

SEND Reform Update

Progress so far



SEND REFORM

Putting children and young people first



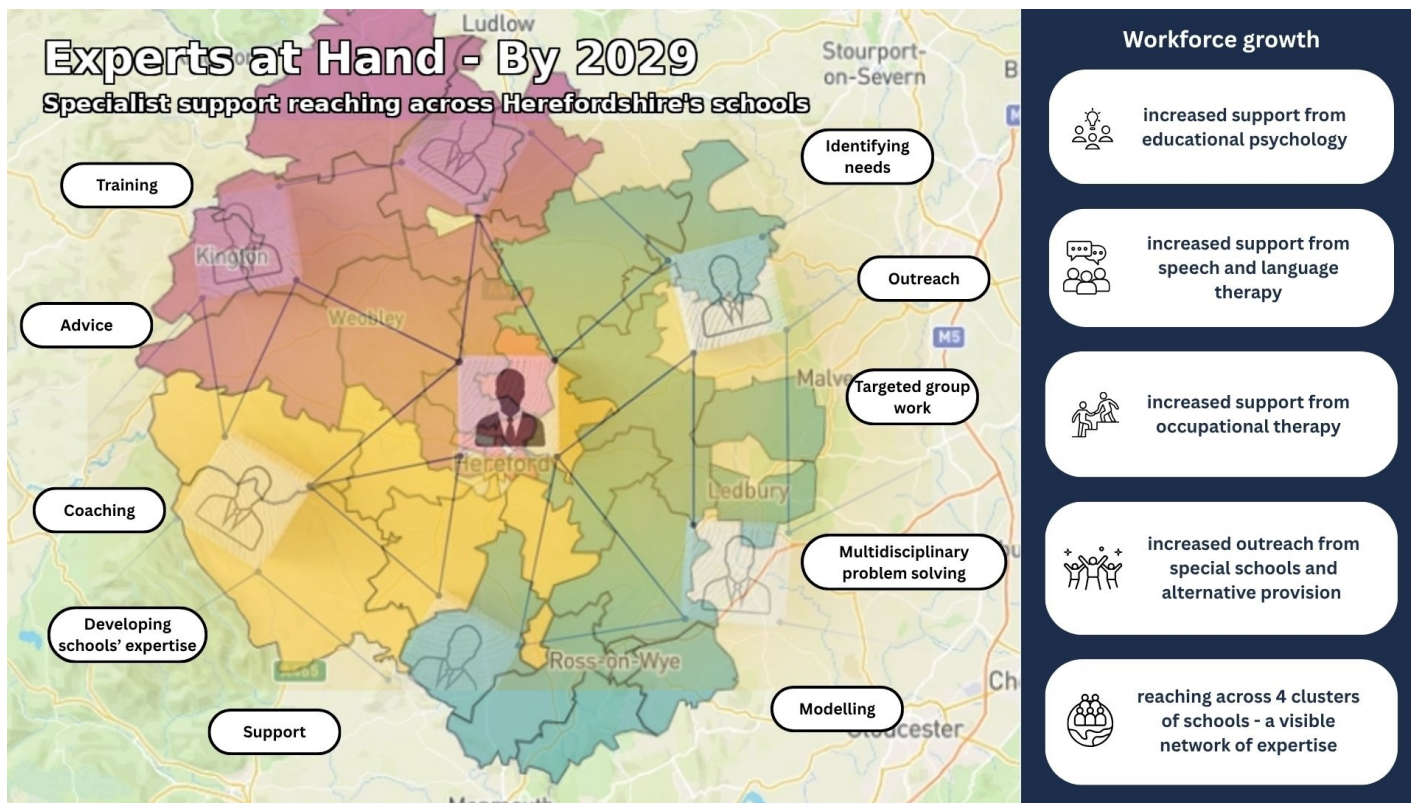
- Herefordshire's SEND Reform Plan was submitted on 19th June in line with the deadline. Co-produced with partners.
- Plan was approved 2nd October.
- Herefordshire is now eligible to receive a High Needs Stability Grant covering 90% of DSG deficit accrued up to the end of financial year 2025 to 2026.
- The indicative High Needs Stability Grant allocation for Herefordshire Council is £32,702,604.

Reform Plan progress – Q2



- Updated SEND sufficiency and demand projections completed.
- All schools engaged regarding inclusion base opportunities.
- Additional specialist capacity delivered:
 - Hampton Dene: +16 places
 - Blackmarston expansion operational
 - Aylestone expansion commenced
 - Weobley inclusion space created through relocation of modular village
- Ryefield consultation concluded
- Continued work on AP and specialist provision development.
- The LINC opened, increasing Tier 2 support capacity.

