Experts at Hand: Rationale, Intent, Roadmap and Next Steps

The Rationale

Bradford's Experts at Hand model has been developed to strengthen inclusion by ensuring that schools have direct access to specialist expertise through a coordinated, multidisciplinary approach. Rather than services working in isolation, schools will work with a single team comprising Educational Psychology (EP), SCIL, Occupational Therapy (OT) and Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) through a shared plan built around school priorities.

The model is designed to:

- Strengthen Ordinarily Available Provision.
- Improve early identification and intervention.
- Build school capacity through consultation, coaching and training.
- Create clearer pathways to specialist advice and support.
- Reduce duplication and fragmented working across services.
- Ensure children, young people, and families remain at the centre of decision-making.

The underlying principle is that effective inclusion is achieved through a collective system in which schools and services work as one team, with support accessed through a graduated and evidence-informed approach.

Our Intent

The ambition is to establish a coordinated offer of support and resource model where named professionals work alongside SENDCos and school leaders to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

What Schools Can Expect

Every school will have:

- A named Educational Psychologist.
- Named SCIL practitioners.
- Access to OT and SaLT support as services are integrated.
- A clear allocation of universal and targeted support.
- Locality-based planning and collaboration.
- Access to communities of practice and shared learning opportunities.

The model focuses initially on strengthening support at **Universal** and **Targeted** levels. Schools will be allocated a number of sessions to deliver this from each service. Allocation will take a data approach to target time for support where it is most needed across the district.

All services will also provide **Targeted +** intervention and support which will be allocated via a multi-disciplinary panel. This means that schools will use their initially allocated resource to support early intervention whilst also being able to access support for individual children that require it.

The Roadmap

Phase 1 (2026-27)

The first phase focuses on Educational Psychology and SCIL working together through a shared school planning process whilst wider integration with OT and SaLT develops.

Key developments include:

Team Around the School

Schools will work with their named EP and SCIL colleagues to:

- Agree school SEND priorities.
- Strengthen inclusion practice.
- Support workforce development.
- Develop targeted provision.
- Build staff confidence and capability.

Universal Support

Universal support will include:

- SEND strategic planning.
- Consultation.
- Workforce training.
- Participation in locality and cluster networks.
- Communities of practice.

Targeted Support

Targeted support will focus on:

- Cohorts of learners.
- Emerging patterns of need.
- Provision reviews.
- Consultation around barriers to learning.
- Joint planning with EP and SCIL professionals.

Future Development

As workforce capacity develops, OT and SaLT will be increasingly integrated into the model, creating a fully multidisciplinary offer across all localities. [

What Success Will Look Like

Schools will experience:

- Clearer access to specialist expertise.
- Stronger relationships with named professionals.
- More coordinated support.
- Greater confidence in meeting SEND needs.
- Improved inclusion and participation.
- Reduced fragmentation between services.
- A stronger graduated approach across the school.

Next Steps for Schools: Engaging with the Phase 1 EP and SCIL Offer

1. Engage with Your Named Link Professionals

Schools should familiarise themselves with their named EP and SCIL contacts and establish regular communication arrangements.

2. Attend School Planning Meetings

Work with your EP and SCIL link professionals to:

- Review current strengths and challenges.
- Identify inclusion priorities.
- Agree how allocated support time will be used.
- Develop a shared annual plan.

3. Identify Priorities for Universal Support

Consider areas where workforce development and strategic support could strengthen provision, such as:

- SEMH practice.
- Communication and interaction.
- Adaptive teaching.
- Attendance and inclusion.
- SEND leadership development. [

4. Identify Priorities for Targeted Support

Work with your EP and SCIL colleagues to identify:

- Cohorts requiring additional support.
- Provision reviews.
- Emerging needs.
- Areas where consultation, observation or coaching may support improvement.

5. Participate in Locality and Cluster Networks

Schools are encouraged to engage actively in locality collaboration and communities of practice, sharing learning and developing collective solutions alongside partner schools.

6. Prepare for Future Integrated Working

Over the coming phases, schools will see greater integration of SCIL, EP, OT and SaLT support. Schools should begin developing a single school improvement and inclusion plan that can inform future multidisciplinary planning.

Key Message

Phase 1 is about making the best possible use of allocated Educational Psychology and SCIL support as part of a joined-up offer of resources. By agreeing priorities together and focusing on universal and targeted provision, schools can strengthen inclusion, build staff capacity and improve outcomes for children and young people before escalation to more specialist support is required.