

Draft Education Excellence Strategy for Sefton

2021 - 2025

Education and training will enable every young person to unlock the door to more choices and opportunities



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Foreword

Welcome to the 2021-2025 Education Excellence Strategy for Sefton. Our children and young people are the future of Sefton and as such should have access to outstanding early years opportunities and receive the best quality education and support to engage positively with others in their community. They have told us we need to instill the right life skills and not judge young people by numbers and grades only. We want our children and young people to enjoy learning, make good progress which will enable them to aspire to achieve the highest outcomes so that every child and young person has a successful transition to adulthood. We will do this by working in partnership with our early years providers and schools to ensure first class education opportunities.

In developing this strategy, we have considered our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and reflected on many of the plans and previous engagement activity within Sefton including the Children and Young People's Plan, the Emotional health and Wellbeing Plan as well as our partnership Vision for 2030. In doing so we have linked closely to the four themes in the Children and Young People's Plan – Heard, Happy, Healthy, Achieving.

Our vision is that, 'All children and young people should receive an education in Sefton which enables them to reach their individual potential and to engage positively with others in their community' is echoed throughout all our intended actions and impact.

Over the last two years we have made significant improvements across our Local Area in respect of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and our work with schools during the pandemic has meant that the approach to partnership working has never been stronger. We intend to build on this partnership approach and ensure that children and young people are at the forefront of our recovery plans.

Our partnership working is key to ensuring the success of the strategy and ensuring that all our children and young people succeed. We will work closely with our partners and link closely to the Children and Young People's Plan to ensure a joined-up approach that supports all our children and young people's life chances.

The strategy demonstrates the Council's role in system leadership, facilitating school leaders to lead school improvement and school to school support and sets out the clear priorities which will address the key themes and measure the progress towards the key actions.

Councillor Diane Roscoe

Cabinet Member, Education Excellence



Background Sefton 2030 Vision

Sefton Council led on the development of an exciting partnership vision for the Borough of Sefton called Sefton 2030. When developing the vision partners worked closely with our communities, including children and young people, to understand what was important to them. This is our single strategic and overarching partnership approach for the borough.

Sefton Health and Wellbeing Strategy – Living Well in Sefton 2020-2025

Sefton's Health and Wellbeing Strategy takes an all-age approach (Start Well, Live Well, Age Well) to meaningful health and wellbeing for the people who live in Sefton. The overarching aims for Start Well are:

- Every child will achieve the best start in their first 1001 days
- Education and training will enable every young person to unlock the door to more choices and opportunities
- Every child and young person will have a successful transition to adulthood

In 2025 we will know if we have made a difference by raising the percentage of children achieving a good level of development from 69% to 74%; continue to reduce the proportion of our 16 – 17 Not in Education and Training (NEET) and improve the experience of transitions as measured by our annual survey and having a fully adopted joint transitions pathway.

Sefton Children and Young People's Plan 2020/2025: My Sefton, Happy, Healthy, Achieving, Heard

This plan sets out how we intend to maximize the health and wellbeing of all our children and young people living in Sefton.

Sefton Council, NHS South Sefton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and NHS Southport and Formby CCG, have agreed a series of priorities for future services and support. These priorities are based on what children, young people and their families have told us of their experiences and what we know about their current care.

We used Sefton's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to inform the plan to seek to ensure that children and young people's needs are understood and met. It is based around the four themes of:

- Heard
- Happy
- Healthy
- Achieving

The Education Excellence Strategy is based around these four themes and our plan will reflect and complement its priorities and outcomes.



Emotional Health & Wellbeing Strategy

The mental health of children and young people has been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, adding to an already worsening national trend of mental health decline. Approximately 200,000 young people are referred to specialist mental health services each year in England which places these services under considerable pressure. Poor emotional health and wellbeing in childhood can have a lasting impact into adulthood. Having a trusted adult that children and young people can confide in is important, especially if the child or young person has experienced, or is at risk of experiencing adverse childhood experiences.

