



Report to CYP&FS Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 15th January 2018

Report of: Dawn Walton, Director of Strategic Commissioning and Inclusion Services

Subject: Special Educational Needs in Sheffield

Author of Report: Tim Armstrong, Head of SEN
Joel Hardwick, Head of Commissioning; Inclusion and School Services

Summary:

The scrutiny committee has requested a report on the current provision and practice in regards to supporting children and young people with Special Educational Needs in the city and the response to the SEND reforms

Type of item: The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	x
Other	

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

The Committee is asked to consider the Local Authorities current approach to the implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) reforms and practice across the city and provide views, comments and recommendations on the strategic approach and practice in place

Background Papers:

List any background documents (e.g. research studies, reports) used to write the report. Remember that by listing documents people could request a copy.

Category of Report: OPEN

Special Educational Needs in Sheffield

1. Introduction

1.1 The vision for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and inclusion in Sheffield is that over the next 5 years we will transform our services and support so that all children and young people with additional needs will have the opportunity to achieve their full potential from early years, throughout school and post 16 education into adult life. All children and young people will be supported towards independence with access to employment opportunities, good health, and able to participate in their community. We will be an inclusive city that works well with children, young people and their families to remove barriers to learning and progression.

1.2 The SEND reforms were implemented in September 2014 under the Children and Families Act. These were the largest changes to the way children and young people with Special Educational Needs were supported in over 30 years. The Department for Education set a timeframe of March 2018 for their implementation; specifically the conversion of all Statements of SEND to Education Health and Care Plans. Within this there was an expectation and drive for the following:

- An holistic approach to meet the needs of those with SEND from age 0 up to 25 from across Education, Health and Care Services
- Development of child centred / person centred practice for those with SEND to ensure that the child and their families' voice is central to support and provision
- A graduated approach to meeting a child's SEND
- Ensuring effective preparation for adult life for those with SEND
- The replacement of School Action and School Action Plus with SEND Support and the introduction of Education Health and Care Plans to replace Statements of SEND
- All children with statements of SEND should be reassessed to provide an Education Health and Care Plan by the end of March 2018

1.3 The current system in numbers:

- Approx. 83,000 statutory school age pupils in Sheffield
- 13.5% classed as SEND Support compared to 11.6% nationally
- 2.5% (2,045 pupils) have either a Statement of SEND or Education Health and Care Plan compared to 2.8% nationally
- Total of 2,475 statements/EHC Plans across the 0-25 age range
- 55.8% of those with a statement/EHC Plan are placed in some form of specialist provision compared to 49.1% nationally.

2. Sheffield Inclusion Strategy

2.1 A refreshed Inclusion Strategy is currently in process of being completed and will be consulted on. It will provide clear outcomes in 4 key themes:

KT1 Identification and Assessment of Needs

KT2 Support, Provision and Commissioning

KT3 Improving outcomes through high quality partnership, leadership and practice

KT4 Engagement of children, young people, their families and the workforce and good communication

2.2 Key Theme 1: Identification and Assessment of Needs

The SEND reforms expect a 'graduated approach' to meeting a child's needs. This should follow a process of 'Assess-Plan-Do-Review' from the earliest point of identifying needs and continuing throughout a learner's education, through key transition points and into adult life. There are a number of key areas of work underway to improve Sheffield's performance:

- Early identification & transition: the Local Authority is working with schools and health and care practitioners to ensure that there are clearly defined processes for identifying needs early, particularly through key transition points, and joined up with other assessment processes
- Sheffield has developed the use of the MyPlan as a tool to support good and consistent identification and assessment of need at SEND Support Level. With further work to ensure that improved documents are developed to build on the learning from the early stages of implementation.
- Sheffield has developed the Sheffield Support Grid to provide a standardised expected baseline of levels of need and provision across different areas of need. This development is allowing a level of moderation in regards to provision to meet learners' needs across the city and expectation of support being put in place. Further work is required, particularly in regards to how it is used to articulate levels of need.
- The Education Health and Care Needs Assessment is the statutory process for those children and young people who require provision over and above that usually available within a mainstream school. There remain some challenges in this area with considerable work underway to improve the process through additional leadership capacity, staffing and training as well as working with advice giving services to ensure that specificity of assessment is provided.

