

## Appendix one: National, Regional and Local Context

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) review and its recommendations need to be understood at not only a local Stockport area level but also framed within a regional and national Policy level to fully understand the current position. This appendix is the overview of the context that the review has been framed within.

### 1.1 National and Regional Context

In the last six years there has been a significant national policy shift in relation to the provision of support for children and young people with SEND. This was because of the Children and Family Act 2014, Part 3 and associated regulatory guidance through the SEND Code of Practice 0-25. This provided a proposed national far reaching cultural shift within the whole sector which was built upon the following principles:

- Families and young people should only have to “tell it once” to professionals
- Clear focus and obligation on services to include parent/carers and young people in decision making regarding their support and care, including provision of information to make informed choices, including personal budgets
- Agencies have a duty to come together to provide joined up services and plans in the areas of education, health and social care, including joint planning and commissioning of services
- A graduated response to support should be offered to young people. This includes Early Help through to EHCP
- Young people with additional needs should be included in their local area provision, with barriers reduced and services provided that are aspirational for them, including preparing them for adulthood.

The legislation marked a much-needed watershed in national policy in terms of provision for young people with additional needs and disabilities within education. However, since its inception there has been significant impact felt within local areas in relation to the implementation and roll out of the reforms. The reforms not only required a change in how services and plans were delivered but also a significant cultural change in terms of workforce. Following the first full year of post implementation inspection OFSTED produced a report<sup>1</sup>. It was clear that:

**“Children and young people identified as needing SEND support had not benefited from the implementation of the SEND Code of Practice well enough”**

This position has continued with 17 out of 26 areas inspected in 2019 requiring a WSoA following an insufficient joint area inspection. Overall, more than half of authorities have been required to complete an improvement plan since the start of inspections in 2016, including Stockport.

---

<sup>1</sup> Local area SEND inspections: one year on

## 1.2 DSG Grant and Schools Block Funding

As a result of the reforms demand nationally for support has increased significantly. This has happened alongside changes to how the high needs formula was allocated in 2018 which has brought real pressure to local authorities.

Work commissioned by the Local Government Association (LGA) carried out by the ISOS partnership found that in responses from 93 local authorities, that the total annual gap between their high needs block allocations and their high needs expenditure rose from £123 million in 2015-16 to a projected £287 million by the end of 2018-19. Over the same period the average expenditure per local authority has increased from £38.8 million to £45.0 million. The average net deficit for this period is £3.4 million.

(Have we reached a ‘tipping point’? Trends in spending for children and young people with SEND in England”, December 2018)

In a recent GM wide briefing note it was stated that at the end of 2018/19, GM authorities will have a collective overspend of £53m. This is expected to be £74m by 2019/20. This is despite moving £17m from the schools’ block to High Needs.

In Stockport the financial situation has been:

- 2017/18 Net DSG outturn position £0.326m deficit – financed by deployment of available reserves
- 2018/19 Net DSG outturn position £1.310m deficit – financed by deployment of Council non-cash limit reserves
- 2019/20 Net DSG final outturn position at £1.360m deficit – This deficit has been carried forward and is to be managed within future years DSG budget setting processes.

The LA has used the flexibility available within the DSG conditions of grant in each of the past three years to transfer 0.5% of funding from the Schools’ block to finance expenditure within the high needs block. The overall DSG grant and reserves/council support is summarised in Table 2.1 below.

DSG grant and reserves/council support 2017/18 to 2019/20

<b>Narrative</b>	<b>2017/18 £m</b>	<b>2018/19 £m</b>	<b>2019/20 £m</b>
DSG Grant	174.139	178.612	181.348
Reserves	0.454	0.314	1.160
Total Income	174.592	178.926	182.718
Total Spend	174.919	180.286	184.020
HNB central spend of above	22.717	25.370	26.350
Variance	0.326	1.360	1.302

The financial deficit on the DSG as a result of High Needs Block spend in Stockport has been offset by Schools' Forum allowing 0.5% transfer of the main block in 2018/19 and again this year. However, the LA has chosen to support the DSG and write off the £1.360 million deficit in 2018/19. This cannot continue long term. Central government announced an additional £700 million High Needs block in November 2019. This equated to an extra c. £2.3 million for Stockport in the baseline 2020/21 grant allocation.

