

Appendix 1- Recommendations and Cabinet Members' Responses

Recommendation number	Recommendation	Cabinet Member for Best Start for Children and Families' response
1	<p>We note the review of the distribution of High Needs Block (HNB) funding in the Camden Council SEND Strategy Implementation Plan. We would urge the working group in its review to ensure that funding follows inclusion.</p> <p>(The ordinarily available £6,000 per pupil per school is clearly essential (and has to be passported to schools under the High Needs block School Funding System SFS) and the developed additional funding (£5,000) provided in Camden for children with complex needs is welcomed, however for those schools with significant numbers of children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) the 'top up approach' is insufficient, and whilst we recognise that there is limited funding and that our recommendation may mean taking some money away from some schools we would encourage the review work that, encouragingly, has started, to explore funding following inclusion.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools Forum on 05/02/2025 agreed to an interim change to the formula for devolved funding to Camden mainstream schools pending a fuller review of mainstream high needs funding. The change means schools receiving more of their devolved funding upfront at the beginning of the school year rather than in the spring term through proportionality funding. The High Needs sub-group will oversee work regarding: • Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP) admission criteria and funding. • Consideration of the growth in our use of independent and non-maintained special schools • Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) packages • Similar consideration of the range of alternative provision funded from the High Needs Block
2	<p>We note that a review of commissioning arrangements of Additionally Resourced Provision (ARPs), special schools, local post 16 specialist provision, post-16 places and AP, advisory services, Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) and therapeutic services is in the Camden Council SEND Strategy Implementation</p>	<p>We recognise the importance of ensuring that schools are able to meet a wide range of needs and we are committed to working with mainstream schools to strengthen inclusive practice across the borough. A number of sessions are planned between February – June 2025 to develop this work. This will provide clarity regarding funding to support children prior to the Exceptional Needs Grant (ENG) or Education,</p>

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	<p>Plan. We strongly recommend that this review enables mainstream schools to enrol children with autism or complex needs with greater continuity of funding and staffing.</p>	<p>Health & Care needs assessment (EHCNA) pathway. Funding for more complex needs through an EHCP or ENG will subsequently be reviewed and we will be reviewing how clusters how can be utilised to trial innovative ways to fund schools, where they are supporting children with complex needs.</p>
3	<p>Consider the possibility of awarding notional funding to early years settings through the Camden Local Inclusion Fund (CLIF) and address inconsistencies between early years and school age funding.</p>	<p>We agree with the need to moderate decision making between early years and school age funding and will complete a moderation exercise by the end of this academic year. We will consider the possibility of notional funding for early years settings as part of the review of proportionality funding discussed above (recommendation 1).</p>
4	<p>Reduce Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCO) workload by: aiming for Camden's SEND services to pro-actively communicate with SENDCOs; supporting SENDCOs with Continued Professional Development providing sufficient time to attend Camden Learning and Camden SEND training and development sessions; clarifying and streamline the Exceptional Needs Grant (ENG) application processes.</p>	<p>We have introduced new Service Standards for the SEND and Inclusion service that will include timely and proactive communication with SENDCOs and other school staff. These standards have now been implemented within the service, along with an expectation of regular school visits by Case Officers. This pro-active communication from SEND services will reduce workloads for SENDCOs.</p> <p>We are working to align the continuous professional development (CPD) offers available for SENDCOs so that they can easily access the most relevant support for them. We will support schools to share best practice on resourcing for SENDCO roles and enabling them to take part in CPD which continues to be facilitated by Camden Learning</p> <p>While we recognise that an ENG application takes a significant amount of time for a SENDCO, it is current significantly simpler and more streamlined than the EHCP</p>