2.3 Key Theme 2: Support Provision and Commissioning

The majority of those with SEND should have their needs met from within mainstream and locally-commissioned provision. A small percentage of CYP will require more specialist provision to meet their needs. Sheffield is undertaking a strategic review to ensure that the landscape of provision for children with SEND is flexible, sufficient, local

and attuned to current and future need. Some of this work is already underway:

- Localities model: Sheffield has adopted a localities approach to support. The city is split into 7 localities who have received devolved funding to support the most vulnerable learners through jointly commissioning specialist provision to support the most vulnerable in their schools. Examples of this to date include group training and development of locality nurture groups.
- Specialist provision in Sheffield is currently running at capacity. The city has a growing population and the review of provision is looking at how Sheffield can develop the local offer to best meet needs now and in the future.
- Sheffield has been successful in the first part of a bidding process with the DfE to create a new Special school. This is planned to support children with complex needs, particularly those with both autism and social, emotional, and mental health needs. This has been identified as a gap in Sheffield provision.
- Early years: the development of early years centres of excellence from within existing structures, to align with the localities, to support the prevention and early intervention agenda by working with early years providers to identify and support children age 0-5 with SEND as early as possible, including increasing school readiness for all children
- Post-16: The development of Sheaf training and establishing supported internships at Sheaf Training and Sheffield College has started to address needs for adult life, and there is further work to do in order to ensure that clear pathways are identified at age 14 that will move young people with SEND to adult life through appropriate provision into employment.
- Joint commissioning: collaborative work is underway, particularly between the Council and the NHS, to integrate funding and commissioning decisions to make care for Sheffield people more coordinated.
- New commissions developed to support inclusion: there are now a number of small interventions and support programmes in place with special schools offering outreach, operating hubs in mainstream schools, and groups of schools operating joint nurture provision.
- Out of city and high cost places: We have reviewed our pathways to access the most specialised provision that often addresses the needs of those with complex education, health and care needs. Work is currently ongoing to ensure clear pathways, decision making and review in order to ensure that these provision ensure progress and offer value for money.

2.4 Key Theme 3: Improving outcomes through high quality partnership, leadership and practice

The Inclusion Programme Board has responsibility for governance of the SEND reforms and Inclusion agenda. It draws together key partners under the Sheffield Children's Health and Wellbeing Transformation Board. The board has an improvement remit to ensure that practice

across the city improves to best meet the needs of those with SEND. Work is developing under the Inclusion Programme Board across a number of key areas:

- Resources & commissioning: resources to meet the needs of those with SEND are finite. Education provision is funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block. In order to ensure that there are improved outcomes for all, effective provision must be commissioned across the city to ensure that funding is used in the most effective way to meet needs. There are significant pressures on the high needs block meaning that decisions on provision and support must be scrutinised to ensure they are fair, transparent and best use of public funding. A Children's Joint Commissioning Group has been established to further the strategic commissioning of services across the Council, NHS and partners.
- EHCP Quality: A quality assurance group exists to review the quality of Education Health and Care Plans. This group will ensure that there is effective sampling of plans and the information used to populate them to ensure high quality practice
- Lifecycle: In order to ensure effective outcomes into adult life, clear planning and provision must be in place. In addition there needs to be the development of further educational opportunities and engagement with the city's employers to ensure that opportunities exist to support those with SEND into adult life. The move to a People's Portfolio is supporting the development of integrated practice into adult life.

2.5 Key Theme 4: Engagement of children, young people and their families and the workforce and good communication

There is developing work in a number of areas to improve services through better engagement:

- Parents/carers: confidence in support for those with SEND is low in many areas. There is good working practice with the Sheffield Parent Carer Forum and we are actively looking to engage families more generally to ensure that the parent voice is clear and heard. The Local Authority recognises that communication with parents has not always been good and is working hard to rectify this.
- Children & young people: engagement of Children and Young People with SEND also needs to improve. The Inclusion Programme Board is establishing a work stream to develop engagement that will include a remit to ensure that the child's voice is central.
- Professionals: High quality training is essential to ensure that needs are met. There has been and continues to be some universal training for professionals involved with SEND and this needs to be consistent across the city. SENCO training is being developed around specific areas of need to ensure a consistent baseline of high quality practice.
- Review: The review described under Key Theme 2 will involve ongoing engagement with children, young people and their families. This should help to improve the strength of the partnership between commissioners, providers, and families and should therefore improve the confidence of families in the Sheffield system.

3 What does this mean for the people of Sheffield?

- 3.1 Sheffield's Inclusion Strategy will drive up the identification of needs and support put in place for children with SEND. It will see improved outcomes for those young people, particularly as they move towards adult life.
- 3.2 In order to achieve improved practice all partners need to engage further with the SEND reforms and prioritise support for those with SEND from the earliest possible point through investment, clear planning and effective support.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The committee is asked to consider the report and note the ongoing work to drive improvement in this area.