In addition, Stockport schools receive low levels of funding within the schools grant block. For a mainstream primary the value per pupil is £4,018 which places Stockport 135 in the LA funding league table out of 152. The secondary pupil amount is £5,178 which places Stockport 124 in the LA finding league table out of 152.

As a result, Stockport schools are at a disadvantage in relation to their basic budgets which has a potential knock on effect to their ability to provide levels of support and potential high needs block spend. The local area has made representation in relation to this to central government.

The above can be further evidenced in relation to the number of schools who have sought LA approval to set a formal deficit budget (2019/20 - 10 schools totalling £1.5m)

### **1.3 Demand for Support**

In terms of ongoing demand for support through high needs blocks nationally figures show 48,900 children and young people, aged 0-25 in England received new Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans in 2018, which detail the support a person with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is entitled to.

This amounts to 134 children and young people with SEND starting support plans each day. National policy context- LGA June 2019

The percentage of pupils with an EHC plan has risen to 3.1% of the total pupil population after remaining constant at 2.8% from 2007 to 2017. *ONS Jan 2019*

In terms of current demand for an EHC plan in Stockport this is shown in the table below:

#### **Stockport EHCP 2015-2019**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>School population %</b>
2019	1,859	4%
2018	1,805	3.9%
2017	1,773	3.9%
2016	1,747	3.9%
2015	1,666	3.8%

**Source:** LA Liquid logic

**Note:** Current NW average is 3.2%, Stockport has the second highest proportion of pupils with an EHC plan in the NW<sup>2</sup>.

Stockport is also an outlier in both regional and national terms in relation to the percentage of young people who receive an EHC plan to meet their needs. In a national context only 12 other LA have corresponding or higher percentage numbers with 6 of these being inner city London boroughs<sup>3</sup>.

The data above indicates that for the last 5 years Stockport has above average young people on an EHC plan in order to meet their needs. This may indicate a gap in the current education early help and SEN Support offer to both pupils and mainstream schools and alternative settings.

In corresponding data Stockport has lower than average SEN Support numbers (early help). This could indicate that support is not being provided at the right level at an earlier stage. This will be explored further in the SEN support section of the main report. The table below shows the SEN support numbers in Stockport from 2015-19:

### **Stockport SEN Support Numbers 2015-19**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>School population %</b>
2019	4,968	11.7%
2018	4,505	9.9%
2017	4,304	9.5%
2016	4,446	9.8%
2015	5,208	10.7%

**Note:** Current SEN support- NW average is 12.1% **Source:** School census

The DSG review acknowledges that Stockport is one of the ten Greater Manchester authorities that make up the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). The strategic plan “Our people, our place” states as a specific aim that Greater Manchester should be:

“A place where all children are given the best start in life and young people grow up inspired to exceed expectations’

Young people equipped for life”

The Greater Manchester (GM) Children and Young people’s plan (2019-2022) also sets out the following priorities in relation to SEND:

- Appropriate services commissioned through a Greater Manchester footprint. These will be responsive to the existing and emerging needs of children and young people with SEND and will ensure value for money and consistency.

---

<sup>2</sup> Knowsley has the highest proportion of pupils with an EHC plan in the North West

<sup>3</sup> Knowsley/Barnsley/Torbay/South Tyneside/West Berkshire/Isle of Wight/Merton/Tower Hamlets/Wandsworth/Hammersmith and Fulham/Islington/Lambeth

- Commissioned services to demonstrate impact and focus directly on improving outcomes for children and young people across education, health and social care.
- All schools and providers to become more effective at providing a collective and graduated response by identifying need at the earliest stage, with swift assessments and effective care packages.

Stockport is linked into the GM work regarding the SEND agenda and joint commissioning. The review recommendations will also need to link into this wider agenda.

