



Report to Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 4th November 2019

Report of: Dawn Walton, Director of Commissioning, Inclusion & Learning

Subject: Progress made in response to the SEND local area inspection

Author of Report: Tim Armstrong, Head of SEN

Summary:

To provide scrutiny committee an update on the progress made to date on Sheffield's response to the local area SEND inspection conducted in November 2018.

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	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	X
Other	

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

Consider the proposals and provide' views, comments and recommendations

Background Papers:

- [Sheffield SEND Written Statement of Action - August 2019 update](#)
- [Sheffield's written statement of action \(summary\)](#)
- [Sheffield's written statement of action \(full report\)](#)
- [Ofsted letter outlining the findings from the inspection](#)

All available here:

<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/schools-childcare/send-inspection.html>

Category of Report: OPEN

Report of the Director of Commissioning, Inclusion & Learning **– Progress made in response to the local area SEND** **inspection, November 2019**

1. Introduction

To provide scrutiny committee an update on the written statement of action following the local area SEND inspection, including the development of a citywide Inclusion strategy

2. Main body of report, matters for consideration, etc

The local area inspection of SEND was completed in November 2018. The inspection report identified 7 areas of significant weakness and required the development of a written statement of action in response. This was published earlier this year. Inspectors are due to return in October 2020.

The purpose of this report is to provide an update against the 7 areas identified by inspectors and to provide information to scrutiny committee on the work completed and recent formal meeting with the Department for Education and NHS England as part of the formal monitoring of progress.

Formal meeting with Department for Education (DfE) and NHS England (NHSE)

The meeting was held with the Sheffield Inclusion Improvement board in September and is the first of 4 formal meetings that will take place before OFSTED and CQC return to consider the progress made. The purpose of the meeting was to provide a formal update to DfE and NHSE and for them to scrutinise the work undertaken to date.

DfE and NHSE fed back in the meeting that they felt that the planning and process of implementation of improvements was good and that there was positive progress being made. They specifically noted that the information prepared for them and the board showed a grip on the issues to be addressed and a clear plan of action. Each of the 7 areas of weakness were discussed. Key points from the minutes are detailed below:

‘EB (DfE) advised that SCC provided good clear information and was happy with what was presented. Noted that it was the best set of data from a written plan of action.’

‘Need to be mindful of timescales and how much pace can be put into development. Be realistic about what can be done by October 2020.’

‘Since the Inspection and first meeting, the way of approaching areas has been committed and joined up. The right people are working on the areas and realistic expectations are being set. It is a very positive start. It is obvious there will be challenges and there will be a need for culture change.’

Areas identified by DfE and NHSE at this point as risks included a lack of social care assessment within statutory processes for those with SEND, timeframes for consultation on changes to integrated resources and the continued need to improve communication in regards to EHC Plans. All of these are being addressed within the WSOA and monitored on a monthly basis by the Inclusion improvement board, alongside the remainder of the actions. The next meeting with DfE and NHSE will take place in February.

WSOA – Area 1 – The lack of a co-produced, coherent vision and strategy for SEND in Sheffield

Scrutiny were provided a report in September on the development of the strategy. Further detail on development is detailed below:

Initial consultation

We have been consulting with people, via meetings and surveys, from our four stakeholder groups (young people, parents, frontline workers, leaders) over the summer and into September and have gained lots of valuable feedback. We have added the feedback from this consultation to that which we have already captured from various events and conferences in the previous year. At the start of our summer consultation we used CCG's template to collate the feedback to date and then used this to focus on groups whose voices we had not yet captured.

CCGs SPEEC group signed off our approach on 10th September.

The research and consultation identified five key themes to build the strategy around:

1. Identification and Assessment of needs
2. Provision to meet needs
3. Effective transition between stages and particularly to adult life
4. Communication and engagement
5. Developing the workforce

Co-production

The themes listed above formed the basis of our co-production session which was held on 7th October 2019. 55 people attended the session including parents/carers, frontline practitioners and leaders. We were unable to get any young people to the event, however we have consulted with young people over the summer and will ensure that young people have the opportunity to comment on the draft strategy.

