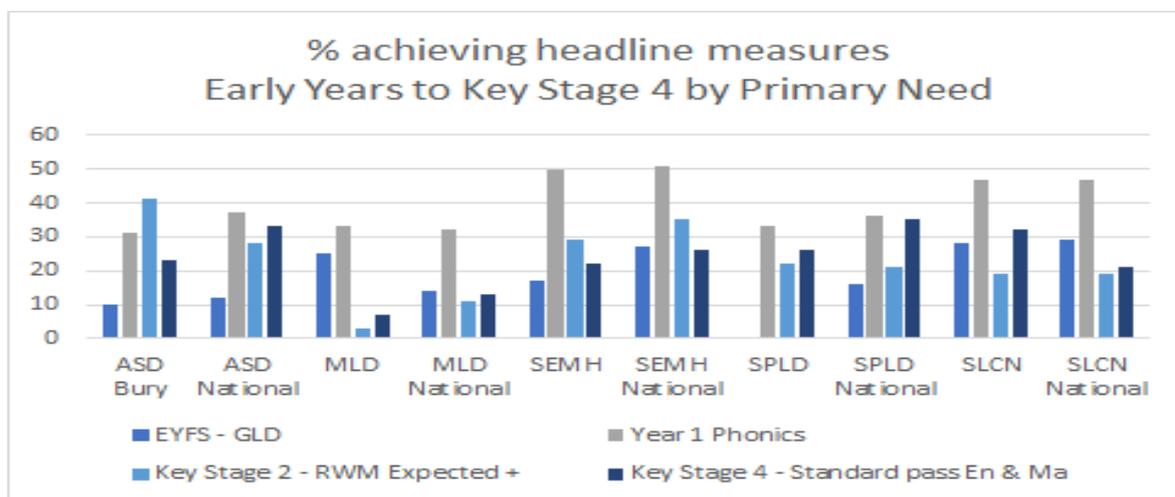


Source: NCER

12.28 A higher percentage of pupils with EHCPs attained the headline measure of a standard pass in both English and mathematics at Key Stage 4 than achieved a good level of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is also the case for pupils on SEN Support however the Year 1 phonics check is significantly higher. Care should be taken with this data given the difference of SEN needs within the different cohorts however the picture for SEN is positive compared with the picture for pupils with No SEN in Bury. This pattern is replicated nationally.

Attainment of Bury Pupils with SEND from Early Years to Key Stage 4 by Primary Need

Note: Only Primary Needs with 10 or more pupils at each Key Stage have been included



13.0 CONCLUSIONS

13.1 Local area leaders from health, social care and education have acknowledged the challenges faced by Bury in implementing the SEND Local Area reforms. Bury as a local area is committed to a programme of transformation and is determined to work in co-production with parents to improve both outcomes and experiences of children, young people with SEND and their families.

13.2 Bury's Local Area Strategic action plan and Project Safety Valve Transformation Delivery Plan will be governed through the SEND Assurance Board which is an example of our strengthening local area partnership and has had a key leadership role in embedding the reforms and accelerating Bury's improvement journey.

13.3 These plans both complement one another with agreed priorities, joint working on integrated pathways and continued work on quality and timeliness of EHCPs; improving outcomes for children with SEND support and improving the experience of families.

14.0 Next steps:

14.1 Bury as a Local Area is committed to SEND transformation and continued progress to ensure improved experience and outcomes for our children and young people with identified Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and their families.

14.2 Finalise a co-produced Revised Strategic Local Area Action Plan in which the aim is that:

- Parents'/carers' and children's/young people's views impact on strategic decisions and shape and inform all work across the Local Area;
- Excellent local offer, understood and accessible to all, leading to improved life outcomes; Earlier intervention and prevention to offer help and meet needs at the earliest opportunity, reducing the demand on high cost and sometimes ineffective interventions; Integrated and transparent pathways allows parents/carers and young people to access services across education, health and care;
- High quality individualised Education Health and Care Plans and reviews drive improvements across the Local Area through transformation through Project Safety Valve;

- Children and young people with SEND have needs met through local sufficient excellent education, health and care services, jointly commissioned where appropriate; Updated JSNA ensures revised SEND strategy and revised commissioning strategy and joint commissioning responds to Local Area needs;
- A continuum of provision across the Local Area ensures needs are met including specialist SEND services;
- Develop opportunities for the use of personal budgets where parents want them; Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) is embedded in Bury from the earliest years including high quality transition to adult social care;
- Improved outcomes and standards across education and training with a focus on inclusion, covid-19 recovery;
- A highly skilled workforce across all stakeholders improves outcomes for children and young people;
- The local area has embedded robust accountability and governance structures ;
- Project Safety Valve leads to SEND Transformation and a reduction in High Needs spending

14.3 Project Safety Valve SEND Transformation plan implementation phase is currently starting with project workstreams in place and reporting progress to the SEND Assurance Board

14.4 Committee members are asked to consider and comment on the information in this report, the identified priorities and the planned next steps.

List of Background Papers:-

Cabinet Report, March 2021: Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Deficit Recovery

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Executive Director sign off Date: 23/8/21

JET Meeting Date:24/8/21