

Southend Area Inspection of Special Educational Needs and/or Disability Report December 2018

Background

Since 2016, Local areas have been subject to inspection to see how they have implemented the SEND Education Act 2014. Following a joint inspection of the Southend "Area" provision for SEND in October (this inspections was of the Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Group, Southend Hospital Trust, Essex Partnership Trust and all schools/settings), the final inspection report has now been published. In their report, OFSTED and the Care Quality Commission found a number of strengths in provision, and also have identified areas where improvements will be required. Like a number of local areas, we will be jointly required to produce a written statement of action to indicate how together we will make the necessary changes. This needs to be completed by March 2019.

The week long inspection earlier in October involved speaking with officers; clinicians; practitioners and stakeholders; parents and learners; and visits to a number of schools and settings. In summary whilst they clearly found that since 2017 there has been some progress made in implementing the SEND reforms, overall, since 2014 the pace has been too slow. They also reported that leaders need to do more to build upon their collaboration between the respective organisations to jointly commission services to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. Specifically, more should be done to listen to and act upon the views of families and children with SEND, and promote what is on offer through an accessible local offer website.

Inspectors did however recognise the more recent improvements and planning by the area, and also that the local area had accurately assessed its own strengths and weaknesses. Several of the individual services came in for suitable recognition of the high quality support they offer.

The local area has already started to address the areas identified for improvement, ahead of the timescales set by inspectors.

Report summary:

The summary of the report concluded that "the inspection raises significant concerns about the effectiveness of the local area"

- 1. The emerging leadership of the SCCG, public health, the local authority and education providers has not developed quickly enough to ensure precisely coordinated priorities, accountabilities and joint commissioning to improve the outcomes for children and young people.*
- 2. The local offer does not provide a service that is fit for purpose to meet the obligations in the code of practice. Local partners in health, social care and education, including schools, are not proactive in promoting co-production of the local offer. They are not ensuring that the local offer is adapted according to the views, needs and achievements of the children, young people and their families.*
- 3. Leaders have not worked together to ensure that EHC plans provide a meaningful multi-agency approach to meeting children and young people's academic, social, health and care needs. There are no clear accountabilities between agencies to make sure that children and young people's outcomes are well assessed, planned for, met and reviewed.*
- 4. Leaders have not developed a strategic partnership that makes sure that children and young people are in provisions that give them good-quality, full-time education. This particularly includes those educated at home, in post-16 provisions, and in out-of-borough provisions. Additionally, within the local area, too many pupils access part-time education for too long. Leaders of the local area do*

not know the extent of the impact of part-time programmes on the outcomes for children and young people. This lack of information is detrimental to the work of joint commissioning.

Written Statement of Action (WSOA)

Under the governance of the Success For All Group reporting the Health and Wellbeing Board, strategic leaders from key agencies have established a task and finish group to draft the WSoA for sign off. In light of the findings above, in particular points 3&4, it is now essential that these key strategic leads from Education, Social care, Public Health and the CCG collectively and visibly own and drive both the production of the WSoA and more importantly implement the delivery plan to improve outcomes. The group has met once to start the drafting process, and will be meeting with DfE officials later this month to ensure that our plans are appropriate.

The report will be published on the OFSTED website on 12th December 2018. Full media communications have already been jointly prepared between SBC and the CCG press teams, and this will include informing schools and settings of the outcome.