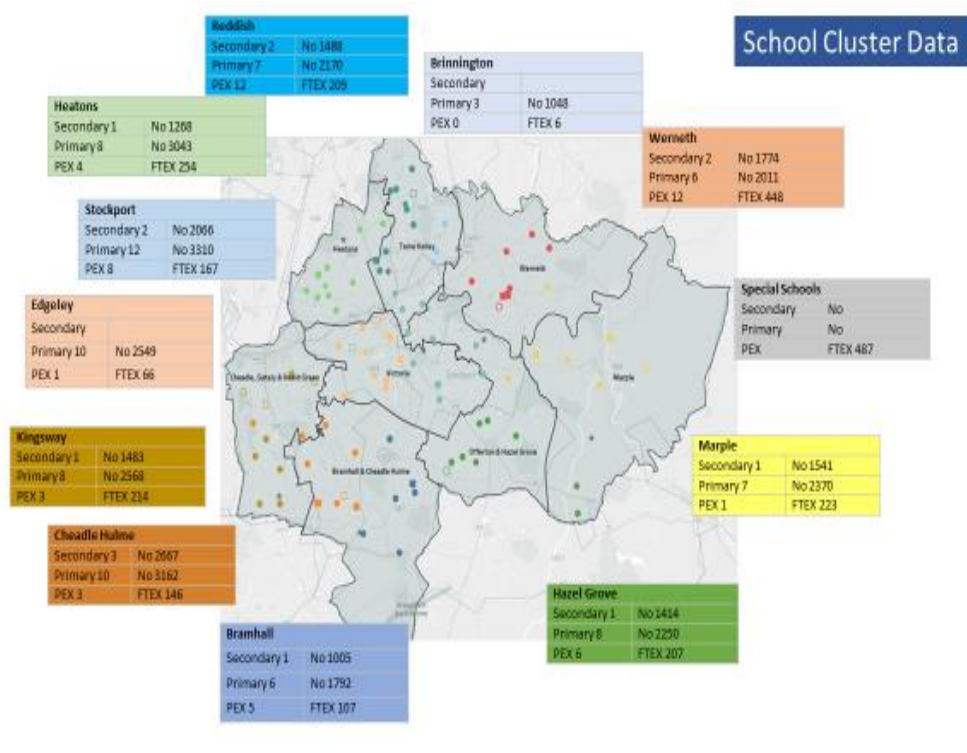
#### **1.4 Stockport Context**

It is useful to provide further Stockport specific context in relation to the review. The SEND population should not be seen in isolation.

There are currently 82,248 children and young people aged 0 to 24 years living in Stockport. Distributions of age groups are similar to the national and GM averages until the age of 18, as significant numbers of young adults leave Stockport, either for further or higher education or to find work or affordable housing. (Joint Strategic Needs assessment, JSNA).

The total population aged 0-24 has been reasonably stable over the last 10 years but is expected to rise over the next 10 years to 87,550. This is driven by changes in birth rates which reached their lowest point in 2001 (2,900 births), then rose (3,500 by 2012) before settling at 3,300 a year by 2018. As the low birth cohort ages out of the children and young people's population the population is expected to grow, (JSNA) Stockport has 85 Primary Schools and 14 Secondary Schools. The mainstream schools within Stockport can be seen in figure below including pupil numbers.

## School Cluster data



In addition, Stockport has six special schools, three primary and three secondary providing support to young people who have EHCP and high needs. The special school population currently stands at 643 young people (225 primary, 416 secondary) in 2019. The table below shows the number of pupils in special schools:

### Stockport Special Schools- 2019

	Type of school	Number of pupils
Lisburne	Primary	116
Valley	Primary	78
Oakgrove	Primary	31
Windlehurst	Secondary	46
Heaton	Secondary	98
Castle Hill	Secondary	272
<b>Total</b>		<b>643</b>

Source: LA finance database

Funding is allocated to specialist settings based on the national “place-plus” funding system model and the host LA determines the number of planned places to be commissioned at each setting.

