

Report Impact Review

Together: Transforming the lives of children and young people with special education needs and disabilities in London

Published July 2018

Over the last year, the London Assembly Education Panel has examined the challenges facing children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

As part of our work we held discussions with, visited and received evidence from a wide range of stakeholders. We heard about the inspiring work being done by parents and carers, by nursery workers, by teachers and teaching assistants, by volunteers, by healthcare professionals and by officers in town halls. But, amidst some truly inspiring work, there are some real challenges.

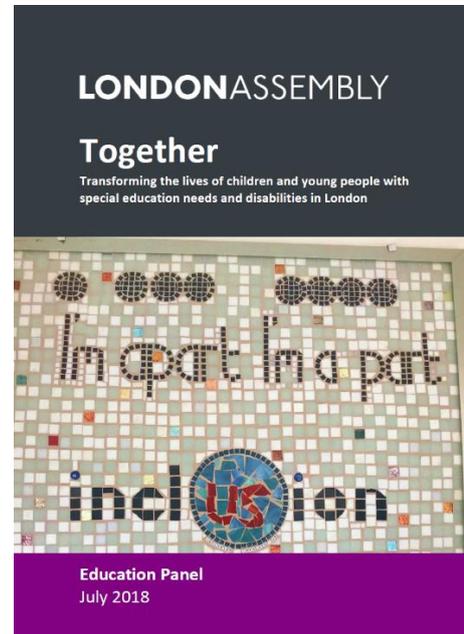
As London's school-aged population continues to grow, there are more and more children and young people who need additional support to be the best they can be. The education sector and government funding streams have reacted slowly to the growing level of need and it is clear that a more strategic approach is required to ensure we are able to provide high quality provision.

The Education Panel called on the Mayor to lead a transformation in the way young Londoners with SEND are supported and reflected in society. In that context, we made a series of recommendations in our report, *Together: Transforming the lives of children and young people with special education needs and disabilities in London* (available [here](#)).

In response to the report, the Mayor of London committed to engage with stakeholders and review training programmes and support networks. The London Assembly Education Panel will continue to push the Mayor and all of his deputies and advisors to increase their efforts in producing a transformation in the levels and quality of support given to children and young people with SEND.

We would appreciate your input on our next steps. Please send us your comments and suggestions for what you would like us to prioritise in our work going forward by 31 December 2018 (educationpanel@london.gov.uk).

Below we have summarised what happened at our launch event for the report, the media coverage and the Mayor's response to our recommendations.



Launch event

We heard about the challenges young people with SEND and their carers face while navigating the public transport system. So, we launched our report at the Westbourne Park Bus Garage, bringing together representatives from TfL, Tower Transit (a bus operator) and young people who use local buses with their carers. There was lively discussion about young people's needs and what bus drivers could do to make journeys easier. The bus drivers relished the opportunity to hear from the carers and some of the wonderful young people even had a go in the driver's seat. Tower Transit agreed to continue working with the community group to continue learning and building up good practice.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM introducing the report's findings and recommendations at the launch event.



Media coverage

The report had great media pickup and was discussed on television and online locally, nationally and internationally.

The report featured in:

- **Evening Standard** - <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/education/severe-pressure-on-schools-as-number-of-pupils-with-most-complex-needs-rises-by-fifth-a3893856.html>
- **London Live news (TV)** - <https://app.criticalmention.com/app/#clip/view/867a80e8-208d-4c0c-8bec-9a431904d6ad?token=3d59acf1-e8a9-4032-b8d5-44a515a2eafb>
- **Yahoo! News** - <https://uk.news.yahoo.com/severe-pressure-schools-number-pupils-105200533.html>

- **MSN.com** - <https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/newslondon/%E2%80%98severe-pressure%E2%80%99-on-schools-as-number-of-pupils-with-most-complex-needs-rises-by-fifth/ar-BBKJ68?srcref=rss>

There was also coverage in trade publications and local papers:

- **Education Business** - <http://www.educationbusinessuk.net/news/23072018/london-needs-thousands-new-school-places-send-pupils>
- **Schools Week** - <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/sadiq-khan-urged-to-intervene-over-londons-special-needs-timebomb/>
- **Enfield Independent** - <https://www.enfieldindependent.co.uk/news/16376024.calls-for-better-careers-advice-for-young-people-with-disabilities/>
- **Tottenham & Wood Green Independent** - <https://www.thetottenhamindependent.co.uk/news/16376024.calls-for-better-careers-advice-for-young-people-with-disabilities/>
<https://www.thetottenhamindependent.co.uk/news/16372356.calls-for-more-financial-support-for-children-with-special-educational-needs/>

The Mayor's response

The Mayor responded to the Education Panel's recommendations in October 2018. This is summarised in the table below, and is available to read [here](#).

	Recommendation summary	Progress	Response summary
1	Lobby the Secretary of State for Education to provide real terms funding increases and allow local authorities flexibility to transfer funding between the schools and high needs blocks.	Agreed	The Mayor raised the issue of funding for pupils with SEND with the then Secretary of State for Education at a joint meeting with the leader of London Councils in January 2018 and will raise this again with the current Secretary of State for Education.
2	Lobby Secretary of State for Education to work with the GLA and local authorities to create new special free schools in areas of high demand.	Agreed	The Mayor will work with London Councils to lobby for adequate funding for boroughs to ensure that school provision is made available where it is most needed. The GLA City Intelligence Unit is developing projections of numbers of pupils with SEND from reception to year 11 to map out the scale and nature of future demand for SEND places.
3	Convene a pan-London SEND network to support the closer working of health, education and local authority leads.	Partially agreed	The Mayor will ask his Health Adviser, Dr Tom Coffey OBE, to seek the views of London Councils as well as the health, school and college sectors about pan-London SEND networks.

4	Support a trial in his Early Year Hubs to create a best practice template which uses the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) profile to evidence any concerns about a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.	Partially agreed	The Wandle and Merton Early Years Hubs have templates used for transition. The Wandle EYH would be happy to review and improve these templates. Information about the templates and best practice will then be shared through the HEYL network for wider usage across the city.
5	Assess the viability of supporting the establishment of a dedicated centre for training SENCOs.	Agreed	The Mayor is happy to engage with education stakeholders on SENCO training and other SEND training needs. Training could be supported through existing arrangements via teaching schools, London Grid for Learning, other pan-London networks. The Mayor will ensure that these programmes review their provision for SEND professional development. The Mayor will also request that provision of training for SENCOs is added to the agenda for discussion at the next London Education Officer Group.
6	Profile schools in the next Education Report who are able to demonstrate excellent progress for pupils with SEND.	Partially agreed	The Mayor agrees that schools should be transparent about their track records of support for children with SEND. He will investigate how that may be taken forward in future reports on London's children and young people. His "Schools for success" programme will include an event on SEND to share good practice.
7	Set out how he intends to utilise the devolution of the Adult Education Budget to support training provision for young people with SEND across the FE sector and including independent colleges.	Partially agreed	The Mayor has commissioned a pan-London review into 16-25 SEND provision. He will use the findings of this to develop a more inclusive adult education and skills system for learners. Adults with learning difficulties and disabilities will be a priority group for Adult Community Learning. Applicants for ten new Career Clusters will be encouraged to replicate the Ealing cluster's specialist SEN model.
8	Lead an audit of the GLA and functional bodies to identify opportunities for supported internships and encourage more large organisations to set-up supported internships.	Agreed	The Mayor will ask the GLA Diversity and Inclusion Management Board to scope the introduction of supported internships. He will ask the cross-GLA group 'Leading by Example' to review and share good practice on supported education, work experience and training schemes to support pupils with SEND and adults with Learning Difficulties and Disability. The Mayor's Good Work Standard includes creating workplaces which are inclusive for disabled Londoners.
9	Convene a working group to assess the viability of supporting the creation of a showcase specialist playground and ways of adding	Partially agreed	The Mayor will investigate what guidance would help local authorities undertake play audits, play strategies and support good design for play. The Mayor will consult with

	accessible play equipment to local parks.		the play and design sectors on best practice guidance on the design of formal and informal play space, soft play areas and integrated and inclusive practices.
10	Fund a number of special Bus Days to bring together CYP with SEND and their parents and carers with bus drivers and pilot a scheme of adverts and messages to challenge pre-conceived ideas about children and young people with SEND.	Partially agreed	The Mayor will ask TfL to explore the suggestions with these user groups.
11	Appoint a SEND Champion to ensure that the interests of our children and young people with SEND, their parents and carers, play a part in shaping strategies, policies and services.	Not agreed	The Mayor agrees that the views of CYP with SEND are important. He states that Deputy Mayors for Education, Social Integration and Skills are engaging CYP directly in shaping strategies and services.

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