

ASSEMBLY

13 September 2017

Title: Joint Local Area Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Inspection in Barking and Dagenham	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration	
Wards Affected: None	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Vikki Rix, Head of Performance and Intelligence, Children's Care and Support Commissioning	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 2564 E-mail: vikki.rix@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: Chris Bush, Commissioning Director, Children's Care and Support	
Accountable Strategic Director: Anne Bristow, Deputy Chief Executive and Strategic Director for Service Development and Integration	
Summary In March 2017, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission conducted a joint local area inspection of Barking and Dagenham to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the disability and special educational needs (SEND) reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. This report introduces and appends the inspection findings, published on 21 June 2017.	
Recommendation(s) The Assembly is recommended to: (i) Note the findings of the SEND inspection, as detailed in the letter at Appendix A to the report; and (ii) Note the development of a multi-agency Local Area SEND Action Plan to address the identified areas for improvement and improve outcomes for children and young people with disabilities in Barking and Dagenham.	
Reason(s) The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the outcome of the joint Ofsted/Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection of Barking and Dagenham's effectiveness in implementing the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.	

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Between 27 March and 31 March 2017, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted a joint inspection of Barking and Dagenham, to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the disability and special educational needs reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. The inspection was led by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors from Ofsted, supported by a team of inspectors including an Ofsted Inspector and CQC children's services inspectors.
- 1.2 During the 5-day inspection, the inspection team sought the views and opinions of children and young people, their parents and carers. This was undertaken during visits to schools, early years settings and colleges and through meetings with individuals and groups. A webinar was also used by the inspectors to gather feedback from parents of children and young people with SEND in the local area.
- 1.3 Inspectors also visited a range of providers and spoke to leaders, staff and governors about how they were implementing the special educational needs reforms. Inspectors looked at a range of information about the performance of the local area, including the local area's self-evaluation. Inspectors met with leaders from the local area and a wide range of documentation and performance data across education, health and social care were reviewed as part of the inspection. A small number of Education, Health and Care Plans were also audited.
- 1.4 On 9 May 2017 HMI Ofsted sent Anne Bristow, the Deputy Chief Executive and Strategic Director for Service Development and Integration, a draft inspection letter outlining the findings of the inspection, including some areas of strengths and areas for further development for factual accuracy checks. Senior Local Authority and CCG officers were provided with the opportunity to highlight factual inaccuracies in the draft letter, before its final publication. 2 inaccuracies were raised by the local area and agreed by Ofsted in the final report.
- 1.5 The local area received the final joint inspection letter from Ofsted and the CQC on the 21 June 2017. This letter details the inspectors' key findings and outcomes in a narrative of areas of strength and areas of development, rather than a specific grading. Barking and Dagenham's Local Area SEND Inspection letter is attached to this report at Appendix A.

2. Main Findings

- 2.1 Overall, the outcome of Barking and Dagenham's inspection was positive. The inspection letter highlights many strengths across education, health and social care, in terms of the support that is offered to children and young people with SEND and their families. Inspectors praised partners' commitment to reform and effective implementation. The local area's governance and accountability were identified as strengths and inspectors praised the role of the Health and Wellbeing Board and elected Members in holding leaders to account for improving outcomes in a local area which is rapidly changing. Collaboration between healthcare and local authority staff and personnel in settings, schools and colleges was also viewed as a significant strength. Strong relationships with providers were commended, which allow effective monitoring of the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

- 2.2 In terms of development, the inspectors noted that insufficient numbers of parents and young people know about, or use, the Local Offer to find advice and help. Whilst the inspection noted that education, health and social care professionals contributed to the local area self-evaluation with priorities identified, detailed targets and timescales are not incorporated into plans. Inspectors noted that there is a lack of clarity about how some aspects of services will be jointly commissioned.
- 2.3 An area for development has also been identified about the capacity in providing therapies such as speech and language, occupational and physiotherapy, due to issues with recruiting and training staff, which leads to delays in EHC plans. EHC plans themselves, it was reported, do not consistently benefit from appropriate input from health and social care. As a result, the detail of the support that children need and how this will be provided is, at times, insufficient. The level at which parents' and young people's views are considered is also variable. Some parents and young people said that they did not feel fully engaged in, or informed about, the process.
- 2.4 The low proportion of young adults who have learning disabilities in training and employment was also identified as an area for development. The local area has identified this and is taking the initiative by leading a project to support employers to understand how they can provide paid employment opportunities for young people. A strong feature of this work is the partnership with Barking and Dagenham College, which is starting to support young people to find employment.
- 2.5 The full inspection report at Appendix A details the findings across three categories; identifying need, meeting need, and improving outcomes.

3. Next steps

- 3.1 In response to the findings of this inspection, an action plan is currently in development. The action plan will be brought to the Health and Wellbeing Board, and will seek to further improve the offer for children and young people with disabilities and/ or special educational needs in Barking and Dagenham.

4. Financial Implications

Implications completed by Katherine Heffernan, Group Manager, Service Finance

- 4.1 This report informs the Board about the recent inspection – as such there are no financial implications arising directly out of this report. The Council and its partners are developing an action plan in response to the inspection. The financial implications of the plan will be assessed as part of its development. It is unlikely that there will be additional resources provided and so the actions will need to be funded from existing budgets through prioritisation.

5. Legal Implications

Implications completed by Lucinda Bell, Education Lawyer

- 5.1 This report asks that members note and discuss the SEND inspection report and the current development of a multi-agency Local Area SEND Action Plan. No decision is required.
- 5.2 The legal context for this inspection are contained in the Care Quality Commission and Ofsted joint document “The Framework for inspecting local area in England under section 20 of the Children Act 2004” (the Act).
- 5.3 New duties on local areas regarding provision for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities are imposed by the Act and amplified in regulations and in the statutory Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years’. The duties came into force in September 2014.
- 5.4 Ofsted and CQC are required to carry out their inspection work in ways that encourage services they to improve, be user-focused and be efficient and effective in their use of resources. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to assess whether the overall evidence gathered causes them sufficient concern to recommend that a written statement of action be produced.

6. Other Implications

- 6.1 **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment** - The 2016 JSNA identified that:
 - The proportion of children identified with special educational needs is lower in Barking and Dagenham than nationally.
 - There has been a downward trend in the number of children with special educational needs without statements
 - The numbers of children with severe disabilities is growing nationally
 - In Barking and Dagenham this means paying particular attention to our disadvantaged residents and our Asian and Black African communities because they have a higher prevalence of young disabled children
- 6.2 **Health and Wellbeing Strategy** - Responding to the findings of this SEND inspection will support the Health and Wellbeing Board in improving the following key themes of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy: improvement and integration of services, care and support, and protection and safeguarding.
- 6.3 **Patient/Service User Impact** - The effective response to the findings of the SEND inspection, detailed in Appendix A, will improve those services available to residents with special educational needs and disabilities.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of Appendices:

- **Appendix A:** Joint local area SEND inspection in Barking and Dagenham report, 21 June 2017