There are also two nursery and ten school age resource units within Stockport aligned to mainstream schools providing support to young people with additional needs but who can also access a mainstream environment. Currently 146 children

and young people attend these provisions (10 nursery, 95 primary and 41 secondary).

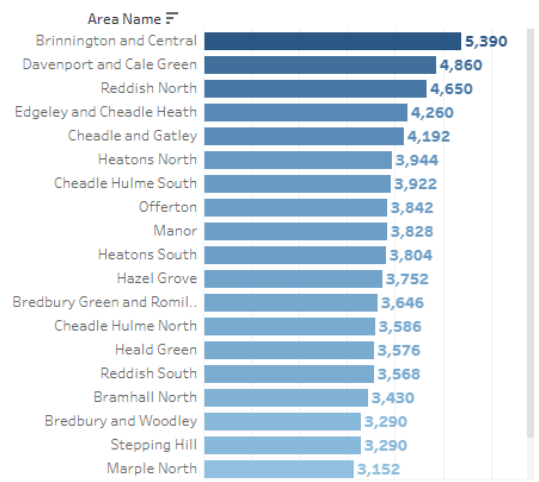
Stockport also has three pupil referral units. Highfields, Pendlebury and Moat House with 190 current students in total.

### **Demographic Information**

The spread of young people within the borough is not even, with the concentration within the most deprived neighbourhoods as detailed in the chart and map below:

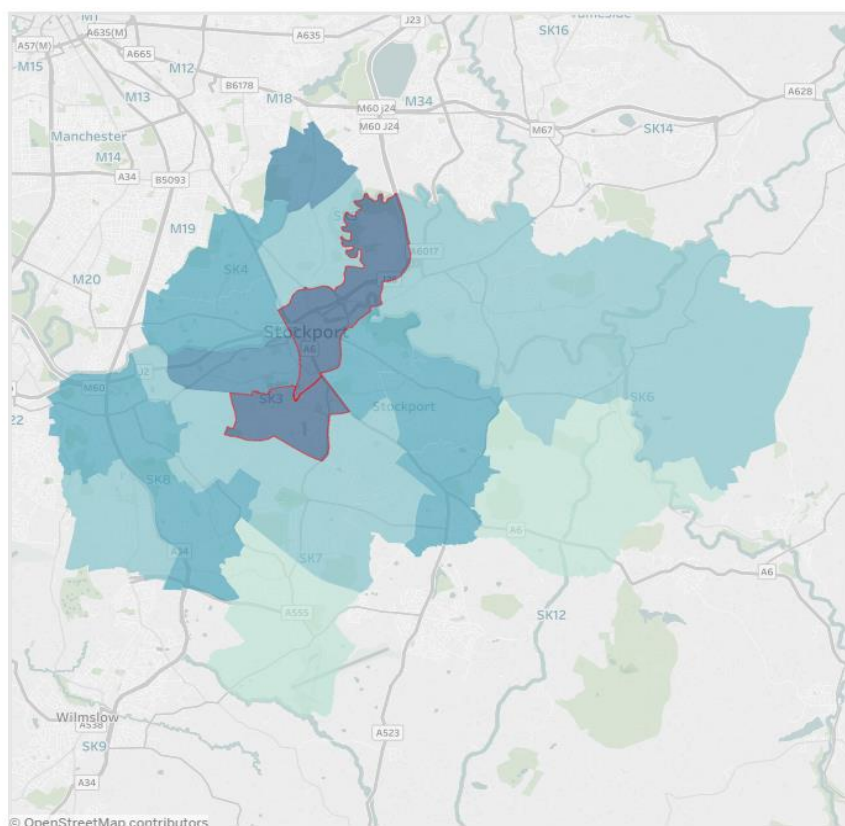
### **Number of young people by ward**

#### **Wards by Highest Population:**



**Source:** Stockport Children and young people's JSNA

## Concentration of young people within borough



© OpenStreetMap contributors  
deprived areas denoted by red border

**Source:** Stockport Children and young people’s JSNA

The table below shows predicted population projections for young people within Stockport. (SEND JSNA):

