

## Rapid Review Scope

<b>Title</b>	Pathways for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
<b>Signed-off by</b>	John Macilwraith, Sarah Ashmead
<b>Author</b>	Katie Dover
<b>Date</b>	3-11-22
<b>Rapid Review Group Membership</b>	Councillors Blamires, James, Kayani, Turner and Ward
<b>Scrutiny Team Resource</b>	Katie Dover, Senior Scrutiny Officer will manage this rapid review.
<b>Lead Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Anita Cranmer
<b>Lead Service Officer</b>	Simon James
<b>What is the problem that is trying to be solved?</b>	<p>Between 28 February and 11<sup>th</sup> March 2022 the Care Quality Commission and Ofsted inspected the services provided for children and young people with special educational needs (SEND) in Buckinghamshire. The inspection team considered how well the local area a) identifies the needs of children and young people with SEND b) assesses and meets their needs and c) ensures positive outcomes for them.</p> <p>In response to the inspection, the council had to provide a written statement of action (WSOA), giving details of its plan to address the three areas highlighted as requiring improvement. These were: a) lack of cohesive strategy to meet the needs of children and young people requiring speech and language, communication and occupational therapy, b) Waiting times for assessments on the autism and attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder diagnosis pathways and the system-owned plans in place to address and c) waiting times to see a community paediatrician.</p> <p>With regards to the lack of a cohesive strategy in relation to “<i>meeting the needs</i>” one outcome the authority is seeking to achieve is to ensure that:  <i>“Families are well informed about available services and support and report positively on their experience of their child’s needs being identified and met.”</i></p>

	<p>The Local Authority, health colleagues on the newly formed Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Parent/Carer Forum (FACT Bucks) representatives have worked together to develop the WSOA which will be monitored by the SEND Improvement Board and Intervention Unit (SIU) at the Department for Education, working closely with NHS England.</p> <p>A whole systems approach is being taken to address the issues which span education, health and social care, encompassing needs-led early intervention, assessment and diagnoses pathways, and post assessment/ diagnostic support.</p> <p>Prior to the SEND inspection in December 2021, the Children's Services department was rated as "requires improvement to be good" by Ofsted. It was noted that the service had improved greatly given the huge increase in demand for services and the difficulties in recruiting social workers. Of the areas requiring improvement, the following were included: a) The understanding, and reduction of, a high rate of re-referrals and assessments that result in no services being provided for children and their families. b) The consideration and cumulative impact of earlier interventions and family histories in children and family assessments.</p> <p>The Ofsted report noted that "improved strategic engagement with partners has secured much greater confidence in the local authority's decision-making and responses concerning work in the front door. Schools are referring more children when new needs and risks have emerged or intensified during recurrent lockdowns"</p> <p>With these elements in mind, a Select Committee review group is being set up to look at the pathways for children and young people with SEND when first accessing the services provided for them. This will involve looking at case studies of those who have already accessed the services and those who wish to across three different scenarios as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Getting help before a diagnosis of Autism</li> <li>2. Getting help before a diagnosis of ADHD</li> <li>3. Getting help with anxiety and depression</li> </ol> <p>"The action plan of the written statement of action focuses on boosting the capacity of the local area to provide increased levels of early identification and support within universal settings with the aim of</p>
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	<p>improving the timeliness of early support and reducing the level of increase of statutory need being experienced currently within the local area</p> <p>Parents, professionals, and members of the Buckinghamshire community often find it difficult and confusing to navigate through the system that supports children with special educational needs and disabilities.</p> <p>In this piece of work, the Review group will explore how the services are accessed in relation to scenarios 1-3 above, and if these access points are communicated fully and appropriately for service users.</p> <p>The group will also examine better ways to simplify and communicate the help and support that exists for children with SEND in relation to autism, ADHD and anxiety/depression.</p>
<b>What might the Rapid Review achieve?</b>	<p>Key lines of enquiry:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assess the pathways to key information on the council website, SEND local offer area, in terms of providing accessibility to services in relation to autism, ADHD and anxiety/depression.</li> <li>2. Identify any potential gaps in the information</li> <li>3. Speak to professionals, such as service commissioners and officers at Buckinghamshire Council, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust and Oxford Health Foundation to clarify their views on accessibility to SEND services.</li> <li>4. Speak to parents who have been through the process and those waiting to access services, via FACT Bucks. Identify case studies of experience in different SEND areas.</li> <li>5. Speak to school officers and SEND officers to clarify their roles in the process of enabling people to access appropriate SEND services</li> </ol> <p>By investigating the above, outcomes will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improved clarity for parents of children with SEND on what help is available and how to access it through appropriate resources and information sources (as per the scenarios outlined above):</li> <li>2. Greater understanding for residents on the roles and responsibilities of professionals working to support children and young people with SEND</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Improvements to the help and guidance available for families on the SEND local offer</li> <li>4. Suggested improvements to the pathways to help shape and inform the development of a more cohesive strategy</li> </ol>
<b>Is the issue of significance to Buckinghamshire as a whole and is the topic within the remit of the Select Committee?</b>	Yes
<b>What work is underway already on this issue?</b>	A SEND Improvement Plan, a SEND Board (which provides governance for SEND activity), and an Improvement Board are in place as well as a written statement of action plan following the SEND Ofsted inspection.
<b>Are there any key changes that might impact on this issue?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SEND Green Paper.</li> <li>• A large increase in demand for education, health and SEND services over the last two to three years.</li> <li>• The Education White Paper</li> </ul>
<b>What are the key timing considerations?</b>	A Department for Education monitoring visit is expected in Buckinghamshire in the next 6 months
<b>Who are the key stakeholders &amp; decisionmakers?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children with SEND and their parents</li> <li>• FACT Bucks (The parent-carer forum)</li> <li>• Schools</li> <li>• Health commissioners</li> <li>• Health providers</li> <li>• Education teams</li> </ul>
<b>What is out of scope?</b>	Any suggested policy changes or changes to statutory decision-making frameworks aka Children & Families Act 2014. Information relating to the Mental Capacity Act, Equality Act, Definitions relating to the young people with SEND
<b>What media/communications support do you want?</b>	The Children's Services Comms lead will be available to support any communications matters An officer from the Education Directorate will be allocated to support members

## Evidence-gathering Methodology Outline Project Plan

Stage	Key Activity	Dates
Scoping	Project plan of work to be undertaken	November 2022
Evidence gathering	Ofsted inspection letter. Written statement of Action. SEND Improvement Plan, SEND Code of practice, recent parent-carer feedback surveys. Speaking to parents, officers and schools relating to items 1a to 1c above Assessing information provided on the council SEND local offer in terms of easy accessibility. Reviewing information provided by other local authorities – sharing best practice ideas.	November 2022 – January 2023
Reporting	Report to be drafted by group	February 2023
	Report published for Select Committee	March 2023
	Select Committee agrees report to go forward to decision-makers	March 2023
	Cabinet/Partner considers recommendations	May 2023

### What types of methods of evidence-gathering will you use?

#### List them here:

- Desktop research including accessing recent surveys
- Meetings
- Discussions with other local authorities

### How will you involve service-users and the public?

Through interviewing parents.

### **Definition of a Rapid Review**

A Rapid Review is a focussed investigation with fairly narrow parameters, that can be conducted in a relatively short time scale. For example, you may hold three or four meetings as a review group – one to establish and understand what the key issues are, one or two to gather evidence from service users or other authorities to gain insight into best practice and a final meeting to discuss what members have heard and identify any useful recommendations. A rapid review format will be useful when considering less-complex issues and may be helpful in delivering ‘quick wins’ for the Council’s service users and residents.