High levels of inequality are also damaging to mental health and emotional well-being. Growing up in deprivation means an increased risk of chronic exposure to stress and adverse conditions. These can have lasting impact on the mental health and wellbeing of someone across their life course and lead to the disproportionate burden of mental ill health being experienced by our most vulnerable residents.

Sefton has made good progress over recent years in improving and expanding its service offer to children and young people – including KOOTH, Mental Health Support Teams, etc - ensuring it meets their needs and is accessible to all. We will continue to work with education to improve their ability to support children and young people to stay in education. Part of this will include ensuring that schools and colleges implement all new guidance/initiatives and best practice in a structured and impactful way. Consistency and equitable coverage is key when considering the education practices in order to benefit children and young people regardless of where they are in Sefton. This work will complement the Sefton Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing Strategy 2021-26 and the Children and Young People's Plan 2020/25.



Education Excellence in Sefton – Vision

All children and young people receive an education in Sefton which enables them to reach their individual potential, have a clear pathway to further education, employment and engage positively with others in their community.

Education – National Context

The Department for Education strategy 2015 to 2020: world-class education and care has yet to be updated. The COVID 19 pandemic impacted significantly on children's school life and this led to education attainment data not being gathered at local area and national level during 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. Schools continue to assess and monitor attainment and progress locally. Young people were assessed at GCSE and A Level in 2019 – 2020 through the Centre Assessment Grades (CAG) and awarded grades accordingly. In 2020 – 2021 GCSE and A Level grades were awarded through Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG).

The local authority has clear statutory duties to promote excellence and the highest standards for all Sefton children; irrespective of what establishment they attend and this includes; -

The Education and Adoption Bill - this introduced measures to improve school standards across the country, as part of the Government's commitment to delivering real social justice. These measures are intended to speed up the process by which failing maintained schools become sponsored academies, ensuring there is no delay in giving children the education they deserve.

The Special Education Needs (SEN) Code of Practice January 2015 outlines the statutory duties of head teachers and principals, governing bodies, school and college staff, SEN coordinators and early education providers providing for pupils with SEN through the graduated approach to meeting needs from Quality First Teaching through to the Education, Health and Care Plan, (EHCP) assessment and review process.

There were an estimated 797,000 young people in the UK who were NEET in October to December 2020; this increased by 39,000 compared with July to September 2020 and was up by 34,000 compared with October to December 2019.

The new National Disability Strategy came into force on 28th July 2021. It sets out to improve the lives of all people with disabilities. It is split into four parts including the introduction; part 1 the immediate commitments to improving disabled people's lives; part 2 including people in policy making and service delivery and part 3 which focuses on a summary of the actions each government department will take.

The education section focuses on a review of actions to improve outcomes for children with SEND; increasing funding; extending continuing professional development and investing to strengthen parents and young people's participation; improving supported internships and increasing the number of disabled people undertaking apprenticeships

Education – Local Context

Over recent years the educational landscape has changes, the local authority (LA) exercises a range of roles and responsibilities with local education providers. The LA works positively with maintained faith and community schools, alternative provision, early years settings, special schools, academies, sponsors, independent schools and further and adult education providers who comprise a part of the mixed economy of local education provision. We view the local authority as the system leader and a champion for all the learners in the borough. Our approach to excellence in education and learning is a collaborative one, working in partnership with key groups to improve knowledge and expertise across the borough.



40,374
CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE

EARLY YEARS CHILDREN

- Jan 21 census we funded:
720 x 2 yr olds and 3757 x 3/4 yr olds
(on the universal 15 hrs offer)
Total of 4477 children.

(Also to note that the figures for Jan 21 were low, due to slightly reduced funding claims due to the pandemic).