Reform Plan progress – Q2



- Experts at Hand workforce recruited:
 - Educational Psychologists
 - Speech and Language Therapists
 - Occupational Therapists
- Pilot clusters confirmed.
- Single Front Door model developed.
- Joint commissioning arrangements established.

Reform Plan progress – Q2



- Revised DSG Deficit Management Plan approved and aligned with SEND Reform priorities.
- Updated SEND demand and sufficiency projections incorporated into financial planning.
- Investment focused on:
 - Expanding local specialist provision.
 - Increasing inclusion capacity in mainstream schools.
 - Strengthening early intervention and outreach support.
 - Reducing reliance on independent and out-of-county placements.
- Financial modelling now reflects anticipated growth in SEND demand and planned provision developments.

Reform Plan what next - Q3



- Co-produce offer of support with schools over the next term.
 - Experts at Hand
 - Outreach/Inreach offer from special provision
- Launch and test integrated support offer.
- Continue expansion of local specialist capacity.

What This Means for Leaders



- Please make time to attend briefings / encourage SENCOs to attend briefings
- Primary heads was 08/10/26
- Secondary Heads: 09/10/26, 1pm
- SENCOs: 12/10/26, 3.30pm
- Cluster 1 and 2 SENCOs and Heads: 15/10/26, 12pm

Deficit Management Plan Update

The plan sets out a three-year programme to improve SEND outcomes whilst restoring financial sustainability. It has been updated to align more closely with the SEND Reform Plan as well as the new financial reporting year.

Rising demand, increasing complexity of need, growth in EHCPs and dependence on specialist provision require a whole-system response.

Four linked workstreams focus on early intervention, inclusion, sufficiency and value for money.

Increasing Demand

- Growth in EHCPs and complexity of need
- Rising SEMH and neurodevelopmental presentations

System Pressures

- Reliance on specialist and independent provision
- Increasing transport and placement costs

Required Response

- Earlier intervention and stronger inclusion
- Increased local specialist capacity
- Better value for money and sustainable services

Workstream 1: Intervention First & Experts at Hand

- Publish joined-up Local Inclusion Support Offer and Experts at Hand pathway
- Deliver Experts at Hand pilots in two Family Hub localities
- Recruit 16 EAH roles in Year 1, rising to 23 by Year 3
- Commission special school and HPRS outreach support
- Strengthen SENCO networks, graduated approach tools and transition support
- Success: single access route, outreach within 4 weeks, increased school confidence and reduced escalation

Workstream 2: Managing Demand & Reducing Escalation

- Appoint SEND Sufficiency Lead and embed shared needs analysis
- Develop workforce training, coaching and modelling for schools
- Expand Inclusion Outreach, EAH, APST and specialist outreach
- Improve dispute resolution and signposting processes
- Introduce Best Start Inclusion Practitioners through Family Hubs
- Embed Families First and Early Years inclusion funding to provide support earlier

Workstream 3: Sufficiency of Local Specialist Places

- Expand Early Years, ASD, SLCN and SEMH specialist provision
- Increase Blackmarston and Westfield specialist capacity
- Develop Ryefield MLD provision and SEMH special school capacity
- Expand HPRS and primary/secondary Alternative Provision
- Create Tier 2 AP intervention pathways
- Reduce reliance on independent and out-of-county placements and educate more children locally

Workstream 4: Financial Management, Transport & Value for Money

- Quarterly reviews of key cost drivers and placement trends
- Annual value-for-money statement
- Financial impact and investment recovery tracking
- Travel impact assessments for all new SEND/AP proposals
- Review recoupment, charges and post-16 top-up expenditure
- Use one dashboard to connect spending, outcomes, transport and sufficiency

Success Measures (Year 3 Targets)

- EHCP pupils in mainstream settings: 61.6% → 65%
- SSA EHCP pupils in mainstream: 44.5% → 48%
- Special school placements: 15.8% → 19.5%
- Independent placements: 12.1% → 8%
- Out-of-county placements: 8.5% → 7.5%
- EOTAS: 2% → 1.5%
- Statutory assessment requests: no more than +5% growth
- EHCP volume growth: no more than +10%
- Attendance for EHCP pupils: 86.8% → 88.5%
- Experts at Hand workforce: 16 roles Year 1, 23 by Year 3
- Increased SALT, OT and EP access for children without EHCPs