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# Y&H PfA Conference

It's complex

Al Thompson and Audrey Goreham, IMPOWER  
Facilitated by Bev Compton, North East Lincolnshire Council

9 June 2021



# Welcome and introduction



**Al Thompson**

Delivery Director,  
IMPOWER



**Bev Compton**

Director of Adult Services,  
North East Lincolnshire Council



**Audrey Goreham**

Senior Consultant,  
IMPOWER

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# This session

During today's session we will:

- Consider PfA as a 'system' and reflect on the complexity
- Take a brief look at some of the data
- Share learning on how to make a difference in complex systems
- Leave some time for Q&A and sharing examples

# Your views

## Poll 1

**When should the journey of preparing for adulthood begin?**

1. Birth
2. Nursery
3. Primary school
4. Transitioning to secondary school
5. Planning for post secondary school
6. During college / further education

## Poll 2

**When does the formal Preparing for Adulthood Pathway and associated support begin?**

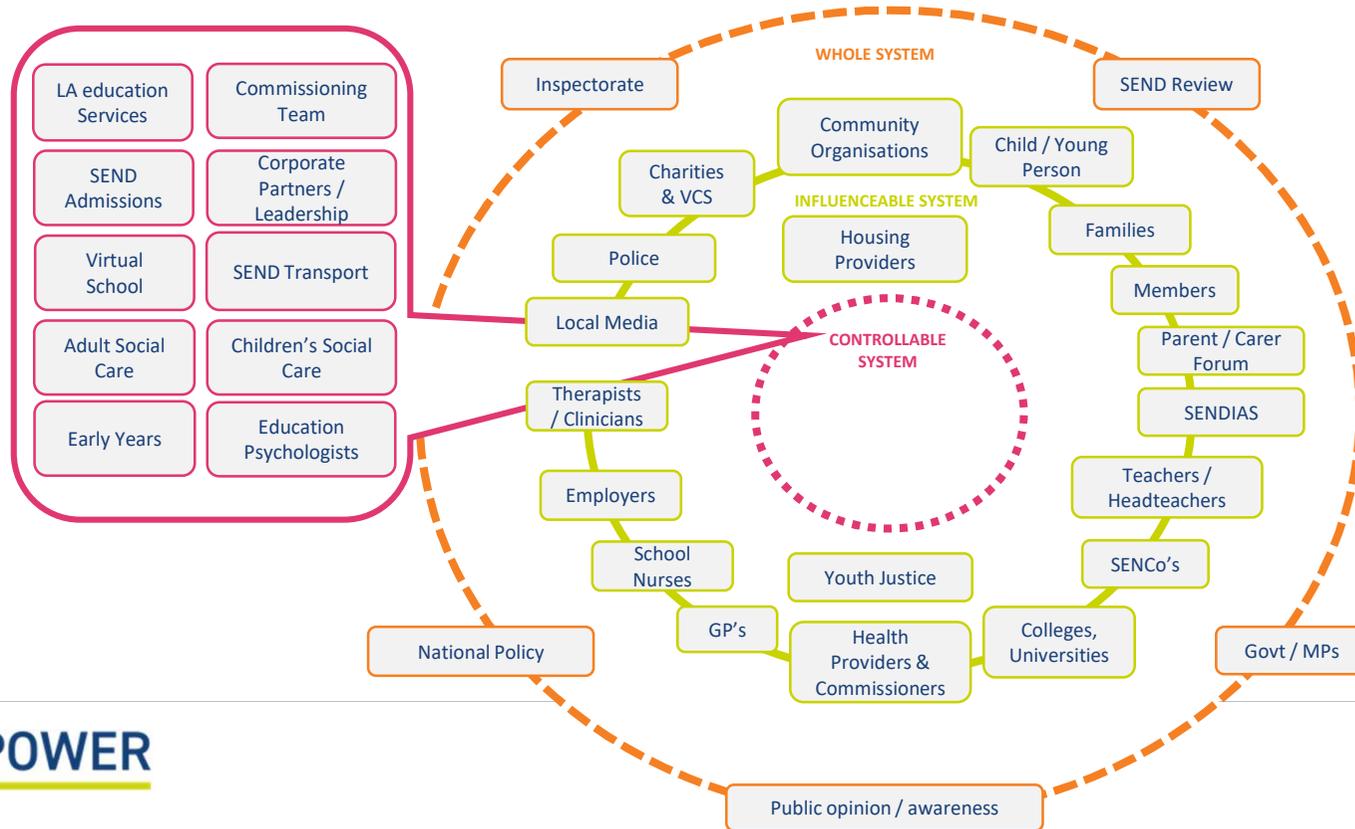
1. Birth
2. Nursery
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4. Transitioning to secondary school
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6. During college / further education

## Poll 3

**Which people in a young person's life have the most influence in their preparation for adulthood?**

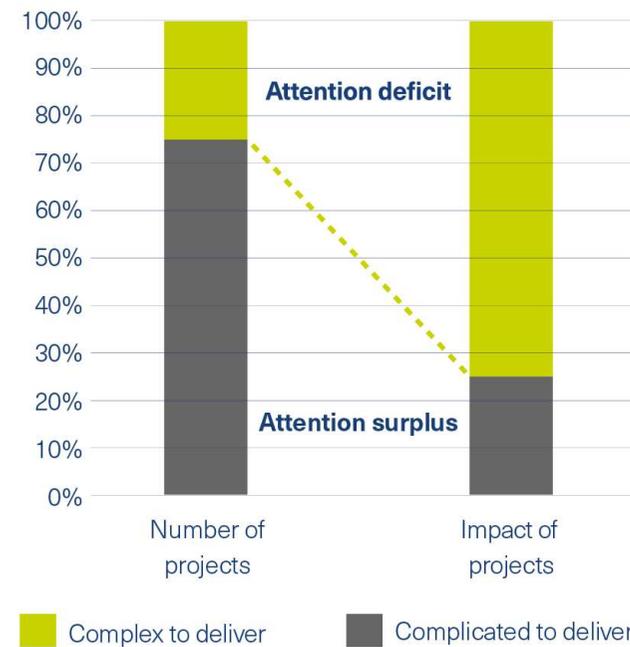
1. The young person
2. Family
3. Peers and friends
4. Teachers / lecturers
5. LA case workers & SEND professionals
6. Employers
7. Health professionals
8. Social care professionals
9. Housing staff
10. Other

