

Report to OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

SEND Performance Report

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Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to brief the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the recent SEND Inspection in Oldham and the positive actions that the Council and Partners have undertaken to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND

Recommendations

To note the contents of the report and the positive direction of travel.

SEND Performance Report

1 Background

- 1.1 Between 2 - 6 October 2017 Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspected the arrangements within Oldham to meet the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). The Inspection letter containing the findings of the inspection was published on the Ofsted website on 28 November 2017 and required the Council and the CCG to develop with key stakeholders a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) within 70 working days. The statement should be co-produced with parents/carers, children and young people and be submitted to Ofsted by 2 March 2018.
- 1.2 This report details the Inspection outcome, the immediate measures taken by the Council and its partners to address the issues raised, the WSOA (attached as Appendix 1) and identifies the current performance in delivering a sustainable, high quality SEND offer in Oldham.
- 1.3 Following the Ofsted feedback meeting on 6 October 2017 a number of immediate actions took place;
- Establishment of a SEND Transformation Assurance Board and associated supporting mechanisms chaired by the Executive Director for Economy, Skills and Neighbourhoods with senior representation from Oldham CCG; education and social care officers, and parental representation through the Oldham Parent Carer Forum POINT;
 - Interim management arrangements in place for the post of Head of Access and Inclusion following the previous post holder leaving the Council employ;
 - Clarification sought from Ofsted on all 'illegal' practice issues;
 - Review of the EHCP process involving key stakeholders;
 - Additional SEN educational and health care (EHCP) writing capacity brought in to address the shortfall in conversions of all remaining Statements of Educational Need into EHC Plans by the due date of 31 March 2018;
 - Interim arrangements in place within the CCG to provide increased strategic capacity on SEND;
 - Additional capacity commissioned by the CCG from NHS providers to support work on conversions. Revised Quality assurance processes put in place to ensure that plans reflect appropriate outcomes which are owned and understood by the plan holder and parents/carer's;
 - Transport policy and decisions reviewed to ensure they meet the national guidance;
 - Additional capacity sourced by the CCG to support the implementation of the SEND reforms within the local NHS;
 - All schools written to by the Director of Education & Early Years reminding them of the exclusions policy and requesting they confirm adherence to all legal requirements. All schools responded affirmatively to this letter;
 - Quarterly Joint Monitoring and Support Meeting held with DfE and NHS England officials. At the first meeting a report was provided identifying actions already taken since the Inspection against the 5 areas identified as the key themes for the WSOA;

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- Inspection findings and feedback sessions held with parents and carers on 7th and 12th December 2017.
 - Co-production of the WSOA was launched on 25th January 2018 with a co-production workshop involving over 65 professional staff and twenty parents/carer's. The Executive Director of Economy Skills and Neighbourhoods; the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the CCG and a senior representative of POINT fronted the session;

2. Governance

2.1 A key challenge posed by the Inspection Report was how to improve effective leadership and joint partnership. To meet this challenge revised governance processes were put in place to;

- Ensure strong strategic and operational oversight from a multi-agency perspective.
- Ensure that the voice and influence of the child/young person and parents/carers are heard and acted upon at the highest level by their direct involvement.
- Ensure that the SEND reform process is firmly cemented within the overall children's strategy and that of the Integrated Care Organisation.

The revised governance arrangements are illustrated in the WSOA.

2.2 It was recognised that a Board structure as described above would not be the most appropriate vehicle for ensuring effective co-production with children and young people. Consequently, local children and young people's expertise was sought by involving existing groups such as 'Barrier Breakers' and the Children in Care Council.

3. Increasing Staff Capacity

3.1 As part of the recovery programme for the SEN Assessment Service significant additional permanent revenue funding of £500,000 was agreed to secure sufficient capacity at an appropriate level and with the requisite skill set in order to complete all legal requirements within mandated timeframes and to the appropriate quality standard.

3.2 A recruitment process was undertaken during the summer of 2018 and a fully staffed SEN Assessment Service is presently almost in place. The revised EHC team consists of the following;

- 1.0 fte Assistant Director
- 1.0 fte Service Manager
- 1.0 fte Team Manager
- 1.0 fte Programme Manager
- 3.0 fte Senior EHC officers
- 8.0 fte EHC Officers
- 1.0 fte EHC Officer (12 month contract)

3.3 This equates to an 80% increase in EHC officer capacity in the short term

4. Current situation

4.1 Bi-monthly monitoring visits by DfE and NHS England took place in July, September and October. At the conclusion of the most recent meeting it was agreed that significant progress has been made in all areas.

