

CABINET 31 MARCH 2020

**CABINET RESPONSE TO REPORT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND
DISABILITIES (SEND) TASK GROUP
(Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee)**

Recommendations of the SEND Task Group

It is recommended that:

1. That, as soon as is reasonably practicable, nurseries be supported to provide appropriate support to children in early years through commissioning of outreach interventions into nursery settings.
2. That the funding arrangements for specials schools that provide outreach services for SEN children in mainstream schools be reviewed; and that the Executive Director of Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Directorate report with the findings of that review to the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee no later than September 2020.
3. That, with immediate effect, the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Directorate work with independent providers of SEN support to ensure that there is adequate, cost-effective provision to meet the needs of service users; and officers work with independent providers of SEN support to develop robust systems for contract management to prevent supply-driven demand caused by the overstatement of service users' educational needs.
4. That, to reduce journey times for service users, the commissioning of SEN provision closer to demand and the development of outreach services in mainstream schools under the capital programme be accelerated with immediate effect.
5. That, with immediate effect, commissioners work with SEND case officers to provide alternative pathways to support that do not require an Education, Health and Care plan.
6. That a review of the implementation and effectiveness of the Graduated Response be conducted; and that the Executive Director of Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Directorate report with the findings of that review to the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee no later than October 2020.
7. That, with immediate effect, the development of, and communication with, Special Educational Needs Coordinators be improved to support the implementation of the Graduated Response Approach.
8. That, with immediate effect, to assist schools to use their budgets to appropriately resource SEND provision, Special Educational Needs Coordinator networks be invested in to ensure SEND staff and Governors are engaged and aware of the challenges faced by the education system.

9. That the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Directorate report by no later than December 2020 to the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee on the implementation of recommendations 1, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 of this Report.

Mr Chris Botten
Chairman of the SEND Task Group

Cabinet Response:

The Cabinet would like to thank the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Task Group for conducting its review of key challenges and opportunities within the SEND system. Its report is insightful and its recommendations are helpful.

The Cabinet supports the Task Group's recommendations which are in line with the improvements the Council has been seeking to deliver through the SEND transformation programme. These are earlier intervention and prevention for children with special educational needs, provision that is closer to home and that fosters independence and preparation for adulthood and more cost-effective delivery of positive outcomes for children and families.

Due to the unexpected and unprecedented urgency to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, all services within the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Directorate are prioritising support for the most vulnerable children in Surrey. This means that timescales for delivering the recommendations, which were reasonable when proposed by the Task Group on completion of its review, may no longer be achievable. The Cabinet asks for the understanding of the Task Group that the Service will endeavour to deliver these recommendations as it is reasonable and practical to do so.

Reply from Mrs Julie Iles,
Cabinet Member for All-Age Learning
31 March 2020