



Report to Children's and Education Select Committee


Date:	Thursday 30 June 2022
Reference number:	for cabinet member decisions only
Title:	Local Area SEND Inspection Outcome
Author and/or contact officer:	Simon James, Service Director Education
Recommendations:	For member of the Select Committee to note the outcome of the recent Local Area SEND Inspection and the next steps.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide the Children's and Education Select Committee with outcome of the recent Local Area SEND Inspection.

2. Content of the Report

- 2.1 Between the 28 February and 11 March 2022, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspected the services provided for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Buckinghamshire. The inspection team considered how well the local area:
- I. identifies the needs of children and young people with SEND
 - II. assesses and meets the needs of children and young people with SEND
 - III. ensures positive outcomes for children and young people with SEND
- 2.2 The inspection team spoke to a wide range of professionals across health, education and social care and met with children and young people of all abilities in education settings and focus groups. They received feedback from over 1000 parents and carers. In addition, inspectors reviewed Education, Health and Care Plans and over 150 documents and pieces of supporting evidence.

- 2.3 The inspection found a number of strengths across the local area, despite the ongoing Covid-19 challenges. It recognised the considerable activity that is happening as part of our SEND improvement programme and confirmed that our self-evaluation accurately reflects our progress. That said, inspectors also identified 3 area of significant weakness:
- I. The lack of a cohesive area strategy to identify and meet the needs of those children and young people requiring speech and language, communication and occupational therapy
 - II. Waiting times for assessments on the autism and attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder diagnosis pathways and the system-owned plans in place to address this
 - III. Waiting times to see a community paediatrician.
- 2.4 As a result of the inspection findings, the local area is required to submit a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) to address significant areas of weakness. The local authority and the area's clinical commissioning group (CCG) are jointly responsible for submitting the written statement to Ofsted.
- 2.5 Progress against the WSoA will be monitored at the Children's Services Improvement Board. This established Board provides the leadership, scrutiny and challenge that will drive forward change in the 3 key areas. The Board is chaired independently of the Council and the CCG, and as such will ensure:
- I. The identified actions are the right actions that will lead to change.
 - II. Progress is reviewed objectively and challenged where it falls short.
 - III. Impact is reviewed and further actions are agreed where required.
 - IV. Outcomes are high quality and have a positive impact on children and families.
 - V. There is sufficient accountability across the council, CCG and partner organisations.
- 2.6 This level of governance reflects the local area's commitment to achieving the ambitions of the WSoA and the importance of getting it right first time for Buckinghamshire children and young people with SEND and their families.
- 2.7 The WSoA is part of Buckinghamshire's broader SEND Improvement Programme and as such the actions will also be reviewed as part of the work of the multi-agency SEND Integrated Services Board who direct and guide the work. The SEND Integrated Services Board reports into the Children's Services Improvement Board and is held accountable by it in relation to the WSoA.
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- 2.8 We will of course focus our efforts on improving the areas of significant weakness identified, while continuing with our broader improvement journey across organisations to ensure the support children with SEND receive in Buckinghamshire is high quality and effective.
- 2.9 Please see the full inspection findings below.