4.2 These include;

- Oldham partners working together effectively to lead and drive forward change;
- The appointment of key staff across the partners and the recruitment strategies, including the Open Day, leading to a new staff dynamic which provides greater capacity to drive the cultural change forward;
- Examination of EHC plans which have been judged to be significantly better than those seen previously.
- A transport policy and procedure which is truly fit for purpose.
- Progress in supporting children and young people with SEND to improve their attainment, reduce exclusions and improve attendance.

4.3 The areas of concern noted by Ofsted and CQC in October 2017 have now been rag rated as follows;

- Area 1: Illegal Practice **GREEN**
- Area 2 Leadership **GREEN**
- Area 3 Process and Quality **AMBER / GREEN**
- Area 4 Transport **GREEN**
- Area 5 Attainment and absenteeism **GREEN**

Further detail on areas 3& 5 are set out below in recognition these are the largest areas of activity:

4.4 Area 3: EHC Plans

4.5 In September 2017 the Service was dealing with the following numbers of children and young people with SEND in Oldham

Numbers with EHC plans (aged 0-25): 1961
 Number of new assessment requests: 265

4.6 A key requirement of the 2014 SEND reforms was to reduce the time taken to complete the assessment process (timeliness). The legal expectation is that the process from referral to finalising of EHC plan (if required) should take no more than 20 weeks. The Local Authority Interactive Tool which collects data on a number of children’s indicators allows comparison between Oldham and its statistical neighbours in the North West and England. The validated data for 2015, 2016 and 2017 is shown below;

Percentage of EHC plans completed in the timescale of 20 weeks	2015	2016	2017
Oldham	8.3	15.6	66.2
Statistical neighbours	34.8	49.4	59.8
North West	55.7	59.3	74.3
England	55.5	55.7	61.3

4.7 Since the publication of the Inspection outcome there has been an increased focus on the quality as well as timeliness of finalised plans.

4.8 From 18 June 2018 questionnaires were sent out to a total of 50 EHC plan recipients. To date a total of nine have been returned equating to an 18% return rate. The responses revealed that;

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- 100% of respondents stated that the assessment process was explained in a manner which was easy to understand;
 - The majority (88%) of respondents indicated that the EHCP assessment process was explained to them by the school;
 - 100% of respondents stated that they felt listened to and supported throughout the EHCP assessment process;
 - 89% of respondents stated the outcomes in the EHCP assessment are clear and easy to understand;
 - 78% of respondents indicated that the content of the EHCP assessment is what they expected;
 - Respondents indicated that the EHCP assessment met their child's needs in the following areas;
 - 33% Health
 - 78% Education
 - 22% Local Authority Social Care
 - 89% of questionnaires were completed by the Parent / Carer
 - 11% of questionnaires were completed by the child / young person

4.9 The questionnaires will continue to be sent out with final plans and further analysis will be undertaken and shared with the SEND Management Board in due course.

4.10 Area 5 Attainment and absenteeism

4.11 A number of actions have been undertaken since the Inspection. These include;

- A review of alternative provision commissioned through the Opportunity Area funding.
- Primary and Secondary Behaviour & Attendance Groups established with specific working groups focused on Improving Attendance, Understanding and Managing Behaviour as well as Local Partnerships and how they work together to support inclusion.
- A pilot ran between May to July 2018 to test a systemic approach to measuring pupil wellbeing, mental health and resilience across Oldham with the aim of improving the wellbeing of pupils through Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) interventions. This is being led by the Child Outcomes Research Consortium (CORC).
- An outline Whole School / College approach to SEMH has been completed. This work is a key strand in the Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) transformation plan and is led by the Integrated Care Organisation (ICO).
- Opportunity Area funding has provided additional funding to appoint a coordinator to lead and further develop the Whole School Approach to emotional health and mental wellbeing programme
- Two Mental Health and Wellbeing Advisors have been employed to build capacity and up-skill teaching and support staff to deliver robust social, emotional and mental wellbeing class room based interventions, peer support, low level interventions and develop supportive networks across all schools and colleges.
- Oldham Council and Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) were successful in delivering the nationally funded Mental Health Services and Schools Link Programme, run by the Anna Freud National Centre for Child and Families.
- Graduated response training has been delivered by the educational psychologist service and further training is now in place led by the mental health advisers.

