

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

**Readiness for SEND Area Inspection
Wednesday 7th June**

Jane Hargreaves – Commissioning Director Education

The SEND Local Area Inspection Framework

Two main areas of focus:

- The impact of its Local Area Partnership's SEND arrangements on the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.
- How the Local Area Partners work together to plan, evaluate and develop the SEND system.

Local Area SEND Inspections Key questions

- Children and young people's needs are identified accurately and assessed in a timely and effective way
 - Children, young people and their families participate in decision-making about their individual plans and support
 - Children and young people receive the right help and support at the right time
 - Children and young people are well prepared for their next steps and achieve strong outcomes
 - Children and young people with SEND are valued, visible and included in their communities
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- Leaders are ambitious for children and young people with SEND
 - Leaders actively engage and work with children, young people and families
 - Leaders have an accurate, shared understanding of the needs of children and young people in their local area
 - Leaders commission services and provision to meet the needs and aspirations of children and young people
 - Leaders evaluate services and make improvements
 - Leaders create an environment for effective practice and multi-agency working to flourish

Local Area SEND Self Evaluation Form (SEF) and Action Plan

3 key questions:

1. What do you know about the impact of your arrangements for children and young people with SEND?

2. How do you know it?

3. What are your plans for the next 12 months to improve the experiences and outcomes of CYP with SEND?

Local Area SEND SEF – Priorities

Within these eleven areas, we identified six Main Priority Areas:

- **Strengthening the SEND Processes**

To continue to strengthen the SEND Team through improved substantive staffing in order to improve timeliness. To improve induction procedures and improve the retention rates through more effective staff development and support. To improve communication procedures with families, partners and providers

- **Joint Working**

The Board needs to address the critical shortage of specialist health professionals' advice and support. There must be greater use of joint commissioning leading to effective provision of therapies. Recognising that staff shortages are having an impact and improving recruitment and retention. We will also work more closely with parents, carers and young people and establish genuine co-production

- **The Guiding Principles (Assess, Plan, Do, Review. – meeting needs in mainstream without an EHCP)**

We need to ensure that there is effective identification of needs at the earliest possibility in the life of the young person. To ensure that the graduated response of 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle is implemented fully across Education, Health and Social Care.

Local Area SEND SEF – Priorities cont'd

- **Improving the Local Offer** Recognition that the 'Local Offer' is more than information but is the offer that is available to all members of the community who have additional needs from 0-25 years of age across Education, Health and Adult Social care. As we develop provision in the Borough, we will invite co-production over the descriptions and how to access them, through an information rich system to allow easy research to everyone.
- **Sufficiency of Places and associated resource** To meet the increase in demand which has led to significant pressures on available provision, we will continue to work creatively and positively with schools and partners to increase local specialist places in line with our commitment to inclusive education.
- **Data collection and analysis** To understand the demands and how they are being met, we need to improve data gathering and analysis systems relating need and provision to the demographics of the Borough. We need to understand health, social care and education issues and provision, particularly with SEND. This will allow greater planning to meet future need.

Local Area Action Plan

The Action Plan has been written as a direct response to the issues raised in the SEF. They are gathered within the eleven Area Inspection areas and cross referenced to the six main priority areas

The issues have had actions identified along with those responsible for the actions. There are then expected outcomes for each action, along with timescale, and these will be 'RAG rated' and monitored closely by the SEND Area Board.

1. Children and young people's needs are identified accurately and assessed in a timely and effective way						
What we need to Improve and how we will do it						
Linked Areas to the SEF	Action	Lead	Programme Timescale	Impact	RAG	
Priority Area 1 Strengthening the SEND Processes						
Timeliness of EHCPs – address deterioration during 2022 from previously good performance.	Implement recovery plan to clear the backlog with additional staffing.	SMc	Jan-Dec 2023	Increasing numbers of EHCPs are produced within the 20 week deadline (see recovery plan for targets)		

Thematic Review of Alternative Provision (Ofsted, CQC and Social Care)

Oral Feedback – main messages

- We think you are doing this right.
- Ambition and care for each child ensures nearly every child gets back to mainstream or has appropriate provision.
- There is high quality alternative provision – the generosity of shared expertise of Mayesbrook is a key feature.
- Vulnerable children & young people are nurtured, supported and achieve well in Barking & Dagenham.
- Children here know that they are missed if they are not present.

Priority Actions

- Working systematically for the rest of this year to clear the backlog of EHCP assessments and improve timeliness.
- Appointing to key posts – Head of Statutory SEND Services
Virtual Headteacher SEND
Family Liaison post
Post 16 lead
- Keeping up with creation of new specialist places
- Work with parents and partners to improve Post 16 opportunities – and avoiding the cliff-edge at 25 – including re-establishing relationships with leadership of Barking and Dagenham College
- Improving support for parents and families – through Early Help/Heathway Centre
- Working with partners to improve access to therapies & recruit to Educational Psychologist vacancies

Inspection Preparation

- The SEND Area inspection is resource heavy – confirmed by the experience of the Thematic Review.
- Graham Pirt – An experienced consultant has helped us to prepare 3 key documents:
 - SEF, Action Plan and Strategy for the partnership
- Next priority is to appoint some inspection coordination capacity to draw together significant data and information required from the partners – as set out in Annex A of the inspection framework and to make sure we have the right documentation where there are gaps.

In summary

There are considerable – especially in practice in schools and settings – very high needs of inclusion.

There are many pressures and strains in the system including shortages of therapists and Educational Psychologists and we continue to work to increase the resources in the EHC team.

We mainly keep the focus on priority actions to address areas of weakness and combine our support for crosscutting areas – the Local Offer, Post 16 opportunities, support for families and the sufficiency of key staff.