

MAYOR OF LONDON

Jennette Arnold OBE AM

City Hall
The Queen's Walk
More London
London SE1 2AA

Our Ref: MGLA230718-8293

Date: 03 OCT 2018



Thank you for your letter of 23 July and the London Assembly report "*Together: Transforming the lives of children and young people with special education needs and disabilities in London*".

I applaud the focus on social inclusion in this wide-ranging report. I want to do what I can to help. Below I have set out details of the activity already underway through my strategies and programmes, as well as where I can act on the recommendations to do more for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

- 1. The Mayor should lobby the Secretary of State for Education: • to provide real terms funding increases per pupil with high needs, taking into account future growth in the number of SEND pupils • to allow local authorities full flexibility to transfer funding between the schools and high needs block of the dedicated schools grant**

I am very concerned that funding from government for local authorities and schools is insufficient to meet the needs of London's children and young people with SEND.

I 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. I will raise this again with the current Secretary of State for Education.

In London, the number of children and young people with SEND is increasing above the national rate, so funding must take this into account. Analysis published by the National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) in May 2018 identified that real term cuts in funding are placing a significant burden on schools, and this has an impact on the ability of mainstream schools to provide an inclusive offer for all pupils.

I will continue to work closely with London Councils to make the case to government for adequate funding that keeps pace with the real costs of teachers' pay and school running costs, as well as the additional resources required to support children through the high needs block of the dedicated schools grant. Local authorities play an important role - they work with local schools to manage demands and must have flexibility and discretion to manage funding to support pupils with SEND.

London Councils will be publishing their latest "Do the Maths 2018" report this autumn, which will set out in more detail the case for funding London's schools and will include details of demand for SEND school places.

MAYOR OF LONDON

2. Lobby Secretary of State for Education to work with the GLA and local authorities to create new special free schools where the pan-London projections indicate areas of high demand for SEND places.

I will work closely with London Councils to lobby for adequate funding and support for boroughs to ensure that school provision is made available where it is most needed.

Not only is it vital that there are enough overall school places in London for SEND pupils – they must also be in the right locations for families, with availability in both mainstream and specialist schools. This recognises the importance of parental choice in selecting the most suitable school provision for their child's needs.

I welcome the Government's recognition in 2017 that local authorities are best placed to plan for SEND schools, with a ring-fenced round of capital funding. Some London boroughs were successful in the first round, including several collaborative applications between boroughs, and a further round opened for applications in May 2018. This funding is helpful, but it will not meet the total demand in London for additional SEND school places.

In consultation with local authorities, the Greater London Authority (GLA) City Intelligence Unit is developing projections of numbers of pupils with SEND from reception to year 11. This work aims to provide a consistent pan-London view of the scale and nature of future demand for SEND places. Establishing this approach will help inform planning for future provision of special schools and identify opportunities for collaboration between local authorities.

Giving London's children and young people the best educational opportunity is a key part of my new Draft London Plan. The Plan recognises the need for an increase in SEND provision across London and requires boroughs to identify and address local education needs and use their Local Plans to identify sites for future provision. The London Plan policy highlights the important role that mainstream schools will have to play in providing places for pupils with SEND needs and advocates that all schools are designed to be accessible and inclusive.

3. The Mayor should convene a pan-London SEND network to support the closer 3 working of health, education and local authority leads to assess learning from the local area reviews and the transition of children and young people to EHCPs.

I am already undertaking a detailed review on the post-16 provision for young people with SEND. This was identified as a pressing concern across London through the Further Education Review. The recommendations have not been finalised, but it is already clear that several of the same issues, such as support for SEND networks and the implementation of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP), appear in both reports. I will be publishing the *London Post-16 SEND Review* later this year.

I will ask my 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 and how they might best be supported, bearing in mind existing arrangements for London networks.

My Healthy Schools London (HSL) and Healthy Early Years London (HEYL) networks already support closer working across health, early years sectors and education. Both programmes include criteria on SEND. To engage in HSL and HEYL, local authorities must ensure that health and

MAYOR OF LONDON

education are collaborating effectively. The networks work closely with London Councils and Public Health England to support joint work across sectors.

- 4. The Mayor should 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. Done in a clear and transparent way this document can transfer to the child's primary school placement in advance of the child actually starting at the school to ensure that the primary school is ready and able to welcome the child on day one.**

My Early Years Hubs support access to high-quality early education and childcare to improve outcomes for children, particularly those from less advantaged backgrounds. The Wandle Early Years Hub, set up in Wandsworth and Merton, has a particular focus on early identification of children with SEND to improve levels of support offered to those children and their families. As part of this work, the Hub has developed an accredited training course for Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) delivered to Private Voluntary and Independent (PVI) settings. The key messages are shared with the whole sector and key partners via established SENCO Forums, nurture group meetings and transition events. The Hub has established links with specialist schools and is further developing close links with Public Health. My other two Early Years Hubs are also working to improve services and training for children with SEND.

Dissemination of good practice and encouraging peer to peer support is an important aspect of the work of my Early Years Hubs. The Hubs and HEYL programmes are working together, with London Councils and Public Health England, to support best practice through the Healthy Early Years Network.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) profile referred to in the report is completed at the end of Reception Class. It is an important mechanism to measure children's outcomes at the age of five but may be too late for sharing information during transition to settings. Early Years providers are already required to share information about a child's development and outcomes during transition periods as part of the EYFS framework. The Wandle Early Years Hub has a template that Wandsworth settings use for transition and Merton settings have their own template. The Wandle Early Years Hub would be happy to review and improve these templates as part of the Hub activity. Information about the templates and learning about best practice will then be shared through the HEYL network for wider usage and greater impact across the city.

- 5. The Mayor should assess the viability of supporting the establishment of a dedicated centre for training SENCOs. He should do this by convening a high-level meeting with London's teaching schools that specialise in providing SEND teaching and learning to assess demand and to discuss viability.**

I am happy to engage with education stakeholders on SENCO training and other SEND training needs for schools and Further Education staff, taking on board both this recommendation and recommendations expected in due course from my Post 16 SEND Review.

Due to the real term reductions in funding for schools and colleges, the budgets for staff training and professional development are under pressure. High-quality training and professional development are the best ways to improve outcomes for pupils and play a vital role in staff retention.

MAYOR OF LONDON

There are likely to be several ways in which training could be supported in London bearing in mind existing arrangements for training via teaching schools, other pan-London networks, the development of digital technology and the need for on-going co-ordination and support. For example, the London Grid for Learning brings together SEND resources and provides training.

I am already providing support for staff development and training for the education workforce through my:

- Early Years Hubs;
- Teach London programme on the recruitment and retention of teachers;
- Getting Ahead London school leadership programme; and
- Schools for Success programme.

I will also be supporting early years practitioners to develop their leadership and management skills and to share best practice through my new Early Years London leadership programme.

I will ensure that these programmes, in consultation with their individual advisory groups, review their provision for SEND professional development in light of the recommendations in your report.

I will also request that provision of training for SENCOs is added to the agenda for discussion at the next London Education Officer Group (LEOG). As well as the GLA, the LEOG has representation from London Councils, the Regional Schools Commissioners (DfE), borough Directors of Children's Services and Heads of School Improvement, London Teaching Schools and Ofsted.

6. As part of his next Education report the Mayor should profile schools who are able to demonstrate excellent progress for pupils with SEND and how their performance can be differentiated within the overall school's performance data. This could then be used as a template for all schools who are concerned that the high number of SEND pupils in their year groups might be affecting their average scores.

My Schools for Success programme identifies schools across London that are delivering excellent results, particularly for pupils with low prior attainment, and this will include pupils with SEND. The programme selects the top six per cent of primary and secondary schools in London each year and recognises their successes at a celebration event at City Hall. The programme showcases schools that have improved outcomes for pupils that begin behind their peers and may need additional support.

Schools share their good practice through online profiles, events and visits. The schools' profiles, which outline the actions they have taken to improve outcomes, can be selected based on target groups of interest, one being pupils with SEND (www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/education-and-youth/schools-success/schools-success-profiles).

I will be supporting sharing of good practice by Schools for Success schools with three events at City Hall for London schools during the 2018/19 academic year. An event focused on SEND will be developed for this programme. I will also promote the Schools for Success schools' case studies of good practice focused on pupils with SEND linking with SENCO networks.

I will be announcing the Schools for Success awards this month with an event at City Hall for the schools. Invitations to the event have been sent to the Education Panel members.

MAYOR OF LONDON

I endorse your aim of increasing the transparency of schools' data and their track records of support for children with SEND. I will investigate further how that may be taken forward in future reports on London's children and young people. The 2017 Education Annual Report includes analysis of educational achievement across a range of pupil cohorts, including those with SEND. Data on pupils with SEND are also set out in the more recent baseline evidence for my Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, 'Inclusive London'. This strategy includes a chapter "Growing Up in London" which provides a holistic overview of inequality for children and young people, including pupils with SEND.

7. In response to this report we want the Mayor, in line with the commitment in his skills strategy, to 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 and charity run colleges.

I am the first Mayor to publish a dedicated 'Skills for Londoners' Strategy, consulting widely to ensure that the vision and priorities for post-16 skills and education in the capital deliver for Londoners – in particular those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Devolution of the Adult Education Budget is an important and welcome first step towards a holistic and strategic approach to skills. To achieve an integrated and whole-system approach to post-16 skills, I need government to devolve further. This would allow for a more tailored, localised skills system so that more Londoners gain the skills they need to progress. I want this to help reduce inequality and disadvantage in the capital.

As highlighted in your report, there is a significant gap in attainment after formal education ends and a well-documented employment gap for people with special educational needs, disability and learning difficulties. This is unacceptable, and we must do more to support young Londoners with SEND to stay-in, or return, to education, as well as training and employment. The devolution of the Adult Education Budget is an historic opportunity to help Londoners get the skills they need.

I recognise that there needs to be a better understanding of London's post-16 SEND provision. Working with London's SEND experts, I have commissioned a pan-London review into 16-25 SEND provision to consider levels of demand in the capital and the current capacity within the system to meet that demand. I will use the findings of this review as a starting point to develop a more inclusive adult education and skills system for learners. In addition, as part of my wider work to identify priority groups for Adult Community Learning (ACL), I propose that adults with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) are one such group.

I have also launched my draft 'Skills for Londoners Framework' (www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2018_07_17_framework_final_for_publication.pdf) for consultation. It sets out my current proposals for reforming and delivering the devolved AEB and includes fully-funding any learners aged 19+ whose first language is British Sign Language (BSL) to study for a first qualification in BSL, up to and including level 2. The new entitlement will break down a barrier to participation in apprenticeships for adult learners who use BSL, ensuring the Deaf community in London can access the skills and training they need to fulfil their potential.

MAYOR OF LONDON

London's 12 Career Clusters, funded by the European Social Fund (ESF), work with senior leadership teams in secondary schools and further education colleges to help design high-quality careers guidance offers for pupils. This includes trying out different employer-based activities for pupils, helping teachers to understand London's job opportunities and supporting pupils into work placements and internships. The Ealing cluster is focussed specifically on supporting pupils with special educational needs. The cluster was designed to complement existing borough initiatives. New employer-led activities to engage SEND learners have been developed with six schools. These activities directly link to potential employment opportunities, as well as developing independent living skills essential to enabling progression into work.

I will be investing in a new youth programme as part of the 2018-23 ESF programme. The programme will fund ten more Careers Clusters. Based on the success of the Ealing cluster, applicants will be encouraged to replicate this more specialist model. These new clusters will be commissioned later this year.

8. The Mayor should lead an audit of possible suitable posts within the GLA and functional bodies to identify a number of supported internship opportunities. Using his Business networks, the Mayor should encourage more large organisations to come forward as "willing employers" able and willing to commit to setting up supported internships.

Opening up the GLA and the GLA group as an employer for young Londoners who need extra support and help them to gain experience and get into work is a priority for me.

Developing supported internships is an excellent idea. I will ask the GLA Diversity and Inclusion Management Board to scope the introduction of supported internships. I will also 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 (LDD) throughout the group.

The GLA HeadStart Internship offers four-week paid internships to young people aged 16-18. This internship opportunity is offered to young people who, as part of the HeadStart Programme, have completed 16 hours of volunteering, after which they can choose the GLA amongst a selection of HeadStart employer partners. This year, nine young people completed their internship with teams across the GLA and OPDC. The promotion of the HeadStart Internship to a wide range of organisations should ensure we are encouraging SEND young people to apply.

The new ESF youth programme will include specialist delivery focused on SEND (in addition to the careers clusters mentioned above) to provide individually-tailored support for young people under 25 years old with SEND who require a high-level of assistance to achieve sustained education, training or employment outcomes. The supported internship model is included in this programme which will be commissioned later in 2018.

I agree that the role of employers is essential, and I want to work with them to make London the best place in the world to work and a fairer place to live. My Good Work Standard will support employers to implement the very best employment standards in London. This includes creating workplaces which are inclusive for disabled Londoners.

MAYOR OF LONDON

Team London Young Ambassadors (TLYA), the Mayor's volunteering programme for schools, connects young Londoners with their communities through social action. Between 2018-2021 TLYA will work with 45 Pupil Referral Units and special schools offering bespoke workshops, assemblies and youth summits to enable young people from any background to engage with the programme. In January 2018, the programme gained match funding from the #iwillFund with a focus on engaging more young people from diverse and deprived backgrounds, as well as those who have not previously volunteered. Between January to August 2018, 111 young people from eleven SEND schools took part in the programme.

9. The Mayor should convene a working group to assess the viability of supporting the creation of a showcase specialist playground and ways of adding accessible play equipment to local parks.

I want to support improvements for all play through my policy making powers, setting the frameworks and expectations for play and informal recreation facilities and opportunities.

The importance of play is recognised in my new London Plan. It includes Policy S4 on play and informal recreation which sets out a strategic framework to ensure boroughs understand the needs of play and informal recreation and produce strategies and policies that address these needs. My new plan acknowledges my commitment to updating the Play and Informal Recreation Supplementary Planning Guidance following its adoption.

I will investigate what guidance would be useful to support local authorities to undertake play audits, play strategies and support good design for play. I am already developing activity through the 'Setting Standards' pillar of my Good Growth by Design programme under the theme of 'Young People and the City' to explore ways of creating and implementing an inclusive child friendly city. Several of my Mayor's Design Advocates are experts in designing for children and play. They will be involved in the development of the London Housing Design Guidance and will test the implementation of a number of my public realm strategies to ensure these reflect best practice.

My Deputy Mayor for Education and Childcare, Joanne McCartney AM, recently met with London Play and discussed my new Draft London Plan and how this will be implemented. I will consult further with the play and design sectors on best practice guidance on both the design of formal and informal play space, soft play areas and integrated and inclusive practices to support families. Showcasing good design is essential to raise aspirations and standards for play provision. Any organisation could apply to my funding programmes such as the Good Growth Fund or the Crowdfund London scheme to seek funds for play provision.

10. The Mayor should fund a number of special Bus Days to bring together children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers with bus drivers at a bus depot whose buses are used on a regular basis by those children and young people to "do the school run". A pilot scheme of adverts and messages should be trialled to begin to challenge pre-conceived ideas about children and young people with SEND.

It is vital that London's transport system enables spontaneous and independent travel for disabled and older people. I know this is vital to allow Londoners to live, enjoy, explore and work in the city freely. In my Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, I committed to continue working through Transport for London (TfL) and other London transport providers to help increase staff awareness and understanding of how to provide an inclusive service.

MAYOR OF LONDON

Since 2016, all 25,000 bus drivers have undertaken their 'Hello London!' bus driver training. The training prompts drivers to consider how they can help disabled people, including lowering their vehicle when required, or allowing people to take a seat or hold on before they pull away. Their drivers' handbook, known as The Big Red Book, provides information on how best to support disabled customers, including those with less visible conditions. It also provides details on travel tools they might use, including the Travel Support Card, which helps customers communicate with staff, and their Mobility Aid Recognition Scheme.