The session was facilitated by Dr Kamal Birdi from the University of Sheffield, using the CLEAR IDEAS approach. Attendees worked in small groups on tables, with each group focusing on one theme for the entire session.

It was a really productive morning and produced lots of ideas and priorities to take forward. Feedback from participants was very positive, particularly about the nature of co-production of the event.

The co-production session worked on the content of our vision statement and each of the 5 areas identified during consultation to establish priorities and actions to be taken as part of the priorities. A number of cross cutting themes were identified from this work as well as individual priorities for each area.

A further session was held on the 24th October with 6 elected members from scrutiny committee to develop this work further and ensure that feedback from their involvement with families was included

Drafting the strategy

The strategy is being drafted by officers working as the Core Strategy Development Group that includes SCC, SCCG and Sheffield Parent Carer Forum.

Priorities included in the strategy

The draft strategy is being drawn together following the co-production session as well as all previously created plans. In particular it has been cross-referenced with the written statement of action.

The following vision statement has been drawn together from the co-production session:

‘Sheffield is an inclusive city where we work together to ensure that children and young people get the right support at the right time so that they can live a happy and fulfilled life.’

The following priorities have been identified as part of this process, formulated through both the co-production session, in line with the consultations that have taken place and through the outcome of the local area SEND inspection. For each theme there will also be a range of identified changes that will be implemented.

Theme 1: Identification and Assessment of needs

1. A focus on earliest identification of needs throughout assessment to support a whole family approach to get the right support at the right time
2. Assessments focus on the CYP and what daily life is like – what is working, what’s not working and what needs to change
3. A consistent golden thread – Aspiration, Outcomes, Needs, Provision – to create a single plan that the CYP and their family understands
4. Assessment and review processes detail who does what and when so that they are clear consistent and understandable for all

5. Integrating services locally to 'pass the baton' and jointly identify and assess need

Theme 2: Provision to meet needs

1. To ensure there is enough of the right support for CYP and families at all levels of need.
2. To create sufficient provision that is clearly defined, of consistent quality and local to where CYP and families live
3. To make provision and support easy to find and access.
4. To provide support as early as possible
5. For services and schools to work together locally to improve inclusion

Theme 3: Effective transition between stages and particularly to adult life

1. There will be clear integrated transition pathways as CYP move into school, into secondary education and into post-16 education and adult life
2. All CYP have a clear plan to move to adult life that is focused on employment and meaningful activity, independence, access to their community and managing their health
3. We need to address the current gaps of education provision around the 16-25 age range.
4. To ensure sufficient appropriate opportunities for CYP with additional needs that are focused on their whole-life including employment, day activities, housing, health support, and opportunities to have the right relationships and support so that they can be independent and access their local communities
5. To ensure that CYP and families are able to easily access the right support, including funding, to enable them to succeed in adult life

Theme 4: Communication and engagement

1. The voice of the CYP and their family will be at the centre. We recognise, listen and respond to the family as an equal partner who is the expert of what daily life is like
2. Services and schools work together to ensure consistent communication with a focus on the child so that there are no gaps in support
3. Assessment and support processes are clearly defined and easily available to all
4. From day one there is clear and consistent engagement with the family that goes throughout life so that they know what is happening and what will happen next
5. There is an open and honest relationship between CYP, families, services and schools about what can and can't be done

Theme 5: Developing the workforce

1. We need to understand overall demands on services and identify shortages and gaps in capacity.
2. We need to ensure our workforce has the sufficient skills to understand and support inclusion across the city
3. It is essential that we develop shared values, language and knowledge as part of integrating services to be more collaborative.
4. We need to ensure that support is co-ordinated and joined up, utilising a key worker approach to do this as early as possible
5. In order to ensure we have a high quality workforce we need to ensure high quality staff recruitment and retention

Consultation on draft strategy

Once the strategy is drafted it will be consulted on with our key stakeholder groups. To do this we will produce a further questionnaire and hold further stakeholder groups. The consultation will last a minimum of 4 weeks. Consultation will be launched in early November.

