

Annual Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

SEND Family Survey

2025 Findings



Overview

This 3rd Annual SEND Family Survey was undertaken to continue to ensure that Lambeth's children, young people and families with SEND are supported with services and resources that improve their lives.

We have identified a range of cross-cutting themes.



What you said last year (2024)...

What we did...

Parents and carers noted that communications and engagement are good during their child's early years but needs to improve as they get older.



Staff capacity and high turnover often lead to communication challenges



Those in **post-16 settings** were more likely to feel that **communication** needed improving



45 families said that **telephone and email responses** from the SEND Service could be better

What we did:

- Introduced a new **booking system** for caseworkers.
- Reviewed the **current communication channels**, such as the **Local Offer**, to make them more **accessible and inclusive**.

Families want to feel more confident about the support available for future plans and transitions to new settings.



Families felt their young person was **less likely to be supported in independent living and employment**



Some stated there is a lack of information and guidance around **transitions to adulthood**



Mentoring, careers guidance, and taster sessions would provide further support

What we did:

- Ensured the work on **Pathways to Adulthood** is clearly communicated and understood by both young people and their families.
- Explored options to deliver **life skills training** across educational settings, including **Independent Travel Training**.
- Offered **professional and life skills training** via our new **SEND Youth Forum**.

Families want more activities and holiday provisions, as well as opportunities to provide feedback on services.



More **afterschool and holiday activities** providing respite for families and outlets for young people



Activities on offer need to be **more inclusive and tailored towards a broader range of needs**



25 families had been given chances to give **feedback on services. Many didn't know if this had been used**

What we did:

- Reviewed the Short Breaks provision and providing clearer guidance around the **thresholds and access criteria for the 0 - 25 offer.**
- Explored opportunities to expand **availability and capacity of leisure and cultural activities** during school holidays and after school. This included an assessment by 13 SEND Young Inspectors aged 11-16 of our Summer HAF Provision with the aim of making improvements.
- Increased the number of **opportunities for families to provide feedback and communicating how this is used to improve services.**



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What you said this year...

What we will do in response...

Parents and carers said that the provision detailed in their child's EHCP made a positive difference and some gave praise for individual teachers or SENCOs who went 'above and beyond'



Most families said their **child's EHCP made a positive impact and provided a clear** understanding of needs and support (15% increase since 2024)



Families want more involvement in decision making processes - only 38.2% feeling their views were consistently listened to during EHCP discussions.



Parents and carers continue to report **communication from SEND services is most effective during early years, but this declines** as children grow older—particularly in post-16 settings.

We will:

- Improve families' involvement in decision making **by communicating more clearly, offering flexible meetings, promoting use of the EHC Hub, and involving families fully in annual reviews.**
- Initiate **Awareness Campaigns** and promoting the **new EHCP team booking system** through newsletters, school communications, and social media and timely email responses.

Families felt that there were differences in the quality of provision between different schools and settings



Families felt that there were **differences in quality of provision between different schools and settings**, noting that **understanding of SEND needs amongst practitioners was variable**.



Some families stated schools are **not following local SEND strategies** or failing to implement the local offer effectively.



Some parents and carers reported challenges related to **SEND transport to specialist settings**.

We will:

- **Promote best practices and share successful strategies across all schools** to ensure a consistent and inclusive approach to Ordinarily Available Provision, supported by our newly established Area SENCO team.
- **Carry out a review of SEND Transport services to make improvements during Autumn 2025**. Independent travel trainers, who have recently been trained and are now based in some of our special schools, will support young people to develop the skills and confidence for independent travel where appropriate.

Families said waiting lists to access Therapies and Support Services were too long



Families felt Access to Therapies and Support settings was subject too long waiting times.



Families said that schools should have more access to mental health professionals and resources.



Families stated mentoring, careers guidance and taster sessions was the most effective support to help their children back into education, employment or training.

We will:

- **Improve communications about support and interventions available** for young people on waiting lists. This includes **workshops, resources and access to advisory services.**
- **Expand MHSTs to all of our schools by 2030** in line with national guidance.
- Provide a **NEET Advisor within the SEND service to help young people aged 16–25 with EHC Plans find the right path into education, training, or work** — offering personalised support and guidance every step of the way.



Contact us

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Next Steps

Thank you to every parent and carer who took part in our 3rd Annual SEND Family Survey.

Your feedback drives real change, helping us improve SEND support and services across Lambeth.

We're committed to improving future surveys to ensure they remain relevant, accessible, and reflective of your experiences. We will redesign our 2026 survey to increase participation and further improve services and support available to families across Lambeth.