Various initiatives like bus open days are organised by bus garages with SEND pupils and schools. They also host regular accessibility garage forums where disabled people can speak directly to bus drivers and garage staff about their experiences using the network. TfL's Travel Mentor team also offer 'bus days' which are open to Year 6 pupils upwards. They cover a number of topics to help young disabled people become more knowledgeable and confident about travel.

TfL is committed to having well trained staff on hand across their network to offer assistance to passengers. In the past decade, nearly 50 stations across the Tube and London Overground network have become step-free. This has opened up millions more journeys for wheelchair and mobility-aid users, as well as for parents with buggies. There are now more than 200 stations with level access across London Underground, London Overground, Docklands Light Railway and Tramlink. All of TfL's 9,000 buses are low-floor wheelchair accessible and fitted with ramps, which are checked daily to ensure they are working, and almost all bus stops are wheelchair accessible.

All stations are staffed while trains are running, and staff offer a 'turn-up-and-go' service, where disabled customers can be accompanied to and from their trains, without the need to book. Senior managers around the business have also undertaken trips on the Tube with disabled customers to get a greater understanding of the barriers customers may face.

TfL has run a number of campaigns over the past years to promote their accessible services to customers who need them. The #TravelKind campaign highlights the small steps that people can take to help prevent delays and make journeys run smoothly for them and their fellow passengers. Supporting this aim, their Priority Seating Week initiative and most recently the Look Up campaign have highlighted what other customers can do to help disabled customers and those with health conditions to travel.

Listening to the needs of customers remains a core focus for TfL. TfL is already working with organisations that represent disabled young people, such as Whizz-Kidz, Trailblazers and the Royal Society for Blind Children, in order to hear children and parents' views to help shape a more accessible transport network. I will ask TfL to explore the suggestions in your report with these user groups.

11. The Mayor should 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 the strategies, policies and services that directly impact on their journey through school and into adulthood.

I agree that the views of children and young people with SEND are important. I want to engage children and young people directly in shaping strategies and services throughout my consultation and participation activity.

MAYOR OF LONDON

I am already working with young people with SEND through my Peer Outreach Team. The Peer Outreach Workers (POWs) are made up of 30 young Londoners aged 15 to 25 years old from diverse backgrounds and life experiences. Currently, about one third of POWs have disclosed special educational needs and disabilities. The POWs tackle key issues faced by young Londoners, including: reducing youth crime, health, mental health and well-being, training and work experience, challenging discrimination, increasing social mobility and giving all young Londoners a voice working across the GLA and GLA group.

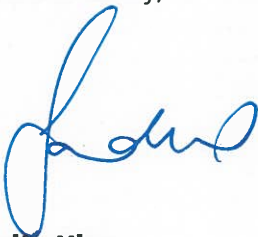
My Deputy Mayor for Education and Childcare, ensures that the views of children and young people with SEND are included in all engagement and participation activity with children and young people across the GLA group.

I want to work in a new way with external experts to support the implementation of my Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, Inclusive London. To do this, I am setting up a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group to have a twin focus on guiding City Hall's work to tackle inequality and create a fairer city, while ensuring the many key external stakeholders who informed the drafting of the strategy continue to be heard and involved on an ongoing basis. I am in the process of establishing the Advisory Group. I have considered the importance of special educational needs and disabilities in making the final selection and I will announce the appointments shortly. The Advisory Group will be chaired by my Deputy Mayor for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement, Matthew Ryder.

I anticipate that the London Post-16 SEND Review will also flag up the importance of young people's and parents' views being included into service development and commissioning decisions. Once we have had final recommendations from the Post-16 SEND review, I will ask my Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills, Jules Pipe, to consider how the GLA might better support children and young people with SEND through school and into adulthood.

Thank you for completing this in-depth report on the lives of children and young people with special education needs and disabilities in London. It has highlighted a number of areas where I can do more to support good practice and my Deputy Mayors will take these actions forward.

Yours sincerely,



Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London