### Stockport Population Projections 2018-2028

Age Group	2018	2028	Change	% Change
0-4	17,800	18,000	+200	1.1%
5-9	18,550	18,800	+250	1.3%
10-14	17,550	19,150	+1,600	9.1%
15-19	14,850	17,850	+3,000	20.2%
20-25	16,750	15,750	-1,000	-6.0%
<b>Total (0-25)</b>	<b>85,600</b>	<b>89,600</b>	<b>+4,000</b>	<b>4.7%</b>

**Source:** SEND JSNA

This would lead to the following projection for the SEND population based upon current percentages of EHCP and SEN support. This gives an overall potential 8% rise in the SEND population over the next 10 years, with potentially 220 more with an



EHC Plan and 410 additional receiving SEN support based on current numbers. This is the most conservative estimate as the data on SEND prevalence suggests that rates are increasing over time. The graph below shows the projected increase in EHC and SEND support from 2018-28.

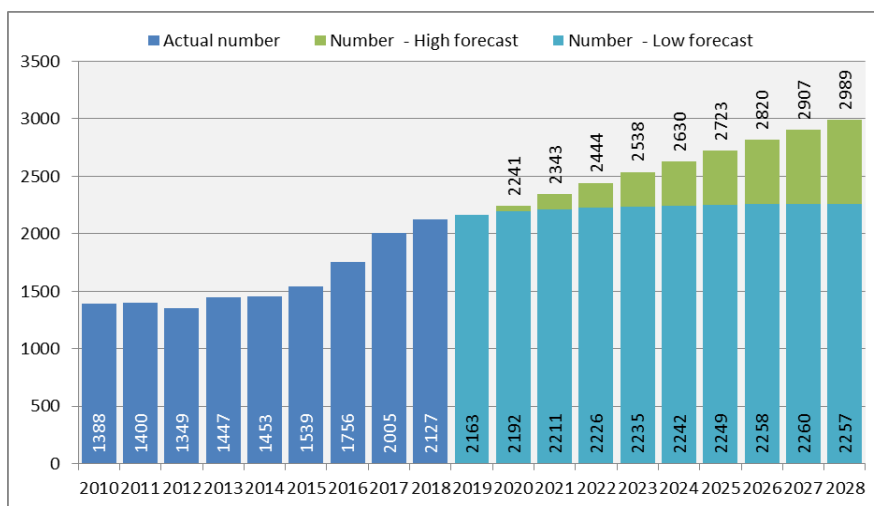
### Projected increase in EHC and SEND Support 2018-28

Group	2018	2023	2028	Change	% Change
EHC	2,230	2,370	2,450	+220	9.9%
SEN Support	5,480	5,770	5,890	+410	7.4%
<b>Total SEND</b>	<b>7,710</b>	<b>8,140</b>	<b>8,340</b>	<b>+630</b>	<b>8.1%</b>

Source: SEND JSNA

This is represented further in the graph below which details the predicted increase across the borough, showing the high and low estimates:

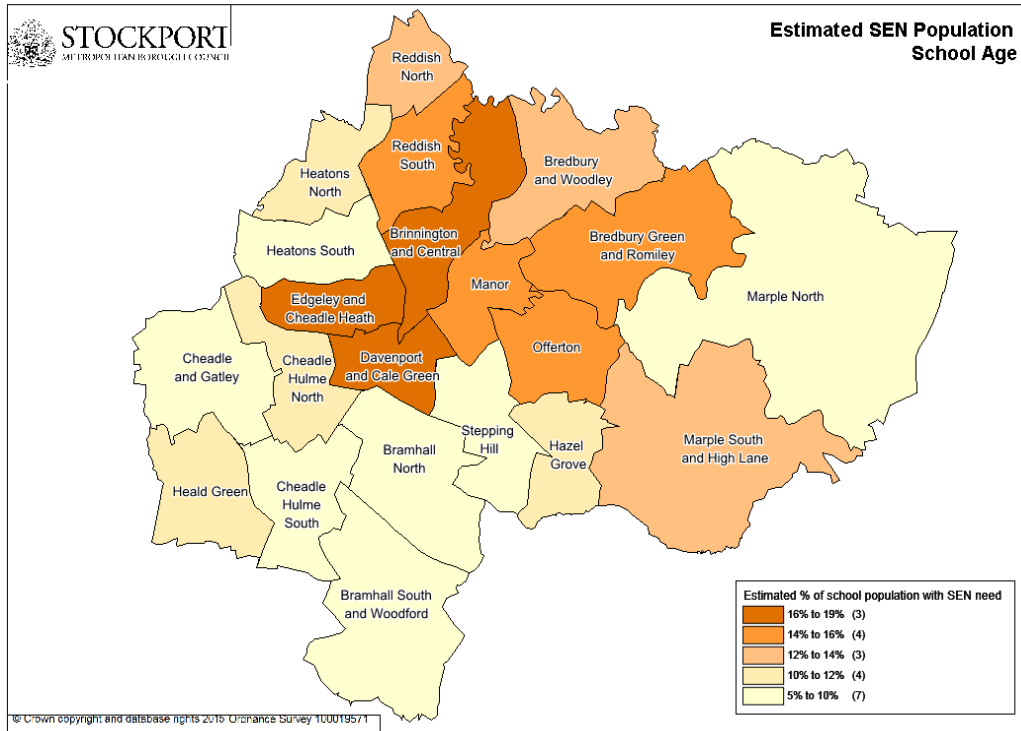
### Actual and Projected SEND Populations 2010-2028



Source: SEND JSNA

The map below shows where Stockport's current SEND population live within the borough. This includes those on SEN support and with an EHCP. This shows that the highest concentration is in the most deprived priority areas. This however needs to be considered in the light of birth rates, which are higher in these wards and concentration of young people as described above.

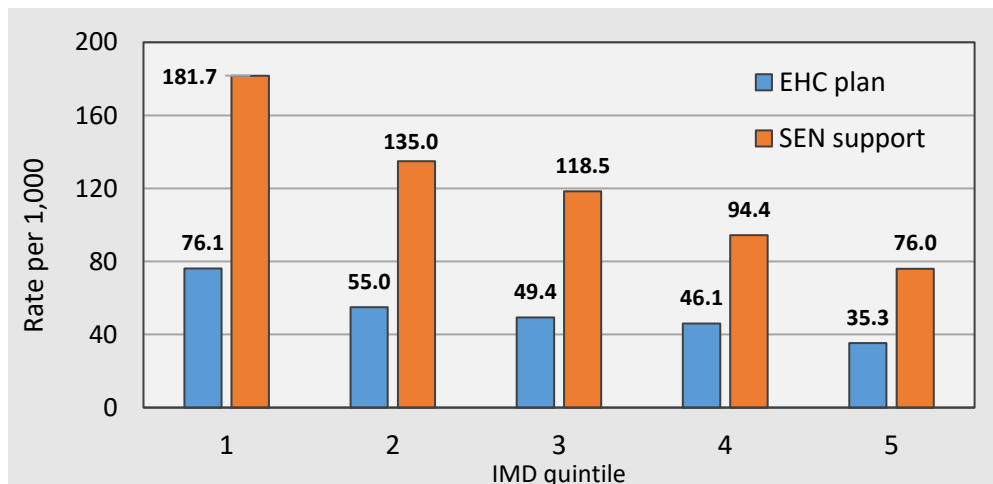
## Proportion of pupils with SEND need



Source: School census information 2019

It is clear that there is SEND need across the borough. However, evidence suggest, that some levels and specific needs of SEND need are in part linked to deprivation, particularly in respect of lower level SEN support. The graph below shows the link between indices of deprivation and SEN need within Stockport. The proportion of children and young people with an EHC plan or receiving SEN support in Stockport are more than twice as high in the most deprived quintile (1) compared to the least deprived quintile (5). (SEND JSNA)

## SEND need by indices of multiple deprivation quintile



Source: SEND JSNA

This may not only be in reference to specific SEN needs. There is strong national research evidence in relation to speech and language development, and attainment relating to poverty. Research by the Early Intervention Foundation has also clearly shown a link between poverty, and behaviour inhibiting attainment, linking that behavioural issues at age five will have an impact upon later attainment. The research suggests that:

*“Analysis provides specific grounds to believe that addressing children’s social and emotional problems at an early age could have educational benefits down the line”*  
Behaviour and attainment: understanding the impacts of poverty on children, Early Help Foundation, 2017

It is of interest that in 2018, in relation to young people with an EHCP within Stockport 22.2 % had a primary need of speech, language and communication needs, with another 22.3% had social, emotional or behavioural needs as their primary need. There may be many reasons for SEND but the review needs to consider how we support our most deprived communities.

It is recognised that the findings of this review are not just directly related to SEND within its narrow definition of education and so only relevant to Childrens Services. There is a clear inter-dependency between the SEND agenda and the wider work of the LA, for example in relation to poverty proofing, and the strengthening of community assets.

### **Where is support being accessed?**

In terms of the school attended, most young people in Stockport with SEND are educated within mainstream schools. The (JSNA) found that 43.4% of children with SEND codes in Stockport are educated in mainstream schools. This is higher than the England and North West averages, although broadly comparable with statistical neighbours.

31.7% of SEND children overall at present in Stockport are educated in special schools. This is significantly lower than the national average but, again, closer to the values seen in statistical neighbours.

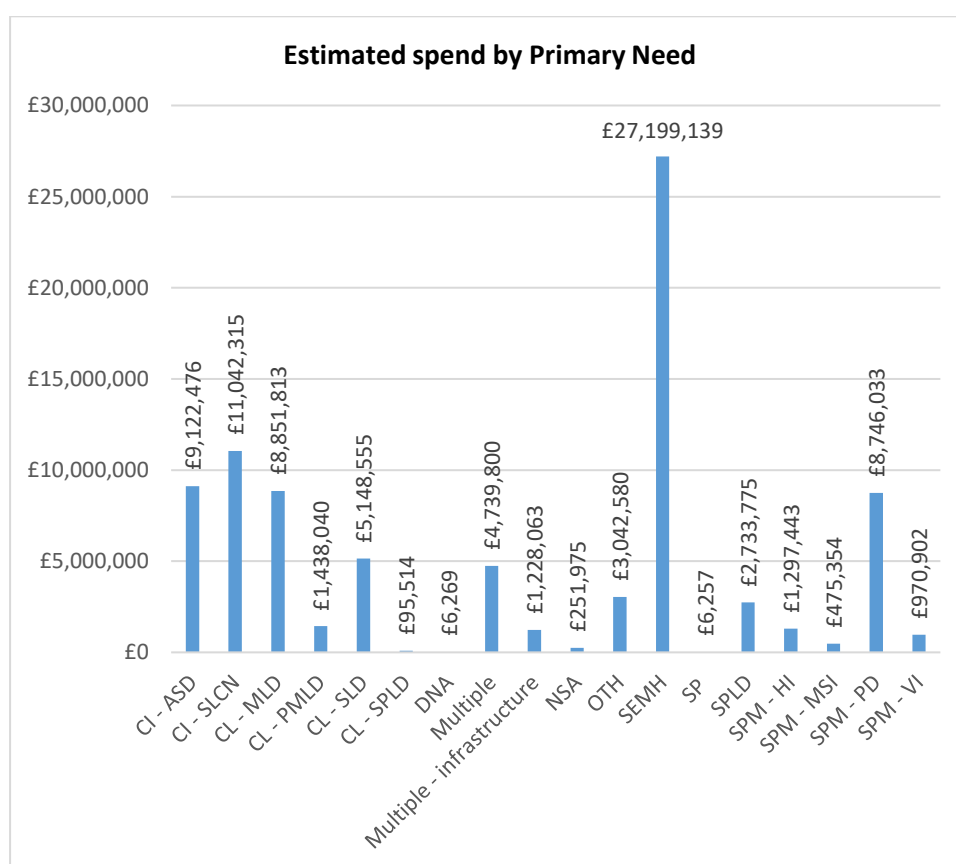
This situation seems to be changing however, for children who were newly started on an EHC plan in 2018, 61.5% were able to remain in a mainstream school whereas only 23.4% were being educated in a special school, with the rest within alternative settings including post 16. There may be several explanations for this, such as an increased ability for mainstream schools to support complex needs, or that mainstream schools have a perception that an EHCP is required to gain support at an earlier point. This is discussed further on in the main report in relation to early help.