- Whole School Approach training has been delivered to schools / college across Oldham by Tameside, Oldham and Glossop (TOG) MIND. An evaluation of the programme is presently being reviewed.
- Local intelligence from SENDIASS and POINT is being used to triangulate with the LA/CCG data sources to inform performance and identify areas of concern.
- The investment in data modeller capacity has resulted in the development of a comprehensive SEND Dashboard together with a deeper analysis of trend information. This will allow Senior Managers to understand the landscape more, be more targeted in challenging poor performance and to consider investment decisions with greater confidence.
- Oldham is beginning to see a reduction in Fixed Term Exclusions (FTE). Overall SEND FTE have reduced by 2.7% which is at a faster rate than non-SEND (0.7%). The gap between SEND and non-SEND is further closing with a reduction of 2% in 2018 compared to the same period last year. The most significant decline within the SEND cohort has been with EHCP pupils in primary which reduced from 26.3% to 8.9%, with the number of FTE exclusions reducing from 91 in 2017 to 35 in 2018. However it is not possible to estimate the rates against national because national predictions are not available, however we are continuing to monitor and interrogate local predictions to inform local planning and interventions.

4.12 National attainment data is published once a year and is therefore currently unavailable, however based on un-validated data shows an improvement for children and young people with SEND as indicated below;

- Attainment at Key Stage 4 demonstrates an increase in the percentage of pupils with SEN achieving Level 9 to 4 in GCSE English and Maths from 13.6% in 2016 to 19.2% of SEN pupils in 2018. The SEN attainment gap between pupils without SEN and pupils with SEN achieving Level 9 to 4 in GCSE English and Maths in Oldham are significantly narrowing as they were 49% in 2016 and have declined to 42.3% in 2018.
- The percentage of pupils with SEN meeting the expected standard or better in Key Stage 2 Reading, Writing and Maths in Oldham, has nearly doubled from 11% in 2016 to 20% in 2018 and is 5% higher than in 2017. Oldham's percentage is now only just below the Provisional 2018 National average of 21%
- The percentage of pupils with SEN meeting the expected standard or better in Key Stage 1 Reading, Writing and Maths in Oldham, has seen a rise in 2018 to 15% from 13%
- Results for KS1 phonics for Oldham have risen by 1% in 2018 to 78% compared to a National average of 83%, for pupils with SEND the rise is also 1% to 37%. The attainment figures at all key stages remain below national average but do illustrate improvement at all levels.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Following the SEND Inspection of October 2017, Oldham Council and partners have worked hard to improve the system and outcomes for children and young people with SEND. This hard work is being recognised by positive feedback from DfE and NHS England officials, parents and young people. The performance figures on key metrics whilst challenging are demonstrating improvements and whilst there is a considerable journey still ahead a way forward has been developed which is showing progress.

6. Key Issues for Overview and Scrutiny to Discuss

6.1 How can the Scrutiny and Overview Committee support the work of the SEND Partnership Board and SEND Management Group in improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND in Oldham?

7. Key Questions for Overview and Scrutiny to Consider

7.1 How have partner agencies, parents, carers, children and young people supported the Council in the Improvement Journey?

7.2 What has been the impact on Council finances of the Inspection outcome? What lessons could be learnt?

7.3 What has been the effect on Oldham Schools of the Inspection outcome and improvement journey?

7.4 What is the wider SEND action plan?

7.5 What other lessons could the Council and partners learn from the SEND Inspection experience?

8. Links to Corporate Outcomes

8.1 The SEND agenda fits with all of the corporate outcomes;

- An Inclusive Economy where people and enterprise thrive;
- Thriving Communities where everyone is empowered to do their bit;
- Co-operative Services with people and social value at their heart.

9. Additional Supporting Information

9.1 Not applicable

10. Consultation

10.1 N/A

11. Appendices

11.1 Appendix 1 Oldham Written Statement of Action
Appendix 2 Oldham SEND Performance Dashboard