- 38,123 pupils on roll across primary, secondary and special schools

ETHNICITY

- 10% of the school children in Sefton are of Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic (BAME) heritage compared to 34% Nationally
- 6% have English as an additional language (EAL) (up slightly on the previous year), compared to 19% Nationally and 15% in the Northwest

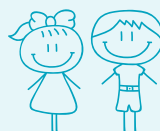
OCTOBER 2021 SCHOOL CENSUS DATA

- Total school population 40,047 Children
- Number of children with an EHCP 3.6% (1432)
- Number of children with SEN support 12.1% (4,839)
- Number of children receiving no extra support 84.3% (33,776)



102
SCHOOLS

- 3 Nursery Schools
- 3 Infant Schools
- 2 Junior Schools
- 70 Primary Schools
- 19 Secondary Schools
- 5 Special Schools
- 2 pupil referral unit and 1 14 to 16 college
- 1 School Improvement Board
- 6 school improvement groups
- Education Collaboration Group
- SAPH
- SASH



222
EARLY YEARS
PROVIDERS

- 45 nurseries
- 25 pre-schools
- 71 childminders
- 23 standalone holiday playschemes/out of school clubs
- 55 schools with nurseries(maintained/academies)
- 3 independent school nurseries



86%

Early Years settings to be judged by OfSTED to be good or better



73%

Of Schools judged by OfSTED to be good or better (83% Primary Schools and 37% Secondary)



3.5%

SEND NEET for 16-24 year olds has reduced 2.5% year on year

Covid 19 Pandemic

Throughout the pandemic Education Excellence teams worked closely with schools providing both support and challenge. Together they implemented new ways of working, some of these changes will be embedded going forward, including the formation of the Education Collaborative Group, born out of the weekly Covid Schools' and Children's Services Cell Group

All schools experienced disruption during this period and the majority of children and young people in Sefton have had a period of time when they were not in school but accessing remote learning and as a result their learning was disrupted. The pandemic had a massive impact on the emotional health and wellbeing of many children and young people and through our Emotional Health and Wellbeing offer we are working hard to ensure they can access support early and that our schools are equipped to support them.



Children and Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) or Activity Unknown in Sefton

A young person aged 16 to 24 who is not currently in education, employment or training is considered to be NEET. They are considered to be in education or training if:-

- they are enrolled on an education course and are still attending or waiting for term to (re)start
- they are doing an apprenticeship
- they are on a government supported employment or training programme
- they are working or studying towards a qualification, or
- they have had job-related training or education in the last 4 weeks

"In employment" includes all people in some form of paid work, including those working part-time. People not in employment are classed as either unemployed or economically inactive. Unemployed people are those who have been looking for work in the past 4 weeks and who are available to start work within the next 2 weeks. Economically inactive people are those who have not been looking for work and/or who are not available to start work. Examples of economically inactive people include those not looking for work because they are students and those who are looking after dependents at home. These definitions are based on those recommended by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Activity Unknown refers to young people with an unknown education, employment or training status.

- As of July 2021 Sefton currently has the lowest percentage of NEET and unknown young people across the Liverpool City Region (3.8%).
- Sefton is performing better than the North West NEET & Not Known combined measure
- Sefton is performing better than the England NEET & Not Known combined measure

A sharper focus on the disadvantaged

The priority across Sefton and the wider partnerships is to sharpen our focus on the most disadvantaged groups of children in our education settings and communities. We know that children and young people with SEND; children and young people eligible for free school meals (FSM); looked after children (LAC); Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups and those in need of protection still perform less well than their peers. This has a negative impact on their life chances.

- We will hold high aspirations for these children and work together across all education settings and across the system to improve their life chances.
- We will collectively act as champions for vulnerable children and young people by using achievement, attendance and exclusion data, safeguarding intelligence and learner and parent/carer voice data to support and challenge each other when we recognise that these children and young people are not being well served.
- We will target our resources to improve outcomes and opportunities for these children and young people, using evidence-based approaches to secure improvements.
- We will strive to ensure that as many of our young people in Sefton continue to participate in education, training or employment after the age of 16 through tracking their participation rates and ensuring that rates of NEET are kept as low as possible
- We will continue to ensure that additional support for NEWET young people who are vulnerable are supported from the age of 14 to enable them to re-engage in learning We will learn from each other and share what is working well to secure outcomes for all children regardless of their educational or physical needs, their family background, the school they attend or the neighbourhood where they live.
- We will work in partnership with our schools, Children's Social Care and other partners to ensure that all our care leavers are supported in making the right choices for their future education or training enabling them to make a positive transition.