In terms of post-16 education, Stockport has a lower provision of its SEND cohort going on to further mainstream or specialist institutions at 16, in comparison to statistical neighbours.

## Current spend and provision of support

Detailed analysis of the overall spend on SEND within Stockport has been undertaken. The total expenditure on SEND-related services is £88.5m per annum including the DSG and CCG funding; around a third (£27.8m) is for services that are wholly or mainly for children and young people with EHCPs and the remaining two-thirds (£60.7m) for children and young people with SEND, but not specifically those with EHCPs.

## Estimated annual expenditure by primary need, 2019



**Source:** Corporate External Commissioning Register, July 2019

The graph above illustrates the current spend in relation to defined primary need. It can be clearly seen that social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) makes up the largest block of spend. SEMH can be defined as:

“A wide range of social and emotional difficulties, which manifest themselves in many ways” ranging from being “withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour”<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> *Timpson, 2019*

Speech language and communication needs (SLCN) also make up £11,042 million spend which includes spend on young people on the autism spectrum.

## **1.5 Stockport: Policy Context**

The current systems of support for families are complex and interlinked. The current complexity of provision for young people and their families can be seen in the rich picture at the end of this document. In addition, this does not consider the other agencies who would be supporting young people with SEND needs, those families often have more multiple agencies and leads from health, education and social care adding to complexity.

In September 2018 the local area was subject to the joint OFSTED, CQC inspection of Stockport's SEND services. Several weaknesses were found within the system and this led to the formation of a WSoA which was signed off by OFSTED in April 2019. The plan is ambitious in its reach and plans for review and transformation and this is linked into the DSG review. The plan can be seen [here](#).

Following on from the inspection and as part of the wider council financial planning and transformation work, listening exercises took place with both parent/carers, educational leaders, strategic partners, local authority staff and the voluntary and community sector within the borough in 2019.

The feedback on current services and systems was clear and has been used to inform the DSG review. Key points were that:

- Services need to have a whole family approach and be holistic of young person's needs
- Families want to tell their stories once, clear access to services, one plan and one lead worker
- Need to work in partnership with schools to deploy services effectively
- Workforce development, cultural change and communication is key
- There should be a strong focus on early help and intervention

The area SEND joint Commissioning plan has been produced following on from the inspection and feedback. This was signed off by the Health and Wellbeing board in January 2020 to cover until 2023, and clearly identifies the following priorities:

1. Effective early help for all families
2. Timely access to services
3. Family and parental support
4. Mental health and emotional wellbeing
5. Speech, language and communication
6. Personal budgets and individual commissioning
7. Preparation for adulthood.

The plan can be accessed [here](#)

There has been additional work undertaken with parent/carers, children and young people and professionals to identify the outcomes that Stockport should aim towards for all its children and young people. These are now ratified by Board and will be now embedded within area plans in the next few months. In draft these are:

- I am confident and able to achieve my goals
- My voice is heard and acted upon
- I enjoy good health and wellbeing
- I feel safe
- I feel part of my local community
- I am happy and have people I can trust
- The people who love me and care for me are enabled to do this

## **1.6 Summary**

There has been clear feedback and mandate gained from stakeholders within Stockport that change is necessary within the current system. The report will now look at the specific findings in relation to the following areas of Early Help and SEN support, Quality, commissioning and workforce, Emotional wellbeing, Specialist Settings, and Inclusion and PRU Offer

In each section the following will be detailed:

- Current spend based only on DSG or aligned not overall)
- Key points raised by stakeholders (parent/carers/Headteacher/colleagues)
- Overview of current situation
- Recommendations