The strategy will be formalised and approved by SCC cabinet and CCG governing body. The timeframe for this is February 2020.

WSOA – Area 2 – Communication, clarity and consistency in the relationship between the local area leaders, parents, carers, children and young people

Developments:

- Process posters and animations have been developed to better explain processes and the SEND system. These have been disseminated and published on the Local Offer
- We have developed guidance documents for schools about pathways to services and EHC needs assessment statutory processes. The guidance on annual reviews of EHC Plans will be published shortly
- Two issues of our half termly 'Special Educational Needs News' have been emailed to more than 550 professionals and families
- Customer focus groups have taken place to gain feedback on the Local Offer website and a proposal to rebuild the website has been prepared. The Parent Carer forum continue to work on their commission to improve engagement with and content of the website
- SENDSARS have worked to develop best practice guidance on communication that will be rolled out after October half term, including reconfiguring of their IT system

Evidence of impact:

- 30% increase in number of people signed up to receive the SEND newsletter. 25%+ click rate to links provided in the newsletter – to further guidance and information.

- Schools have advised that they have found the documents helpful in their understanding and support to families
- As part of our WSOA monitoring, the Parent Carer Forum (PCF) has offered to repeat some of their State of Sheffield survey questions – we intend to ask about communication again, to help assess the impact we are having.

Next steps:

- Finalise co-production principles – and then start production of best practice guidance on co-production of a support plan.
- Develop best practice guidance re communicating with families of children and young people with SEND – working with parents/carers, schools and services.
- Redesign local offer website
- Development of further information for families and services, including on personal budgets.
- Implementation of SENDSARS communication guidance and policy.
- Continued publication of SEND newsletter and further process documents.

All produced guidance documents for schools can be viewed at:

<https://www.learnsheffield.co.uk/Partners/Inclusion-Task-Force/>



WSOA – Area 3 – Poor strategic oversight of SEND arrangements by the CCG, which results in unacceptable waiting times for access to specialist equipment and appropriate pre- and post-diagnosis support and children and young people’s needs not being met

Developments:

- A CCG recovery plan has been developed and is being delivered as part of WSOA.
- Regular updates on SEND improvement plan now being reviewed and overseen by CCG Governing Body to increase oversight at strategic level.
- Designated Clinical Offer (DCO) in place with a work programme that includes:
 - Promoting health checks for people with learning disabilities
 - Training and supporting health professionals to write advice for EHC Plans
 - Putting in place and delivering quality assurance mechanisms throughout the EHC Plan process
 - Supporting work on the 'tell us once' approach and transition and transfer arrangements
- DCO time will be increased from 0.4 FTE to 1 FTE from November, recognising the capacity required to deliver improvements.
- First draft of wheelchair fitting service specifications and KPIs complete with ongoing monitoring arrangements in place. Workshop held with service users to gain feedback on the service and the new specification.
- Change to contractual arrangements with SCH to incentivise reductions in waiting times for ASD assessment/support and development of pre- and post- diagnostic support pathway.

Evidence of impact:

- Service users have had the opportunity to input into service improvement plans and comment on service specifications. This includes ongoing sessions around service areas such as Speech and Language Therapy.

Next steps:

- Commission and embed health input into the SENDSAR service to review health reports as fit for purpose, assure quality and sign off the health element of EHCPs. This will be overseen by the DCO.
- Embed clinical input into the EHC Panel – DCO will be attending regularly from the start of November.
- Review of action plan for reducing existing waiting times to ASD assessment and support – action plan expected from provider by 31.10.19.
- Final version of wheelchair specification to be completed and in contract by 29.11.2019 with new reporting arrangements fully embedded by 29.12.2019.

