

REPORT

SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Northumberland

Dec 21

What is a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment?

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) is a process by which Local Authorities and NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups assess the current and future health, care and wellbeing needs of a local community to inform local decision making. This JSNA is about children and young people with SEND aged 0-25 and identifies priorities for commissioners based on

The JSNA:

- Describes the characterises of children and young people with SEND aged 0-25
- Identifies inequalities
- Illustrates trends
- Describes local community views
- Highlights the key findings

What information do we use?

Information from many different sources are looked at, including

- Nationally published datasets on education, health and social care
- Information from services in the Local Authority and the NHS
- Internal data systems within the Local Authority and NHS
- The voice of children, young people and their families

A list of published datasets used to write the JSNA is available in the appendices.

It isn't possible to get a fully definitive picture of the needs of children and young people with SEND because organisations collect different information, in different ways and on different timescales. However, putting together the information that is available allows us to more fully understand the needs of children and young people with SEND in Northumberland.

About Northumberland SEND population

Northumberland Population

In 2020, Northumberland had an estimated population of 323, 820 of which 19.2% were 0-18 year olds. Overall the birth rate is falling and is expected to have decreased by 7% in 2043.

SEND Population

Northumberland has just under the national average of pupils identified with SEND. Of those identified, there are more children with an EHCP compared to the national average and there are fewer children receiving SEN Support.

Two thirds more boys have identified SEND compared to girls. Three quarters of EHCPs are for boys and a quarter are for girls.

SEN Support in Mainstream Schools

There is an eight year long increasing trend of numbers of children and young people identified with SEND. Schools in the West have lower numbers of SEN Support pupils in mainstream than those in the North, Southeast and Central localities. Numbers of pupils with EHCPs are increasing and are above the national average with an increasing trend.

The top three SEN needs across Northumberland at SEN Support are

- Speech, language and communication
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Moderate learning difficulties

Children and Young People with an EHCP

There is a year on year increasing trend, that is above the national average of children and young people with an EHCP since 2015 (as of January 2021 Northumberland 3.9% vs National 3.7%). This is increasing on average 10% a year in line with the national average.




The top three SEN needs for children and young people with an EHCP in Northumberland are

- Autism
- Social, emotional and mental health needs
- Speech, language and communication needs

The two year groups with the highest numbers of EHCPs are Years 6 and 8. All age groups show a rise in numbers of plans year on year with the exception of 20-25 year olds.

Education and Employment

We want children and young people to

-  Achieve the best in learning
-  Learn skills and knowledge that will help promote independence
-  Be employed, access an internship or volunteer

EHCPs and mainstream schools

In primary schools, the number of children and young people with an EHCP has increased by 19% from January 19 to January 20. This compares to a regional rise of 17% and a national rise of 12.4%.

In secondary schools, the numbers of children and young people with an EHCP halved between 2010 and 2019. From January 19 to January 20 Northumberland figures dropped 0.9% against a regional increase of 8.3% and a national increase of 9.04%

Specialist educational provision

There has been a year on year increase in the numbers of children and young people with specialist provision named within their EHCP. This represents an average increase in specialist educational placements of 9% year on year over the past five years.

285 of pupils supported with an EHCP are educated in specialist placements, schools and colleges outside of Northumberland; of those 91 are in Post 16 education. For students under 16 the number of out of authority placements has increased in part due to a lack of appropriate Northumberland provision but also in part due to parental pressure for specialist out of authority provision.

Education Outcomes

Percentage of early years SEND children reaching a good level of development in Northumberland is above the national average and is showing a rising trend.

Performance at Key Stage 1 and 2 for reading, writing and maths is showing improvement for SEN Support learners and is above the national average for this group. There is a significant gap between all learners and SEND learners in writing standard at KS1 and KS2.

Validated Attainment 8 scores show an improvement for SEN Support learners but a decrease for EHCP learners. Although showing improvement in some key stages, outcomes for EHCP learners remain low. The attainment gap between children and young people with SEND and those who do not widens with age in line with the national picture.

Post 16

Post 16 the majority of learners attend further education and 6th form colleges with a high number accessing provision outside of Northumberland.

NEET numbers for young people with SEND are higher than for young people who do not have an identified SEND and are above the national average.

Supported internship numbers have decreased during the pandemic.

Vulnerable learners

The top three needs of children, young people and their families receiving support from Early Help who have an identified SEND are

- social, emotional and mental health needs
- moderate learning difficulties
- Autism

As would be expected, many children and young people with SEND who are open to social care are receiving support from the Disabled Children's Team.

Numbers of children who are educated at home rose from 19-20 to 20-21 but have seen a fall in 21-22. As of January 2022, 17% of those electively home educated were at SEN Support, 8% had an EHCP and 75% had no identified SEN.

There has been a falling trend of children and young people with SEND subject to a fixed term or permanent exclusion year on year since 2018.

Support for Early Years

Inclusion support for early years settings showed an increase in referrals of 66% between the academic years of 19-20 and 20-21.

There has been a three year increase year on year in referrals for support for pre-school children who have been identified as having significant need that may result in additional support being required in school. 40-45% of those referred are predicted to have a level of need that may require specialist educational provision. Referrals have increased from 79 in the academic year of 18-19 to 184 in 20-21, an increase of 133% showing there are more children being identified earlier with high levels of need.

Support for schools

There has been a 36% increase across the board of the numbers of referrals made by schools for support from specialist teachers with the following needs following the removal of the traded services model

- Autism
- Emotional wellbeing and behaviour
- Literacy
- Speech, language and communication

This increase is seen in all school partnerships bar one in the southeast and represents an increase of 24 additional schools seeking support for children and young people with SEND.

Key findings

- *There is a development need within mainstream schools for greater inclusive practice with SEND learners, particularly at secondary level*
- *There is a need for workforce development to better support learners across the highest areas of need of social, emotional and mental health, Autism, and speech, language and communication needs*
- *There is an increased need for specialist educational provision across the board, particularly for pupils with SEMH and Autism at secondary phase*
- *There is a need to increase the range of options for Post 16 learners within Northumberland*
- *There is a need to reduce the numbers of young people who are NEET and SEND and reverse the trend*
- *There is a need to Increase the number of supported internships which result in employment.*

Health

We want children and young people to

- ♥ Be as fit and healthy as possible
- ♥ Be relaxed and happy and able to cope with life's ups and downs
- ♥ Know how to look after individual health needs

Early identification and the Healthy Child Programme

Children living in Northumberland have their progress reviewed in a timely manner enabling early identification of need through regular reviews at 6-8 weeks, 12 months and two and a half years with on average 90% of visits taking place in a timely way.

Of those being seen, there is a 90+% level of children achieving at or above the expected levels in the five domains of communication, fine and gross motor, problem solving and personal-social skills.

Therapy and Nursing Support

Children and young people referred to the Northumbria NHS Foundation Trust for Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Speech and Language Therapy are seen within the national 18 week waiting time. This has remained strong throughout the pandemic over the past two years. Special School Nursing are able to deliver a needs led response to children and young people in special schools.

There remains a level of concern about levels of therapeutic support from some parents, carers and educational settings as evidenced through discussions, complaints and SEND tribunals. Support for children and young people with sensory processing difficulties is inconsistent across Northumberland and is an area of unmet need.

Support for mental health

To note, SEND specific information about NHS mental health and SEND is not available. Information here relates to all children and young people.

91% of children and young people who are referred to the Primary Mental Health Team are seen within four weeks. The numbers of children and young people who are referred has increased year on year since 17/18 from 503 referrals to 1,085 referrals in 20/21, an increase of 115%. Historically the service has seen a 50/50 split in male and females referred, during 2020/21 the team saw an increasing prevalence of females. Reasons for referrals have remained largely similar over

recent years. Anxiety is the most common referral reason, followed by low mood and depression, behaviour, self-harm and suspected Autism.

Online support is available through the platform Kooth for 11-25 year olds. In 20-21 Kooth received 6334 logins from 1024 young people. There are more than double the number of females accessing the site than males this is reflected nationally. The average number of chat sessions is 2 and the average number of messages sent is 7. Presenting issues remain largely constant and related to anxiety/stress, suicidal thoughts, self-harm and family relationships all of which have been in the top five most prevalent presenting issues every month over the last year.

All children were seen within 12 weeks of referral to CYPS (Childrens and Young People's Service at CNTW) for access to diagnostic pathways and / or mental health support. There has been an increase in referrals which has impacted on the ability to meet with four week wait, however this is stabilising now that referral rates are dropping.

Children and young people receiving support from the Northumberland Inclusive Education Service show that there is a continuing need for support for mental health. Out of 165 children, 26% scored 8-10, 50% scored 4-7 and 14% scored 1-3 for 'I can manage life's ups and downs'.

Referrals for children and young people to access support for mental health have increased significantly during the pandemic and are placing demands upon the capacity of existing resources.

Autism Post diagnostic support

Diagnostic support is offered through EarlyBird Plus (0-4) and Cygnet programmes. There has been a 124% in parents and carers being offered a place on Cygnet programmes. Programmes are valued by parents and carers.

Education Other Than At School

Numbers have remained static over the past two years for children and young people who have either physical and / or mental health needs that have been identified by a health practitioner as being a barrier to attendance at school and receive education outside of school. Of this group 82% have mental health needs and 18% have medical needs. 25% of this group had an EHCP, 32% are at SEN Support and 43% had no identified SEN.

Autism and Girls

A task and finish Focus Group looked at data, listening and practice for Girls and Autism. The report showed there was a need to listen to and provide support to families with girls with Autism, for earlier identification and more consideration of the needs of girls and how they present within existing diagnostic pathways.

Annual Health Check

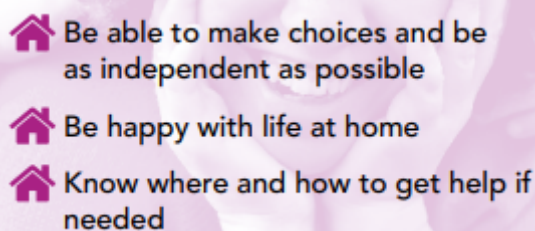
63% of young people aged 14-25 with a Learning Disability on the GP register who are eligible have received an annual health check.

Key findings

- *There continues to be a high level of need around social, emotional and mental health needs and a continuing need for a multi-agency focus on supporting pupils with SEMH through the implementation of a coordinated graduated response*
- *There is a need for a clear pathway to access assessment, advice and support around sensory processing and sensory integration needs*
- *Diagnostic pathways and support needs to be more responsive to and of the needs of girls with Autism*
- *Speech, language and communication needs are the highest need within Northumberland and would benefit from the establishment of a clear graduated response to meeting need*
- *There is a need to increase the number of young people who are eligible for and receive an Annual Health Check*

Independent living

We want children and young people to

- 
- 🏠 Be able to make choices and be as independent as possible
 - 🏠 Be happy with life at home
 - 🏠 Know where and how to get help if needed

Children, young people and transition

An online survey about transition between school settings was devised by the 'Be You' Team, a collaboration of professionals from Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust and Northumberland County Council. 191 responses were received – 24 teachers, 43 parents and carers and 191 children and young people.

This report showed there was a need for focussed person centred planning that starts early, improved communication between all partners, welcoming nurturing environments and training for support around anxiety.

Transition into Adulthood in social care

For two years there has been an increase of children and young people being referred by children's social care into adult social care. This means that an increasing number of 16 and 17 are receiving an adult social care assessment under the age of 18, and that more young people and their families understand what support will be available into adulthood. Autism remains the highest level of need in this population, including those who also have ADHD and / or learning disability.

Independent Living

There are a number of schemes currently in development in the County, most of which are blocks of supported living units that will meet need and better utilise care and support available. A block of 12 flats in Bedlington, approximately 17 bungalows in Ashington, 5 bungalows in Morpeth as well as an opportunity in Berwick. However, there are gaps in provision in the North and West of the county and we are keen to work with potential partners to develop ideas to provide specialised supported living solutions to meet demand.

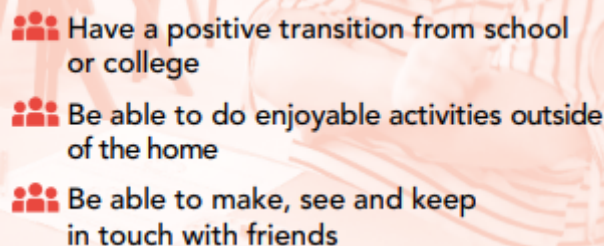
96% of young people with a learning disability aged 18-25 live in settled accommodation (in their own home or with friends and family).

Key findings

- *Gaps identified in the equity of access to supported living across Northumberland in the North and West*
- *There is a need for improved identification and pathways into adulthood for young people who will require adult social care support and who are not open to the Disabled Children's team.*
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Community Inclusion

We want children and young people to

- 
- Have a positive transition from school or college
 - Be able to do enjoyable activities outside of the home
 - Be able to make, see and keep in touch with friends

Short breaks

A review of the Short Break Offer highlighted geographical disparity which results in limited choice and flexibility for some families, meaning there is not an equitable offer. A specific area that has been raised in Northumberland is about the lack of access to short break activities in the west and the north of the county, whereas the southeast and central areas have more easy access to the Ability to Play service. The pandemic has reduced access to some activities and services for some families, but it has equally been an opportunity for many families to access virtual support, which has been positively received and has strengthened networks.

VCSE Feedback

Inclusion North approached Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations / groups to understand the views of the communities they support and the results of any consultations carried out. Key points include

- **Aspirations** – young people are aspirational, systems are less so, need to consider planning around employment earlier
- **Person-centred** – approaches need to be holistic and centred around the young person
- **Relationships** – their importance and the need for places to socialise which is not consistent across the geography of Northumberland
- **Information** – need for information to be accessible in a number of formats and focussed on moving into adulthood, to include support for parents and carers
- **Multi-agency communication** – greater join up between practitioners with consistent communication
- **Consistent** approach to transition across schools
- **Finance** – lack of accessible information to support families about benefits

Key findings

- *There is a gap in the equity of access to short break activities across Northumberland.*
- *There is a need for clearer accessible information about moving into adulthood across all areas*
- *There is a need to develop and support consistent person centred approaches in supporting young people into adulthood*

Voice of children, young people and their families

Information gained from listening to the voice of children, young people and their families in workstreams across the year indicate a number of common themes that need to be embedded within all development and commissioning work. These are

- **Information** – children, young people and their families report that access to information is an area that requires development, and that the Local Offer is not easy to navigate or find information on
- **Communication with parents and carers** – parents and carers report that communication is not always timely
- **Multi-agency communication** – parents and carers report that practitioners do not consistently communicate with each other, particularly when many agencies are supporting a child or young person
- **Co-production** – children, young people and their families report that sometimes the care they receive is not person-centred and their views are not central to decision making
- **Preparation for adulthood** – parents and carers tell us that there needs to be more planning, information and support from practitioners around leaving education and moving into adulthood
- **SEN Support and EHCPs** – the most common queries raised through SENDIASS are about SEN Support, EHC needs assessments and educational placements

Key findings

- *There is a need to ensure that the Local Offer is current and content is easily accessible*
- *There is a need for all development work to ensure that accessible information is readily available*
- *There is a need for practitioners to consistently share information and collaborate as part of coordinated multi-agency working*
- *There is a need for co-production to be consistent at the level of strategic planning, at the level of delivering services and at the level of each family and child*
- *Information about support that is available at SEN Support and the process by which you apply for, be assessed and have a named school in the EHCP needs to be clearer and more accessible for parents and carers*

Published datasets accessed

- [LG \(Local Government\) SEND report](#) *(opens in external window)*
- [SEN2 data](#) *(opens in external window)*
- [Local Authority Interactive Tool \(LAIT\)](#) *(opens in external window)*
- [A Multi-Agency Data Dashboard for SEND 0-25](#) *(opens in external window)*
- [Mental Health Services Data Set](#) *(opens in external window)*
- [Public Health Profiles](#) *(opens in external window)*
- [Personal Health Budgets](#) *(opens in external window)*
- [Learning Disabilities Annual Health Checks](#) *(opens in external window)*

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January 22