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		process. We plan to review this process in 2025 although we must ensure that the process gathers sufficient evidence to justify the awarding of high needs block funds.
5	Deliver comprehensive training and support on person-centred practice for all professionals who support children, young people, and families with SEND across the partnership, maximising the opportunities presented through the development of the newly created Centre for Relational Practice.	We look forward to the opportunities that will be created through the creation of the Centre for Relational Practice to improve the skills and knowledge of the SEND and Inclusion workforce. The restructure of the SEND and Inclusion services includes the creation of a Training and Development Officer who will identify needs and strengthen opportunities for workforce development, prioritising person-centred practice.
6	Training on autism for all professionals who engage with children. Camden to produce a developmental framework on autism for use by all professionals.	Autism Education Trust (AET) training is currently available for all council and school staff who work with children, and there is an equivalent training offer for partners in health. We are working to ensure that attending training results in improvements to practice and that we are tracking attendance on training across the workforce.
7	Camden Learning to consider further opportunities for peer learning between schools , so that any problematic inter-school inconsistencies are reduced, and all schools play a strong part in Camden's overall inclusive vision. This might include using: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Continuing Professional Development •Reviewing the curriculum and pedagogy to ensure the ordinarily available meets all needs •Schools Requiring Additional Support (SRAS) meetings •Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) 	We recognise the important role that Camden Learning play in strengthening SEND provision in schools. Plans are currently being developed with Camden Learning to review how they can best support peer learning, CPD opportunities and school improvement. At present, there are a number of peer led SEND initiatives being facilitated by Camden Learning. Parliament Hill School and the North London Alliance Research School have led secondary pedagogy hubs for school practitioners focussed on evidence-informed pedagogical development in Inclusion, and Cognitive Science. Teachers have been trained in practical strategies to use and apply in their own classrooms to support the progress of all students, particularly those who are SEND or disadvantaged, as well as the research underpinning these. 20 schools are members of the Camden SEND hub, run from Kentish Town School which offers structured opportunities for schools to learn from each other

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		<p>and develop best practice in classroom provision for pupils with SEND.</p> <p>Five well-attended 'Removing Barriers to Reading' sessions at the British Library held over the last year brought together SENDCOS, Reading leads, and teachers to explore barriers to progress and share evidence-informed interventions in improving reading for younger pupils, particularly those with SEND.</p> <p>Camden Learning continues to work with schools to gather a deeper understanding of differences around inclusive practice in Camden schools in order to support schools to adopt best practice including aligning the work of SENCo forums, the various training opportunities and bespoke support to schools, to ensure that they are meeting needs and are easy to access.</p>
8	Use school scorecards to understand and improve the SEND offer for schools.	<p>The Camden School Reports seek to give a rounded and nuanced picture of each school -beyond the limitations of Ofsted reports. Developed by Camden Learning in partnership with schools, parents and the Council, they are more accessible than a school website –viewed via a phone (app style). Each one contains information about wider aspects of life at the school, such as approaches to inclusion, the wider curriculum offer and the things that are special to the school. They include the most recent Ofsted inspection report and a range of national data about the school's performance, including tests and examinations. The target audience is parents who are looking to send their child to a Camden school, but also existing parents. They will also be useful for external bodies such as the local authority and Ofsted. They are verified by Camden Learning school improvement consultants. School Reports will be shared via the Camden Admissions page as well as directly by schools.</p>
9	We note the excellent work of the Inclusive Intervention Team (IIT) in Early Years and	<p>We recognise the positive impact that the newly titled Early Years Intervention Team (EYIT) make across the partnership.</p>

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	recommend that Camden SEND explore an all-age intervention advisory service to support parents and children in statutory school age education.	The service will continue to be reviewed to ensure that there is sufficient resource to meet the increasing needs across early years and primary education.
10	To reduce wait times for assessment for children with SEND , we urgently request the North Central London Integrated Care Board to provide scrutiny with a plan as to how they are working with commissioned health providers to reduce waiting times for assessment and report to scrutiny on progress towards it.	In December 2024, North Central London Integrated Care Board (ICB) confirmed additional resource for the neurodiversity diagnostic pathway as well as changes to the pathway to make better use of resources. There will be a recurrent investment of £625,000 per annum in the pathway. The investment includes provision of psychoeducational support for families pre and post diagnosis. We welcome this additional investment from the NCL ICB and hope this will that this makes a positive impact regarding diagnostic pathways at the earliest opportunity.
11a	Camden SEND to consider how to help parents and carers to know who to hold to account for what for their EHCP , this would be a person or arbiter who sits above their caseworkers, as this level of accountability is outside the caseworker's role.	The SEND and Inclusion Service Standards provide detail of what families can expect from the service and who are responsible for services. This also includes contact details of staff should they need to escalate any issues. These are published on the Local Offer, the website holding all information about SEND services and support, as a whole document, as well as on individual pages, such as pages on education, health and care needs assessment page, to make it as easy as possible for families to access information about what to expect. The introduction of the SEND Duty Line and regular SEND Surgeries will make it easier for families to access the team and resolve any queries earlier. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Independent Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) provide independent information, advice and support to families.