WSOA – Area 4 – Weaknesses in commissioning arrangements to remove variability and improve consistency in meeting the education, health and care needs of children and young people aged zero to 25 with SEND

Developments:

- Inclusion & SEND joint SCC and CCG commissioning programme, priorities and dashboard developed for discussion and approval via the Joint Commissioning Committee in the Autumn.
- Public engagement about growing and developing integrated resource and special-led hub provision complete, and formal consultation now planned.
- One new special school under development and due to open in 2021, successful bid in the second DfE bidding wave for a second new school, now in process of development with prospective sponsors.
- Commitment to additional funding into the Locality SEND funding (mainstream top-up funding) pot, allocations now driven by moderated Sheffield Support Grid data.
- School sector leadership for Inclusion & SEND has been commissioned through Learn Sheffield to lead, develop and progress consistency, frameworks for assessing support needs and accessing support, and new approaches to inclusion across the school system. This includes commissioning the time from primary and secondary heads and in regards to whole school SEND reviews
- Further clarity around commissioning intentions at levels of need has been identified and articulated to ensure that planning across levels of need (universal, universal +, early intervention, targeted, specialist) and ages is defined
- Service specifications put in place for community paediatrics, dietetics, continence and OPAT. Ongoing programme of service specification development work in place.
- First draft of Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) service specification completed and Occupational Therapy (OT) and physiotherapy service scoping work underway – this will provide basis for further service review and specification development to ensure service meets needs and provision and delivery of outcomes are being effectively monitored.
- Ongoing work to develop an Inclusion Tracker which will monitor the impact of different interventions – and will be used as a tool to inform future commissioning.

Evidence of impact:

- Development of the Inclusion Tracker is specifically targeted at measuring outcomes from commissioning arrangements and informing future commissions.
- First draft of SLT specification includes set of KPIs which has enabled us to start monitoring impact from October 2019.

Next steps:

- Physio and OT draft service specification to be completed.

- Full SLT service review and development plan, using specification as a baseline.
- Joint commissioning priorities agreed through Joint Commissioning Committee with a programme and timelines attached to each.
- IR consultation and decision making processes.
- New special schools developing towards opening.
- Further work to develop Inclusion Tracker.
- Further defining of all age commissioning intentions.

WSOA – Area 5 – The quality and timeliness of EHC plans

Developments:

- Continued improvement in timeliness of EHC Plan development - 91% of new EHC plans finalised in September were issued within 20 weeks. Our year to date average is now 81%.
- Common templates for statutory advice giving from services are in place.
- Work is progressing to ensure that social care information is provided as part of the EHC Needs Assessment Process. This is being developed with MAST and Children with Disabilities service.
- Development of the SENDSARS IT system means the service now has a digitised EHC Plan annual review process which is enabling more timely annual reviews and earlier notifications sent to schools/colleges.
- Appointment of two senior Inclusion Officers to develop quality of EHC Plans has taken place and they are working with DfE to ensure embedding of training and good practice.
- Quality Assurance group terms of reference and process has been revised to ensure that EHC Plans are based on high quality advice and well written.

Evidence of impact:

- More children and young people are receiving an EHC Plan within statutory timescales.
- Quality of EHC Plans is improving.
- Staff within SENDSARS are reporting a greater confidence in ability to write high quality EHC Plans

Next steps:

- Embed health input into the SENDSAR service to review health reports as fit for purpose, assure quality and sign off the health element of EHCPs. This will be via the DCO.
- Embed clinical input via the DCO into the EHC Panel to make decisions related to personal health budget for unmet health needs from commissioned services and to ensure that individual appropriate

assessments are identified and commissioned as part of the EHC Needs Assessment.

- Development of process and then monitoring to ensure care provision is consistently gathered to feed into an EHC Needs Assessment.
- Continued focus on the quality of EHC Plans with further training for SENDSARS staff, including input from DfE.
- