

SEND and Inclusion strategy



A Case Study by:



The Bristol SEND and Inclusion Strategy, built on our Co-Production Charter and MoU, used thousands of parent carer voices to shape priorities, strengthen collaboration, and improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND

Shaping a Shared Vision

Co-Producing Bristol's SEND & Inclusion Strategy

Thousands of voices, one shared strategy
Building inclusion through genuine collaboration



Overview

In 2024, Bristol launched its refreshed SEND and Inclusion Strategy, co-produced with families, education settings, health partners, and local services.

This strategy represents a major step forward in our collective commitment to improving experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND across the city.

The challenges

Before this strategy, families consistently told us that their voices were not fully heard in shaping strategic priorities. Feedback highlighted a lack of trust, inconsistent communication, and limited opportunities for meaningful involvement. Families often felt that their lived experiences were overlooked, and strategies were not always grounded in what mattered most to them.

The launch of the SEND and Inclusion Strategy came shortly after Bristol Parent Carers (BPC), Bristol City Council (BCC), and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) had created a co-production charter and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

These documents provided a clear framework and shared expectations for meaningful collaboration, making the strategy a perfect opportunity to put our co-production commitments to the test. It was a chance to demonstrate that family voices could genuinely shape city-wide policy and priorities.

How we worked together

To make sure this strategy was built from the ground up, Bristol Parent Carers (BPC) worked closely with Bristol City Council (BCC), the Integrated Care Board (ICB), and education partners to design an open and inclusive engagement process. Over several months, thousands of pieces of feedback were gathered through surveys, focus groups, school-based events, and community conversations - ensuring every family, regardless of background, had a way to contribute. Parent carers were not only consulted but also directly involved in drafting the strategy, reviewing key priorities, and shaping the language to ensure it reflects real experiences. This approach was supported by a clear co-production framework, transparent communication, and a shared commitment to building trust through action.

The impact this had

The resulting SEND and Inclusion Strategy is a genuine reflection of what families told us matters most; early and accessible support, inclusive education, clear communication, and coordinated services.

Bristol Parent Carers are now actively involved in monitoring delivery, with regular updates and opportunities for continued dialogue to ensure the strategy remains dynamic and responsive. This process has strengthened relationships across the local area, built confidence in co-production, and demonstrated that when families are meaningfully involved from the start, strategies are more relevant, more inclusive, and more likely to lead to positive change.

 Being involved in the strategy made us feel like our views actually matter. The process was clear, honest, and supportive - for the first time, it felt like the system was listening to families like mine. 
- Parent carer, Bristol