- We will ensure there are pathways for young people whose education outcomes have missed their full potential to re-enter education, training or employment after the age of 19 which build upon their employability and enable them to move into sustainable prosperity



3 PRIORITIES



PRIORITY 1

Children are ready
for school



PRIORITY 2

Raise achievement and
ensure young people
have the life skills so they
are well prepared for
adulthood.



PRIORITY 3

Children and young people
with Special Educational
Needs and/or disabilities
achieve their full potential

Education Excellence – Priorities

Key to achieving our priorities is working with colleagues from across the Council and partners from across the Borough for example Career Connect, Sefton Council for Voluntary Services, Health and Parent Carer Forum.

Each school and setting will have its own priorities, our Children and Young People's Plan is clear as to where we need to improve as a borough.



Priority 1. Children are ready for school

A great start will shape children's lifelong health and wellbeing. Working with partners across Sefton we will ensure that all children are ready for school with good social and emotional development. Together we will secure and sustain better all-round outcomes for babies and children which narrows the gap between vulnerable children and others.

We will take a preventative approach from the earliest point in a child's life in order that we can identify problems in children's health and development so they can get help with their problems as early as possible.

We will:

- Ensure children's voices are heard and families get the right support and help at the right time.
- Work together with parents and carers to ensure that families have access to good early years provision and encourage take-up of this opportunity.
- Implement the new national Early Years Foundation Stage Framework in schools and private, voluntary and independent settings that is underpinned by the ethos of 'listening to children' to find out their interests, motivators and Characteristics of Effective Learning and use this knowledge to good effect in promoting or accelerating progress
- Work with partners and early years providers to promote school readiness.



Priority 2. Raise achievement and ensure young people have the life skills so they are well prepared for adulthood.

We will have a clear understanding of the aspirations of our young people and what they have told us is important to them. We will respect and encourage the hopes and dreams of the children and young people we work with. We know high quality education is the greatest liberator so want all pupils to make at least “good” progress in every year of their education. We will ensure that all children attend good or better educational settings in Sefton and barriers to participation and progress are addressed. There will be a broad and balanced curriculum equipping them with the life skills they need to be independent and successful as an adult. These skills and opportunities to achieve will also value the contribution of sport, cultural, social and health education in preparing young people for their future. When preparing for adulthood we will have pathways to employment that ensure they are moving towards good quality sustainable work. We will focus on ensuring our children leave school with the right skills such as financial management, how to deal with bullying and citizenship, and maintaining wellbeing when carrying out caring responsibilities.

Learning does not stop once a young person leaves school and we want them to have the desire and opportunities to keep on learning and developing.



We will:

- Work with school leaders and stakeholders to ensure that the education system in Sefton provides an inclusive education that delivers excellent educational outcomes; meets the needs of all children, young people; raises their aspirations and prepares them for the next stage in their education and lives.
- Focus on Sefton’s most vulnerable pupils, so they are ready to learn, resilient to change and have the skills and confidence to lead successful lives.
- Develop an education scorecard that will monitor progress against a range of criteria including assessments and exam results at all key stages; attendance; exclusions; NEET.
- Collectively act as champions for vulnerable children and young people when we recognise that they are not being well served.
- Develop and make young people aware of the variety post-16 pathways which help address local skills needs and prepare them for the next stage in their education and adult life.
- Focus on transitions from primary to secondary school, starting school further education and working life to improve outcomes.
- Further develop our borough-wide partnership approach across all phases of education to ensure that young people can access clear pathways that link education to the world of work in a way that is relevant to the local labour market
- Provide opportunities for young people and adults to return to learning to help them achieve their full potential and increase their employability
- Ensure that regeneration and investment programmes in the borough offer good quality work experience opportunity, jobs, apprenticeships or vocational training for our young people wherever possible

Priority 3. Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities achieve their full potential

We want children with complex individual needs to have the best life chances. We will enhance joint commissioning of support between education, health and care services for children with special educational needs and disabilities to ensure services work together. We will ensure that all parts of the Sefton Send Local offer work together to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND and that they achieve their full potential and that people know the range of services available to them. We will ensure all children have access to an educational setting that is appropriate to their needs, including those with SEND and social, emotional and mental health needs.