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<p>11b</p>	<p>Therapists – especially Speech and Language therapists (SALT) /Speech Language and Communications Teachers (SLCN) – to share their plans to recruit, retain and develop their workforce. Providers to also explore/alter their model of delivery to meet the needs of the school-based community.</p>	<p>There has been additional funding for Occupational Therapists (OT) and Speech and Language Therapists (SLT) to rebalance school teams so that children with significant levels of need as identified by either ENG or EHCP could access therapy services, as well as the universal offer that was available to all. This has been funded through the high needs block. This has also been supported by focused work to support recruitment to vacancies in Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy with almost all vacancies now filled. Retention remains an area of focus for these services, particularly in roles that can be harder to fill. OT have taken an innovative approach to tackling this with staff working across service areas to develop skills in multiple areas.</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Explore the creation of an all-service Camden outreach team to support schools and families. This team should have the aim of providing further specialist support for complex children in mainstream schools and be comprised of professionals from both education and health services.</p>	<p>As discussed above (recommendation 9) the SEND and Inclusion service will review advisory and support services. This review will include consideration of an all-service, multi-disciplinary outreach team. This new service will be in place in readiness for September 2026.</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>Ensure that the Camden SEND Strategy Implementation Plan develops a strategic plan for Camden schools that considers: the increase in demand for assessment, the increase in positive diagnosis because of the assessments, falling rolls in some schools, need for more reliable supply of Speech and Language Therapists, need for more support to schools/SENDCos/children and families from specialists.</p>	<p>In line with emerging central Government policy, strengthening inclusive mainstream practice is a clear priority for us locally in Camden. This is being taken forward this year through working with schools to coproduce a tool kit to support mainstream provision The learning from this process will feed into needs assessments for commissioned advisory and support services and special school / ARP places so that we can provide a strong continuum of provision for children and young people in Camden to ensure that needs can be</p>

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		met locally across all of our schools. SEND place planning is part of our wider Schools Place Planning strategy and reporting.
14	<p>Camden Council and Camden Learning should continue to work with schools in partnership to explore new approaches to meeting the needs of Camden's children. This could include:</p> <p>a. Schools working in partnership b. Test and learn projects where schools work together and develop different models to meet the needs of Children and young People with SEND</p>	<p>See response to item 7</p> <p>There will be opportunities to develop test and learn initiatives over the Spring term in 2025 which will focus on how schools can work collectively to meet the needs of children and young people.</p>
15	<p>Explore how best to match the profile of need across the continuum of provision: which could include strengthening inclusive mainstream as well as additional ARPs and Special School places, to ensure there is appropriate, local provision for pupils.</p>	<p>Once we have completed our work to agree what level of needs could be supported across mainstream schools, work will start on re-commissioning ARPs and Special School places to ensure that local provision matches local needs. Work on commissioning new places will be part of our wider school place planning work with any newly commissioned provision opening in September 2026 and September 2027. We recognise that there may need to be additional places in readiness for September 2025 and so will work with existing ARPs and special schools to expand places where necessary, ensuring appropriate, local provision for pupils.</p>
16	<p>Ensure that relational practice is front & centre to improve relationships between all partners, recognising that there may, at points, be differences of views, recommendations and constraints.</p>	<p>Embedding relational practice is a clear priority for the Children and Learning directorate and specifically the SEND and Inclusion service. The service restructure included a new role of Training and Development Officer who will work to ensure that we have appropriate conduct regular training needs assessments and broker appropriate training to meet needs, including around relational practice.</p>

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17	<p>From the parent questionnaire we had hoped to learn more about the specific gaps in provision that parents identify, and several parents did indeed provide their views on this. Specifically, parents wanted to see what services and provision were in place for children and young people without a learning disability.</p>	<p>The refreshed Local Offer website provides improved accessibility regarding the services and provision on offer across the borough, including for children and young people without a learning disability.</p>
18	<p>Camden should set out, for itself and for parents, exactly what provision exists. And ensure this is reflected in the school score cards. There should be a clear, simple statement of what is available, why this is the case, and how Camden's approach to education, including the education of children with SEND, differs to those of other local authorities. Such a statement should set out clearly the reasons for and benefits of an inclusive approach for all children, but especially those with SEND. The statement should make clear what is available within the borough for children with different types and levels of need and clarify the options for children whose needs cannot be met within the borough (either due to an absence of sufficient places, or the absence of appropriate specialist provision).</p>	<p>Considerable work has taken place to make it easier to families to be able to understand the local offer of services and support. The refreshed Local Offer website was published in autumn 2024 to provide this information. The restructure includes the new role of Local Offer Officer who will work with services and families on an ongoing basis to continue to improve how the Local Offer is meeting local families' information needs. Regular feedback is captured during parent carer sessions to assess satisfaction levels.</p> <p>The Camden Learning School Reports are now live, providing families with clear, nuanced information about local schools in an accessible format.</p> <p>Further work will be implemented over the coming months to provide increased clarity on the continuum of provision across Camden through the Local Offer site.</p>
19	<p>An easy to access guide to 'what is ordinarily available,' in schools. This should be referenced in the school score cards.</p>	<p>We will be developing our approach to this work over the spring and summer term and will publish clear and accessible documentation of our approach on the Local Offer in readiness for the new academic year</p>
20	<p>Camden SEND to work with Voluntary and Charitable Sector (VCS) and organisations such as</p>	<p>The partnership recognises the importance of working with the VCS. The VCS play a crucial role in supporting families</p>

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	SENDIASS to help parents and young people with SEND to become peer mentors/peer champions /hand holder to support others through the SEND educational journey. This could be both operational and strategic support.	throughout their educational journey. This is an area of work that we will be exploring as part of our year 3 implementation plan.
21	Expand the autism journey map to incorporate broader services across the system to help families understand the steps and support along their journey.	We are working to embed the Local Offer as the key information resource in the borough, helping families to understand the processes and support available to them. We will continue to improve the Local Offer to meet families' need for information.
22	Council departments and parents to co-design a process/system that ensures that families are able navigate much easier resulting in them not telling the same story over and over.	We recognise the need to ensure that systems across the partnership are able to work together to negate the risk of families having to repeat the same story on multiple occasions. There are shared record systems across the partnership which are in place, however further improvements are needed to ensure consistency. This is being addressed both through the review of systems that are being used as well as through workforce development opportunities. Further work on this will take place during 2026 and 2027.
23	A clear 'you said we did,' annual form of communication for parents and as a follow up to any questionnaires put out to parents.	The refreshed Local Offer includes a 'You said, we did' page which is regularly updated with progress on how we are responding to feedback from families. Additional forms are also being developed for parent/carer sessions which will be reviewed routinely to ensure feedback is constantly reviewed to inform service development.
24	Camden to review and expand the wraparound support provided specifically to parents/carers with SEND children , to ensure parents feel supported and empowered by the council in their journey to care for their child.	There is a range of support available to parents to help them in caring for their child and to support their own mental health, including one to one counselling sessions. We will continue to improve how we communicate this offer of support to parents, including through the Local Offer and care work.

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25	Officers in contact with parents/carers with SEND children to follow a relational practice model , with a strong emphasis on ensuring that parents/carers don't experience a sense of being 'blamed' by professionals.	Camden Children and Learning directorate are committed to embedding relational practice in all our work with families and with each other. The framework for our practice model has now been finalised and training has started to embed this within practice.
26	To follow the recommendation from the recent Camden SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, which recommended to further improve data collection on those with SEND and protected characteristics and their outcomes to better understand differences in prevalence seen, including overrepresentation in Black ethnic and mixed/multiple ethnic groups and under-representation in Chinese communities.	Improving data collection on protected characteristics is a clear priority for the partnership. There is ongoing work to improve how data on protected characteristics is captured through the CNWL single point of referral to enable better data analysis on outcomes and experiences. Within SEND and Inclusion, work is underway to regularly collect feedback on their interactions with the service which can be used to understand and address any differences between children based on protected characteristics.
27	Camden council to actively promote more accessible apprenticeships and supported internships within the council and with its partners to do the same.	We will continue to explore the possibility of supported internships within the council and continue to work with partners to develop additional supported internships. In 2024/25, 21 young people have taken up fully accredited supported internships, with a further 7 taking up alternative supported internships programmes. Supported Internships are included as part of our Youth Mission and work will continue through the Youth Mission to increase the variety and number of Supported Internships.
28	Camden to explore the sufficiency and effectiveness of the provision for pupils post-18 and that the outcomes of existing provision are meeting the needs of this profile.	The Camden Learning Post 16 Prospectus outlines the strong education options for children and young people with SEND in Camden. As part of the review on existing commissioned providers, we will seek to further strengthen post 16 provision with specific focus on how providers are delivering positive outcomes. This will be a key area of responsibility for the new 'SEND &

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		AP' commissioner function, which is a new role developed as part of the re-organisation of SEND & Inclusion.
29	Camden Local Area SEND Partnership to take a system wide approach in raising awareness of the prevalence of autism amongst girls and its gender-specific manifestations, ensuring that they are identified and receive appropriate diagnosis, intervention and support.	Raising awareness of inequalities in identification of SEND, including autism in girls, is a clear priority for the partnership. The SEND JSNA provided useful insight into when needs were being identified and for whom, and we will work to continue to share this information effectively to inform practice. The SEND JSNA found that the gap in autism diagnosis between boys and girls is narrowing, showing improvements in the work already underway to improve awareness of presentation in girls.
30	Camden to explore working with voluntary agencies to improve the quantity of good quality after school and holiday clubs for children/young people with SEND.	There is ongoing work to improve inclusivity of breakfast, after school and holiday clubs in Camden. Locally, we have topped up DfE funding for Holiday Activities and Food programme to create additional places for children and young people with SEND. From summer 2023 to summer 2024 (including summer holidays in both 2023 and 2024), Camden invested an additional £188k to create an additional 573 places, 232 of which were for children and young people with SEND. Further information on our after school and holiday clubs offer will be updated routinely on the Local Offer website.
31a	Based on specific requests that came out of the parent questionnaire, to improve provision for teens and post-16, specifically more comprehensive life-skills training ; better sixth form provision (A-levels/BTEC vocational qualification) in smaller schools; and to provide overnight respite care .	As discussed above (recommendation 28), we will review post 16 education provision in 2026 to ensure that provision is improving outcomes and meeting aspirations of Camden residents. We also responded to the Government call for evidence as part of their Curriculum and Assessment Review, highlighting the need for the curriculum to work better children and young people with SEND.
31b	Government to launch a national consultation on how we might create an inclusive education	Camden Council submitted a response to the Government call for evidence as part of their Curriculum and Assessment

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	<p>curriculum for children with SEND, perhaps led by a 'schooling framework commission', and use resulting principle and values that emerge from it to be the measure of success for assessing our education system. This should also take careful note of the soon to be published Oracy report.</p>	<p>Review outlining changes that are needed to better support children and young people with SEND and to the parliamentary Education Committee's enquiry into Solving the SEND Crisis.</p> <p>Through the work of the SEND Change Programme, Camden alongside Barnet, Islington and Enfield are representing London in exploring what an inclusive education should look like for children.</p>
32	<p>Government to undertake a review of post-16 provision for children with SEND and allocate funding immediately to increase provision for 16-25 years old. This should happen alongside a broader reflection of how we might foster an inclusive society where neurodiverse adults participate fully in community life.</p>	<p>We support these national recommendations and will continue to use our influence to lobby for further changes. We have submitted a response to the government consultation on Curriculum and Assessment review, submitted evidence to the parliamentary Education Committee enquiry and continue to raise the profile of local work through the Change Programme.</p>
33	<p>A review of the 2014 Family Act and code of practice legislation, creating the legislative protection for SEND with the right funding from the outset.</p>	
34	<p>Ensuring that the legal protections for children and the funding for local government have a mediation process wrapped around for any disputes rather than the adversarial tribunal system that we have at present.</p>	
35	<p>Government to provide immediate funding to increase SENDCO capacity to alleviate their administrative burden and have sufficient time for teaching interventions.</p>	

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36	Government to commission research on the causes of the increase in demand and diagnosis of complex needs , especially autism and ADHD.	
37	Revisit an education Covid-19 compensation national funding stream to include a focus on early years and KS1 intervention , as well as tracking the cohort of children 0-5 years old in the Covid-19 years.	