# The Controllable and Influenceable Systems

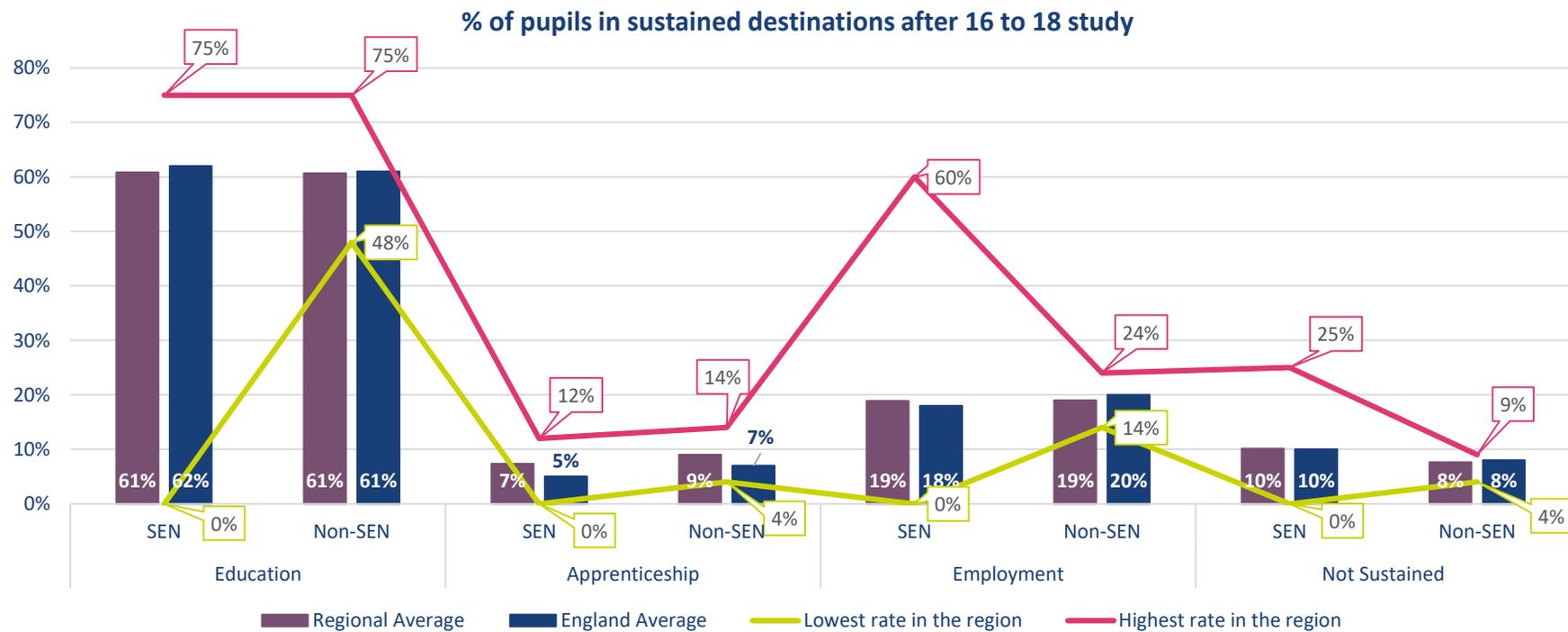


# Beware of 'attention deficit'

- How much of the improvement work you're involved in is in the controllable space, such as restructuring internal teams?
- How much effort does that work take?
- How much difference will that work make?
- Is the effort proportionate to the impact?



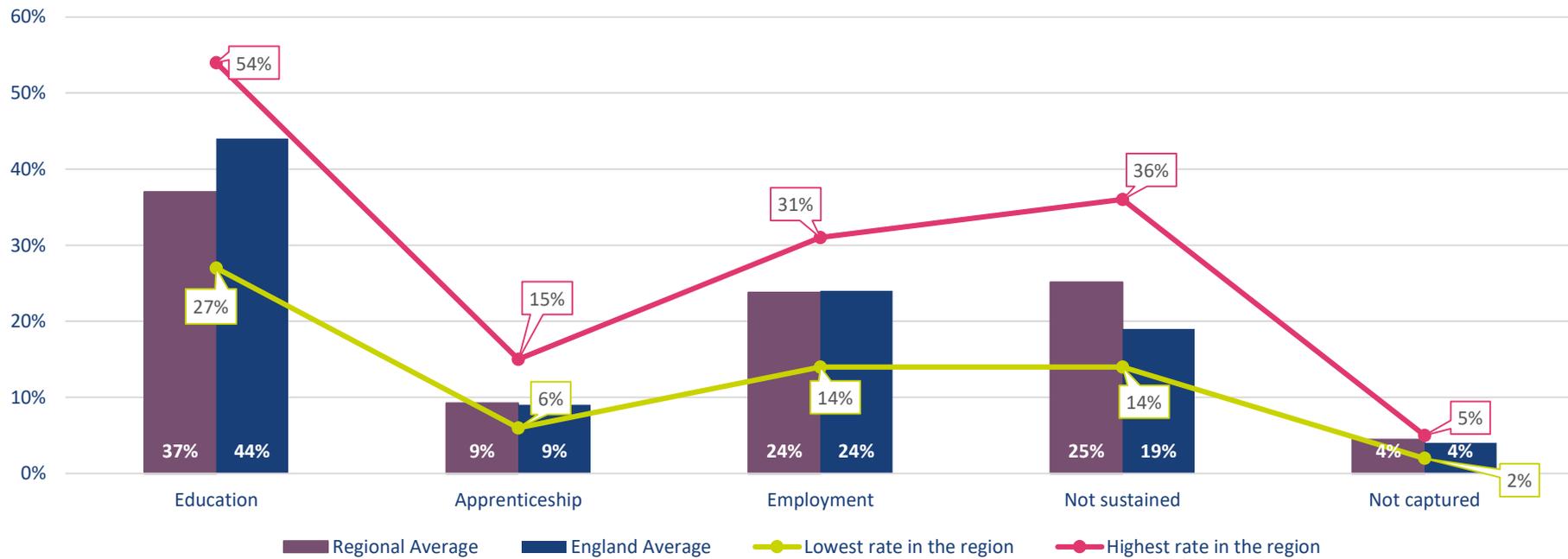
# PFA in Y&H | What the data suggests...



\*Data Source: 'Destinations of key stage 4 and 5 students 2019' - DFE (November 2020)

# PFA in Y&H | What the data suggests...

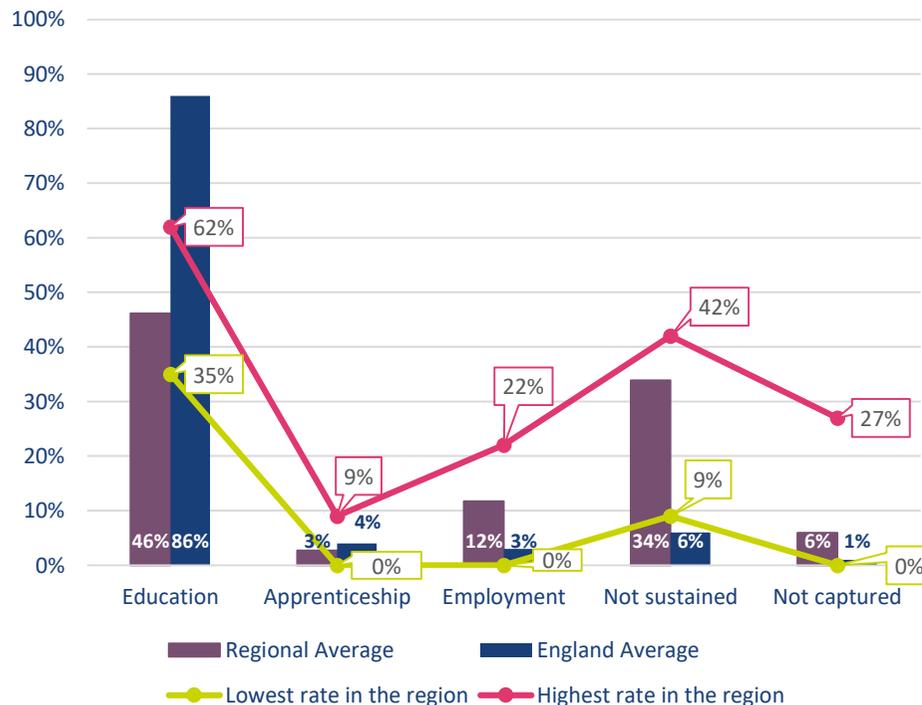
% of pupils with Learning Disabilities in sustained destinations after 16 to 18 study



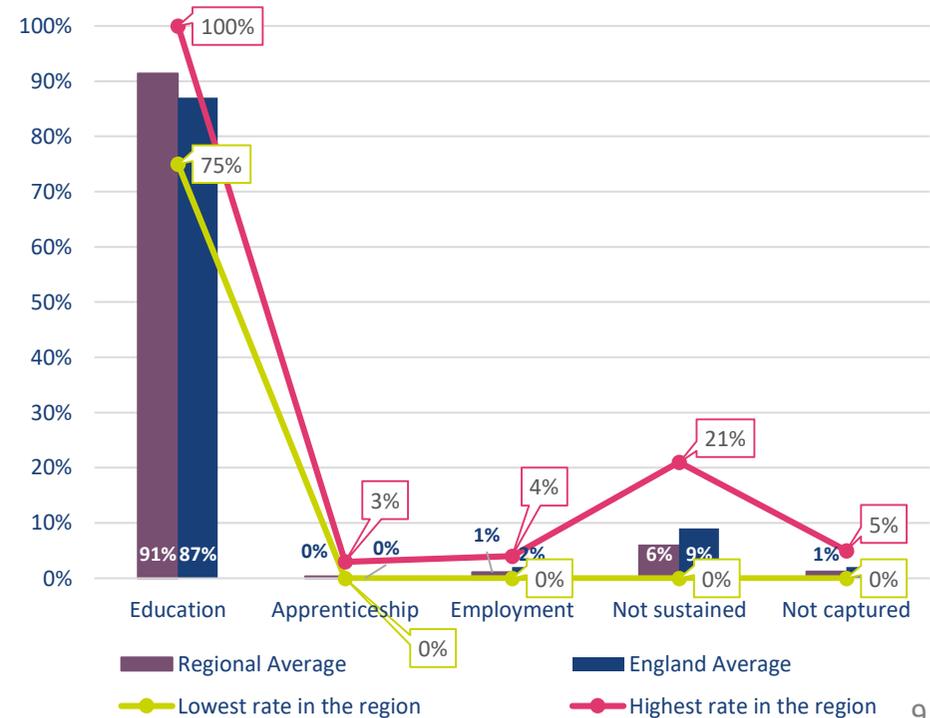
\*Data Source: 'Destinations of key stage 4 and 5 students 2019' - DFE (November 2020)

# PFA in Y&H | What the data suggests...

**% of pupils attended Alternative Provision in sustained destinations after KS4**



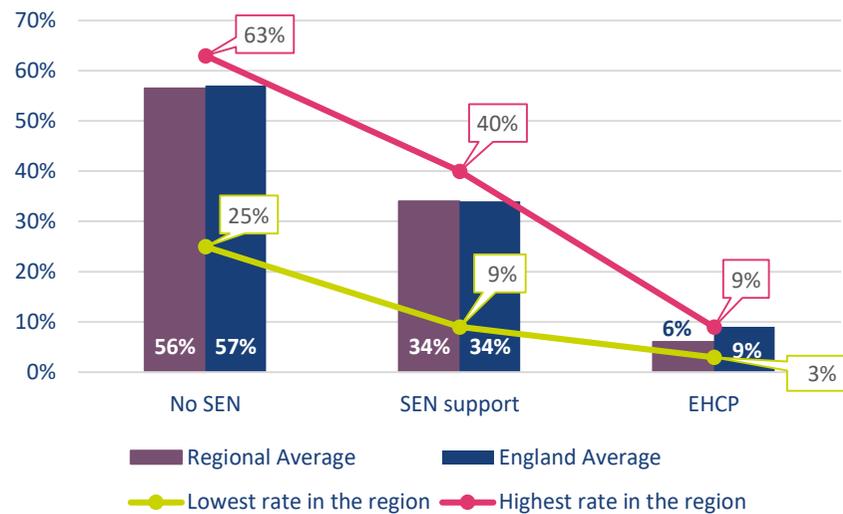
**% pupils attended Special Schools in sustained destinations after KS4**



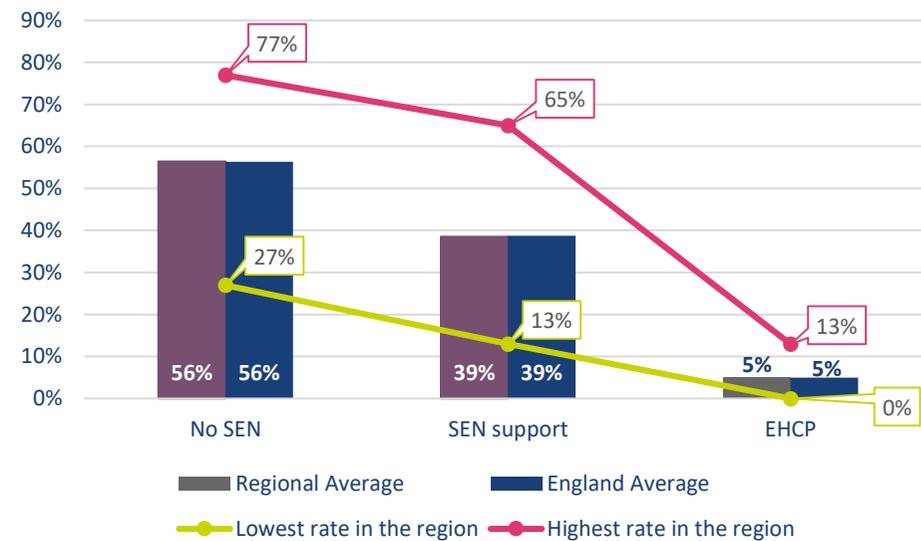
\*Data Source: 'Destinations of key stage 4 and 5 students 2019' - DFE (November 2020)

# PFA in Y&H | What the data suggests...

**Rate of Fixed Term Exclusions**  
(Proportions of YP excluded for a fixed term with and without SEN)



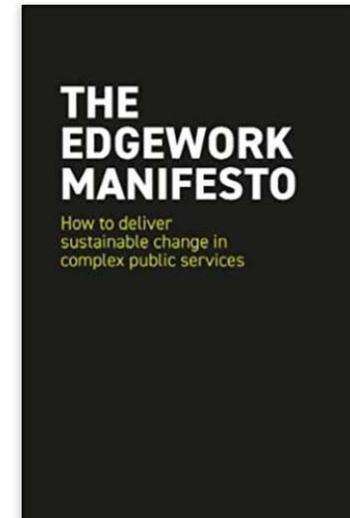
**Rate of Permanent Exclusions**  
(Proportions of YP permanently excluded with and without SEN)



# What to do? | Our learning



# Creating an 'inclusive ambition'



# In such a complex system, collaboration is key

Lincolnshire have worked with staff across the Council services, and with the partnership group of schools, settings, health and the Parent Carer Forum, as well as Lincolnshire's Young Voices group to agree what they are collectively aiming for

**"In co-producing this work, we have seen often brave, innovative and inspirational thinking by the Local Authority and its partners which has been truly beneficial in effecting positive change for the families of children with SEND in Lincolnshire and should be applauded."**

*- Chair, Lincolnshire Parent Carer Forum*

**"This sounds like the world we all want to live in"**  
*Junior School Head on the Inclusive Ambition*

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# Starting with an overarching ‘inclusive ambition’

Lincolnshire’s inclusive ambition for children and young people with high needs and their families was co-produced and agreed by **LCC, schools, health, parent representatives** and other **system partners**

1

Children and Young People, Parent/Carers and Professionals will have a **strong understanding of the graduated approach and support available in Lincolnshire** and have confidence navigating the SEND system, because the **right support is provided at the right time**.

2

**Mainstream settings have strong knowledge and understanding of supporting children with additional needs** and are able to teach social and emotional skills. **Settings work together with families to ensure the home environment reflects other support taking**, to best meet a child or young person’s outcomes.

3

We will **move away from exclusions to recognise that behaviour is a communication of need**. In response to this need professionals are able to wrap services around a child, helping to meet their need in an inclusive way.

4

We will **have high aspirations for our children and young people with additional needs**, using plans to help meet needs and achieve outcomes, meaning higher academic achievement, increased personal resilience, increased socialisation and more resilient adults after education.

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# A golden thread can be developed, from that ambition through to a shared plan

... between an overarching **inclusive ambition** that all partners could sign up to, down to **trajectories** that allowed progress to be measured and learning on what was working.



# Lincolnshire translated this overarching ambition into ten 'system ambitions'

**1.** Where children have additional needs, parents and professionals have a shared understanding of what these are and are confident in each other and how these needs are being met, resulting in high aspiration and trust.

**2.** Children with additional needs are identified early and the majority thrive through SEND support, with schools valued for how they support them.

**3.** The majority of children who have additional needs can fulfil their potential in mainstream settings, as settings are clear about how to meet these needs and the right support is available to enable this at an early stage.

**4.** Transition is well supported, with minimal need for children to move to specialist settings when they have been in mainstream school.

**5.** Support planning is clear, joined up and focused on short-term needs and long-term aspirations, resulting in some children returning to mainstream settings after time in special settings where this helps them progress towards their own goals. Wherever possible, support works to reduce the level of need that children and young people experience and to build skills for independence.

**6.** There is a shared responsibility for supporting children with additional needs across settings and professionals, with routine and timely sharing of skills, resources and experience to support inclusion across education, health and care.

**7.** Children with additional needs receive the fullest possible support to prevent exclusion, with wide understanding that behaviour is often a form of communication and anxiety.

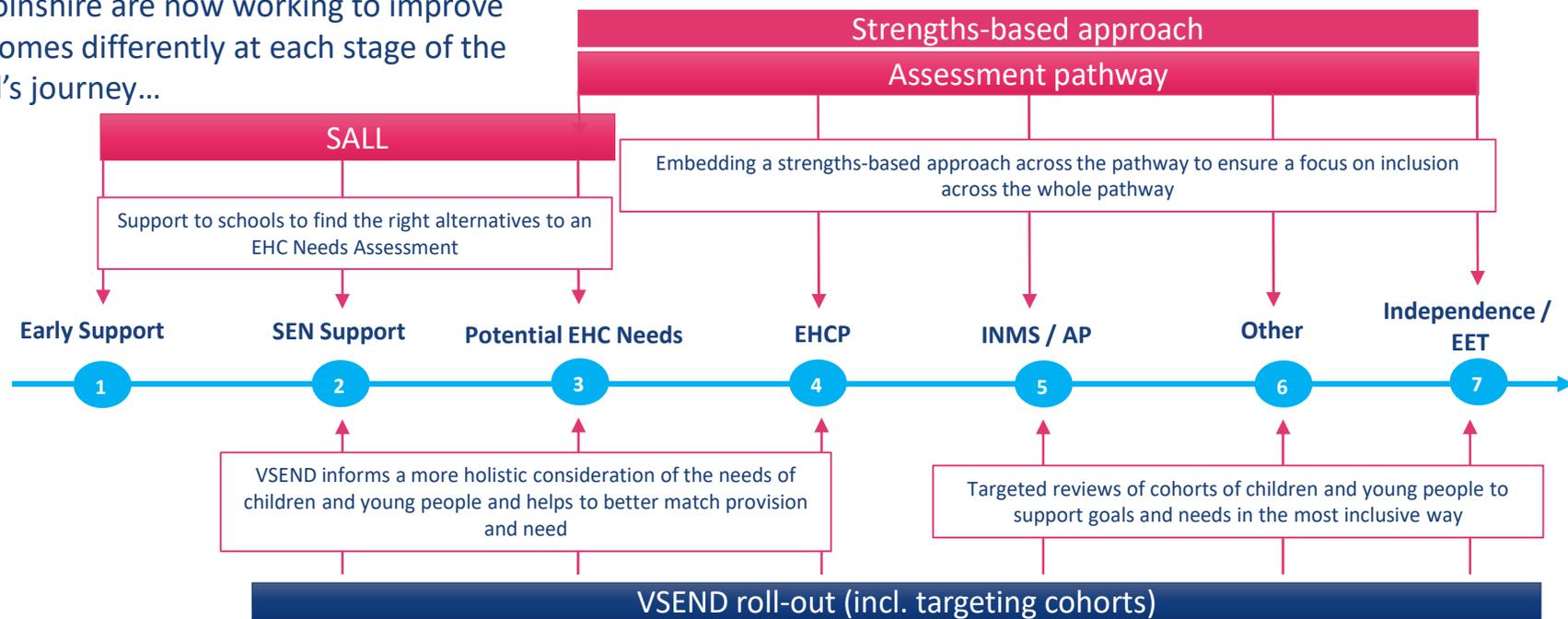
**8.** Support is truly integrated for children with additional needs and includes support in the home and from health, wrapping around education provision, to help maximise their life chances.

**9.** Children and young people with additional needs can access the right support, including their education provision, local to their homes and communities.

**10.** We all have high aspirations for children with additional needs, resulting in a high number of young people with SEND in employment, apprenticeships post-18 or higher education.

# And then into a ten point plan

Lincolnshire are now working to improve outcomes differently at each stage of the child's journey...

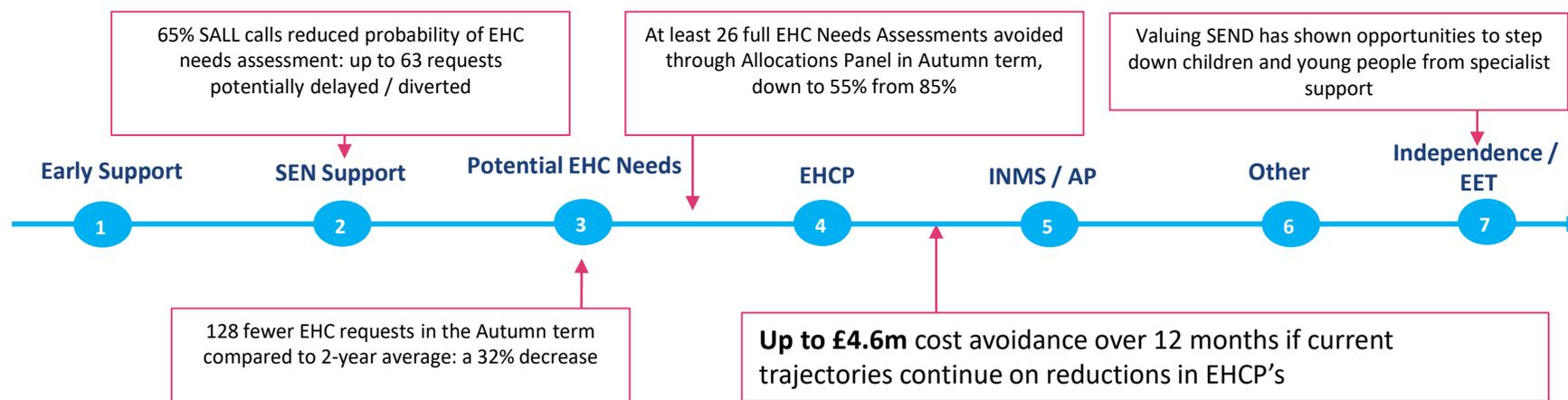


# With the impact across the system starting to be seen

Improving earlier identification & response to reduce the level of new demand for statutory support

Reducing the escalation of need and push to move from mainstream to specialist provision (including AP)

Stepping down children from specialist provision to mainstream where better outcomes can be achieved



“... the work has had a huge impact - that golden ticket [of the EHCP] doesn't seem to be quite as golden as it used to be” - *Special School Head*

# Understanding and changing behaviours



# Behaviour change techniques can support practice

- Every day, **our behaviours are being influenced** - from how we cross a road, to what we buy in shops.
- Behavioural science helps us to **define what specific behaviours we are seeking to influence**, and to **better understand what is preventing them** e.g. defaulting to a residential solution for young people with certain needs.
- We have successfully used applied behavioural science techniques to help practitioners **change the conversation** at the frontline with: young people; parents; carers and partners.
- We have achieved this by: training practitioners in the use of behavioural science techniques (such as MINDSPACE); developing tools and prompts to enable improved preparation for and delivery of conversations; facilitating reflection and problem-solving huddles; and by having a focus on impact and wellbeing.



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# Making for different conversations ...



## Direct call to SALL from Head Teacher at Primary School.

- The call was regarding a ten year old boy, Rory (anonymised) with moderate learning difficulties, but no specific diagnosis yet, but they are assessing for possible Autism.
- The family are worried about transition to secondary school due to Rory's learning needs and would like to **request an EHC Needs Assessment** – school do not support this as they feel they can meet needs.



- The conversation explored the **child's current needs, support in school and agencies accessed**.
- School had accessed support from appropriate agencies such as the **Specialist Teaching Team** and were implementing strategies.
- **Previous EHCP request** from another school had been **declined** due to lack of evidence of need.
- School felt they could provide a **robust transition plan for secondary school**, but were unsure how to address concerns with the family.
- Paediatrician has suggested **BOSS referral** due to concerns about behaviour at home.



The Ask SALL adviser discussed school talking to Mum about what her aim would be in requesting the EHCP Needs Assessment and what this could add to Rory's current support. ASK SALL advised school to

- ✓ Complete a **V – SEND tool** for Rory to explore needs.
- ✓ Explore the families concerns with behaviour at home by doing an **Early Help Child and Family Assessment Form**.
- ✓ **Shared BOSS transition booklets** and guide for support at home and school.
- ✓ Made follow-up appointment with **Educational Psychologist** to discuss needs further.



The Educational Psychologist gave strategies and advice to support a **robust transition to Secondary School** and meet Rory's needs.

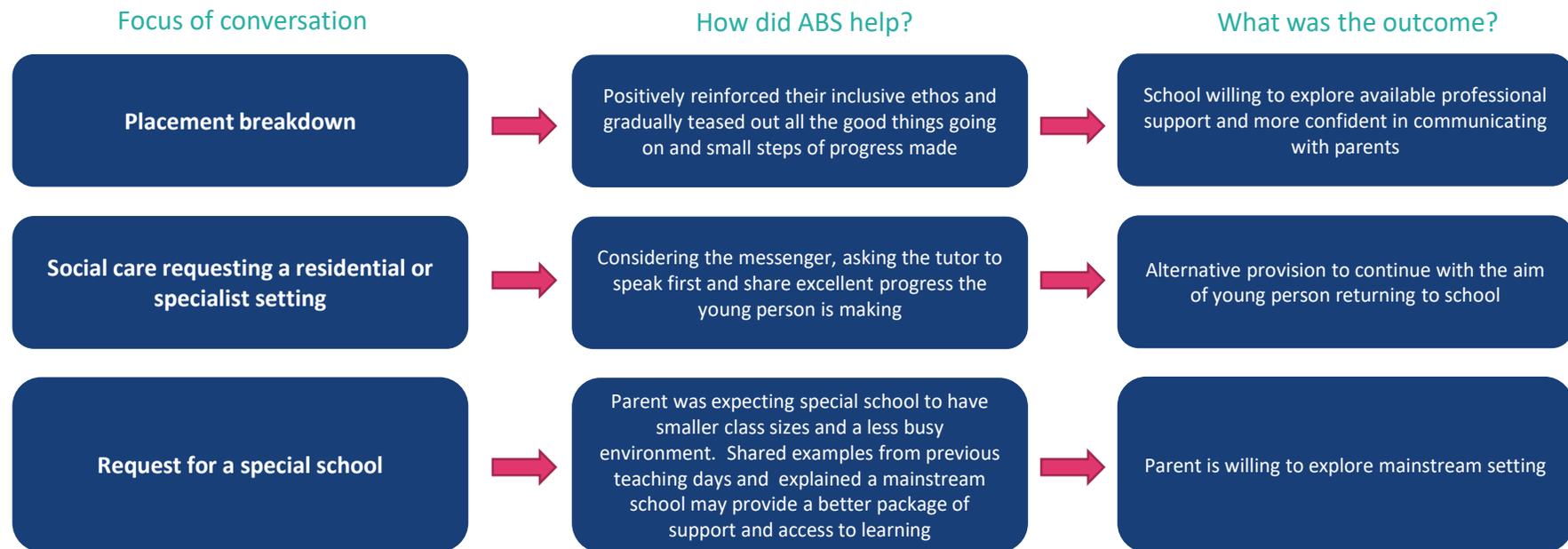
- The Ask SALL advisor contacted school following further information from the **Educational Psychologist** appointment and was able to signpost to further support for the family at home, including **sensory strategies' and sleep charity support**.

In this case the Ask SALL adviser felt that the EP appointment had been **preventative** in parents feeling further support was needed through EHCP route. School commented having a third party (EP advice) had been very beneficial.

The outcomes and solutions identified solutions will support the child within current level of funding in school in a more **inclusive approach**.

# Behaviours are shifting across schools, social care and families

Below are examples of impact captured through recent frontline learning logs



# And outcomes are improving

- The Statutory Assessment Team (SAT) has been trialling a **strengths-based approach to the EHCP process** – these are casework officers who support in the assessment process and then hold plans for their duration
- Impact so far suggests that confidence in having difficult conversations and making decisions has increased within the team – leading to improved outcomes and reduced costs.

Reflections from the team on **impact** in applying strengths-based approach and behavioural science techniques

Rating	What was the impact of using the approach?
1	Parents expectations have been better managed
2	School and parents working closely together to agree support and improve outcomes
3	Parents/schools/professionals had improved confidence and understanding of what we were trying to achieve

**96** impact logs completed

**23%** of cases demonstrated steps towards improving outcomes and positively managing demand

**£253k**  
'good savings'

# As is staff confidence

Staff identified the following as positives of using the approach:

- Enabling **time to be saved** through group problem solving, rather than trying to tackle issues on their own
- Tools have helped **build confidence** and **planning** ahead of difficult conversations
- **Huddles** (peer support groups) have been helpful in reminding individuals of ideas, tools and solutions they may have forgotten about due to breadth of work
- Has supported **wellbeing** during remote working to have a designated time to come together
- Useful to have **structured discussions** that can be captured and shared

"[The approach] Gave me confidence in what I was doing. I had a similar conversation with this school last year and the difference in confidence was massive! "

"Strength based approach allowed school to realise that they have not tried all available options to them."

"A strengths based approach allowed father to see there were other options"

"I recognised my own ability to move the conversation on"

"Using the MINDSPACE tools just really helps me to have the confidence in my approach in these types of [difficult] discussions"

# Front line change

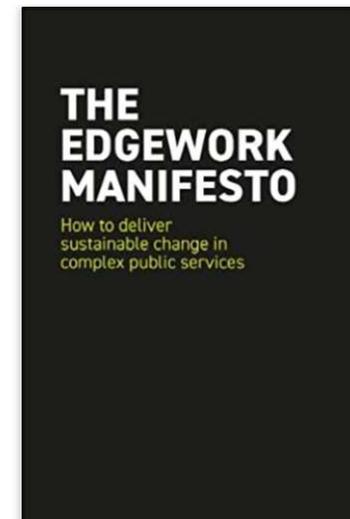
## Questions to ask

- Where is the 'frontline' for preparing for adulthood?
- Who needs to be supported and influenced?
- Which conversations and interactions (behaviour change) could make the biggest difference to the future lives of individuals?
- Are we clear on an individual's needs and independence goals?



**DELIVERING AT THE  
FRONTLINE**

# Delivering at the front line



# Valuing SEND

## Young person at the centre

The ambition of the Valuing SEND approach is to:

Improve **long-term outcomes and inclusion** for CYP

Improve the **experience** of families and professionals across the system

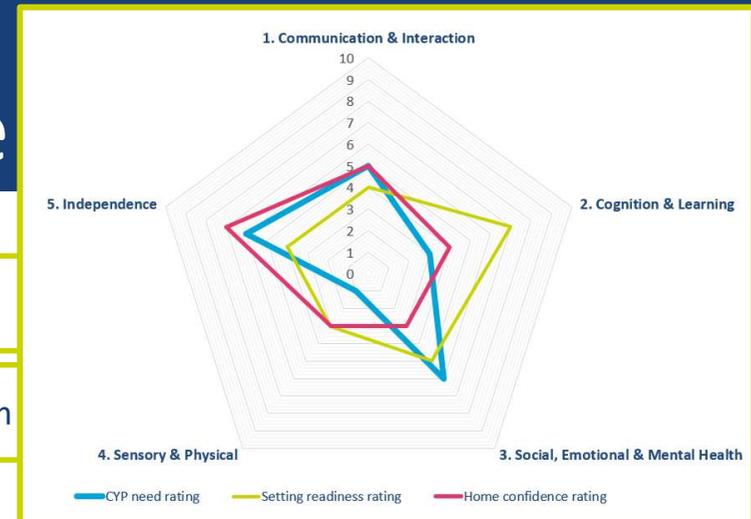
Valuing SEND aims to achieve this by:

1

Developing a single, rounded picture of the **needs of children** and the support they need to succeed and prosper within and outside of their education, from birth to adulthood.

2

Using this as the foundation for **planning and commissioning of provision**, monitoring of progress and evaluation of support at a child and cohort level, and to enable earlier and more co-ordinated intervention across the system.



# Preparation for Adulthood starts early...



**Marek**  
Male  
48 months

**Diagnosis:** Epilepsy

**Agencies involved to date:** portage, physio, neurologist, speech and language

**Context:** Joined nursery at 36 months; was non-verbal, walked with a walking frame, in nappies, difficulty managing emotions. Domestic violence in the home, now lives just with mum. Sibling lives with another carer outside the family home. Nursery have established a good relationship with mum and have used inclusion funding to increase his hours which she is grateful for and have put in significant support to meet his needs. Dad on scene still but reportedly lives separately.

**The practitioner had significant concerns about how he would cope in mainstream, and was worried about how she would convince mum that special school was the right place for him to transition to in September.**

## Changing the conversation: Valuing SEND and the strengths-based approach

Using the VSEND tool, the setting have established:

- He is making rapid and sustained progress since joining the nursery a year ago. This isn't easy to document with standard tracking but VSEND has drawn it out
- The setting has made significant alterations to their provision and provided carefully planned support to meet his needs
- Mum has reported feeling extremely under confident in meeting most areas of need
- Mum has expressed a wish for him to attend the local primary school in his gran's village (where the nursery is)
- The child is hugely motivated by his peers: his main motivation to walk was to join in with the children in the nursery. He attempts to play with and communicate with other children all the time
- This setting's insight into how to meet this child's complex needs and help him make rapid and sustained progress is central to the success of any transition for September

The SENCo and setting manager are now focused on and committed to using the next 7 months to ensure a positive transition to the local, mainstream primary school.

The setting has made contact with the primary school SENCo and shared the VSEND profile. They have also made an enquiry to the local authority as to whether he is likely to be successful in gaining a place at the primary school as he lives out of the area. Follow up VSEND session with mum to share the radar chart, showing her how his needs CAN be met and to grow her confidence by providing regular, targeted support leading up to the transition.

### Actions going forward:

1. Whole staff meeting scheduled to embed VSEND as the approach to SEND assess-plan-do-review across the setting
2. Setting to link with Ask SALL for help reaching out to the receiving primary school in order to plan a smooth transition
3. Schedule VSEND meeting with the new setting to help plan support that needs to be in place ahead of time, and
4. LA to track this child and the success of this transition.

# Preparation for Adulthood continues throughout childhood...

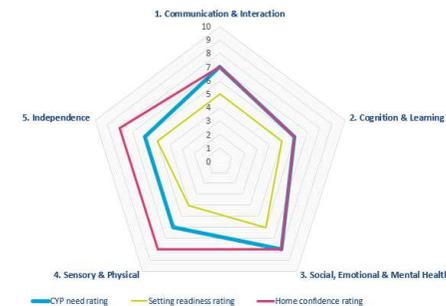


Ellie-May  
Year 7

**Diagnosis:** ASD & ADHD

**Context:** Attendance very low at mainstream secondary school due to high anxiety and sensory needs. Became unable to wear uniform and shoes. Exacerbated during pandemic. Daily struggle to leave the house and usually unsuccessful. School believed they are not meeting her needs so have recommended her for a special school placement.

**The SENCo had significant concerns about Ellie being able to cope in mainstream school and her annual review highlighted a specialist placement was required.**



## Changing the conversation: Valuing SEND and the strengths-based approach

Using the VSEND tool and a strength-based approach at Ellie's annual review, the setting have established:

- Ellie had made considerable progress in her cognition and learning since her last review.
- She likes to be met at the school gate and spend time in a safe base prior to going to lessons. This prepares her for the day and lowers the heightened state of anxiety that is caused by getting to school.
- Ellie's parent shared her interests at home, it was discovered that she has a keen interest in photography, film and video-editing. Through discussion of this interest at the annual review, it was discovered the supporting SENCo is a photographer.
- By the school creating a photography and video project to document her journey to school, she is able to use her abilities in film and photography to help make the journey to school manageable.
- Ellie's interests were incorporated through the strength based approach into a strategy to help her to attend school.

The parents' and settings' input and insight into how to meet this child's complex needs and help her make rapid and sustained progress is central to the success of the transition.

The SENCo's view was that VSEND and the strengths-based approach had a positive impact on the outcome of the annual review.

**Ellie's school were pleased with the approach of the annual review and the support that would be provided for her at the mainstream school.**

Ellie is now on dual placement with the special and mainstream schools, the annual review recommendation is to return to mainstream school on a transition plan from special school.

# Some takeaways

- The system which supports children and young people to prepare for adulthood is complex
- So it's important to explicitly define the 'system boundaries' and the parts you want to influence to make the biggest difference for children and young people
- Start by creating an inclusive ambition across the defined system, with ways to learn what's working and to monitor progress / impact
- Beware of attention deficit – manage the temptation to take too narrow a view
- Many (most) of the opportunities to make a difference are behavioural – use the science to positively influence this
- Bringing consistency to how goals and needs are communicated across the system is an enabler to this behaviour change. How can needs codification approaches like Valuing SEND support earlier and more co-ordinated PfA support and intervention?
- Always outcomes first - when we get the outcomes right 'good savings' follow

# Q&A

- Please add your questions and talking points in the Q&A function
- We'd love to hear about your examples of applying this thinking in your area
- Bev will draw a few out for discussion

# Thank you

**Al Thompson** - Delivery Director

E: [athompson@impower.co.uk](mailto:athompson@impower.co.uk)

**Audrey Goreham** - Senior Consultant

E: [agoreham@impower.co.uk](mailto:agoreham@impower.co.uk)