We will from the earliest point in a child's life encourage independence, where appropriate, and ensure families have timely access to support so their experience improves and the needs of their children are identified early and met. We will ensure that young people are well prepared for adulthood, providing opportunities to develop independence where possible. We will encourage equalities of access to universal services so all Children and Young People with SEND and/or Autism can gain maximum benefit from what Sefton has to offer.



We will:

- Develop a new SEND Improvement Plan building on the good practice of the last two years.
- Ensure that all children and young people going through the Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) Assessment process and those with an EHCP have their voice heard as part of that process and their views and preferences taken into account.
- Consider new models of provision for children and young people with SEND.
- Gather and incorporate the views of children and young people with SEND in order to minimise barriers to learning and ensure the holistic development of children and young people.
- Address key queries raised by parents/carers and young people post 16 relating to the 4 Preparing for Adulthood themes – Community, Health, Independent Living and Education/Employment.
- Continue to monitor progress through the SEND Continuous Improvement Board.
- Lobby and respond to Department for Education when it consults on improvements to the SEND system through the SEND Review.



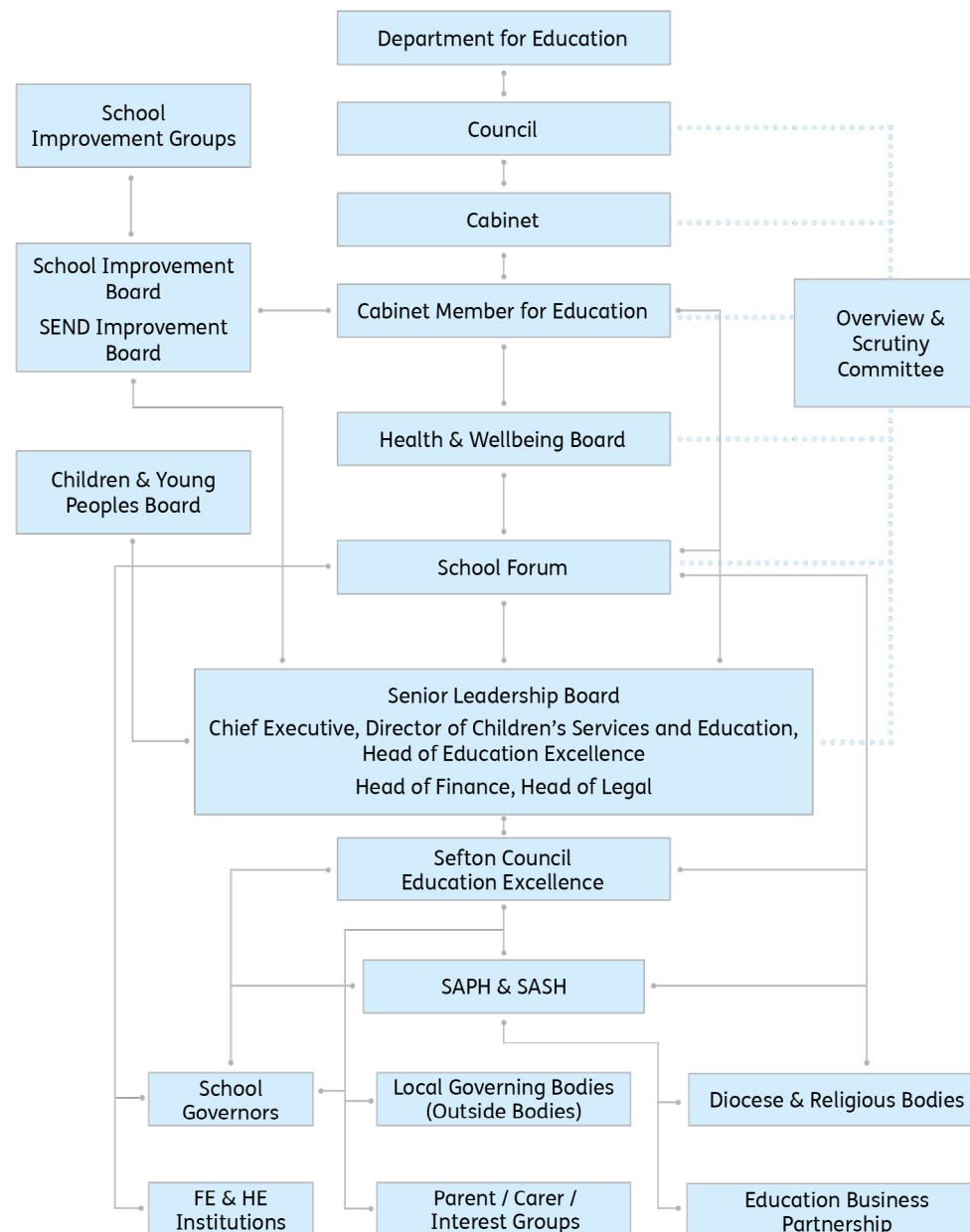
How will we make this happen?

Governance:

Strong governance is essential to success and Education Excellence is answerable to several boards including SEND Continuous Improvement Board; EHWPB Board; School Improvement Board as well as the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the Council.

Each of the priorities is underpinned by action plans linked to the four key themes of Heard, Happy, Healthy, Achieving and reviewed each year. Progress against the priorities will be reviewed and monitored regularly to ensure that our approach is responsive to emerging needs, challenges and opportunities.

Good governance and accountability is a two-way relationship and where Sefton has concerns regarding the provision in schools, the process as set out in Sefton's Arrangements for Monitoring and Intervention of School Performance will be invoked.



Partnership:

If we are to succeed in our ambitions, then we need to build on the excellent relationships established over the last year. We will work with all partners, parents/carers and schools so that Sefton's children and young people are educated in the school which is right for them and which best meets their needs. It is essential for all partners to work together to help Sefton achieve the vision that, **'all children and young people receive an education in Sefton which enables them to reach their individual potential, have a clear pathway to further education, employment and engage positively with others in their community.'**

Effective collaboration and partnership with Teaching Hubs, Multi Academy Trusts (MATs), standalone academies and all other schools will support raising pupil outcomes.

Partners have a key role in enabling children and young people to be the best they can be. Partnership working with secondary schools, colleges, providers and local businesses will have crucial roles in ensuring that our young people are able to develop the skills and attributes through aspirational courses that enable them to be successful in the workplace.

Alongside our academic ambitions is the need to work with Public Health, the Clinical Commissioning Group and other health partners to prioritise the mental health and wellbeing of all children and young people particularly as we recover from the Covid pandemic.



Delivering Our Priorities:

If we are to succeed in our ambitions, then we need to build on the excellent relationships established over the last year. We will work with all partners, parents/ carers and schools so that Sefton's children and young people are educated in the school which is right for them and which best meets their needs. It is essential for all partners to work together to help Sefton achieve the vision that, **'all children and young people receive an education in Sefton which enables them to reach their individual potential, have a clear pathway to further education, employment and engage positively with others in their community.'** Effective collaboration and partnership with Teaching Hubs, Multi Academy Trusts (MATs), standalone academies and all other schools will support raising pupil outcomes. Partners have a key role in enabling children and young people to be the best they can be. Partnership working with secondary

schools, colleges, providers and local businesses will have crucial roles in ensuring that our young people are able to develop the skills and attributes through aspirational courses that enable them to be successful in the workplace.

Alongside our academic ambitions is the need to work with Public Health, the Clinical Commissioning Group and other health partners to prioritise the mental health and wellbeing of all children and young people particularly as we recover from the Covid pandemic.

Priority 1. Children are ready for school

| How we will make this happen | By when | Lead Partner |
|---|----------------|--|
| Implement the New Early Years Foundation Stage Framework in schools and private, voluntary and independent settings | September 2021 | Early Years Foundation Stage Team schools and settings |
| Develop partnership between Private, voluntary and independent Nurseries/Schools and Family Wellbeing Centres to support early identification and appropriate support. | December 2021 | Early Years Foundation Stage Team |
| Embed the Early Years 'First Response' function for vulnerable children | December 2021 | Early Years Foundation Stage Team |
| Joint working with colleagues in Health and Early Help | July 2022 | Early Years Foundation Stage Team |
| Ensure that young children are supported by key adults in order to enjoy good physical, mental and emotional wellbeing | July 2022 | Early Years Foundation Stage Team |
| Enhance existing pathways across agencies working with children ensuring their development is promoted consistently, and risks of delay are identified and addressed early. | July 2022 | Early Years Foundation Stage Team |
| Work with all early years' providers to support speech and language programmes | July 2022 | Early Years Foundation Stage Team |

Priority 2. Raise achievement and ensure young people have the life skills so they are well prepared for adulthood.

| How we will make this happen | By when | Lead Organisation |
|---|----------------|--|
| Provide an Agreed Religious Education Syllabus for all non-maintained Primary and Secondary Schools that allows pupils to share their religious views and consider life values | September 2021 | School Improvement Team |
| All primary schools implement the new statutory Relationships Education policy and all secondary schools implement the Relationship and Sex Education policies | September 2021 | School Improvement Team |
| Continue implementing the rigorous schools causing concern protocol challenging schools to diminish the achievement gap by focusing on the attainment of more able and disadvantaged pupils | July 2022 | Local Authority |
| Embed working in close collaboration across services within Educational Excellence and other partners to support and challenge schools | July 2022 | School Improvement Team |
| Work with the new super teaching hubs to facilitate appropriate and identified Continuing Professional Development for staff across all schools | July 2022 | School Improvement Team |
| Work in partnership with the DfE to deliver the programme of support and challenge for Bootle Constituency schools and other identified schools | July 2022 | School Improvement team |
| Develop the Narrowing the Gap Programme across all secondary schools | July 2023 | Meols Cop Research School School Improvement Team |
| Embed the partnership work to ensure that all pupils are able to access the right course post 16 and have access to effective career guidance that matches builds their aspirations | July 2022 | Post 16 Partnership Board |
| Embed and develop further support for Emotional Health and Wellbeing in all schools | July 2022 | Emotional Health and Wellbeing Board |
| Challenge schools to reduce absence so that pupils are accessing their learning | July 2022 | School Support Services |
| Develop the provision within the Virtual School for Looked After Children and across partnerships for Children in Need and Children on a Child protection Plan to enable them to make progress. | July 2023 | Virtual School |

Priority 3. Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities achieve their full potential

| How we will make this happen | By when | Lead Organisation |
|---|---------------|------------------------------|
| Incorporate the views of children and young people through the Education, Health and Care Plan process and throughout their school life in order to minimise barriers to learning and ensure their holistic development | December 2021 | SEND Team and Inclusion Team |
| Embed the graduated approach therefore reducing the need for children and young people to attend Resource Bases or Special Schools | July 2022 | Inclusion Team |
| Use specialist assessments alongside school data to build a holistic profile of the child's needs and progress. | July 2022 | Inclusion Team |
| All children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans receive the appropriate support and placement to enable them to thrive and make the appropriate progress they are capable of making. | July 2022 | Local Authority |
| Continue to review the specialist provision across Sefton ensuring that all children and young people identified with SEND have access to quality provision within Sefton | July 2023 | SEND Team |
| In partnership develop a FAQ document to address key queries regularly raised relating to the 4 Planning for Adulthood themes – Community, Health, Independent Living and Education/Employment. | December 2021 | SEND Team |
| Embed the NEET Case Conferencing Group to identify creative and innovative solutions to address the barriers facing individual young people. | July 2022 | Career Connect |
| In conjunction with local FE Colleges, we will develop and expand the Supported Internship programme to increase the opportunities for young people with SEN to access paid employment | July 2022 | SEND Team |

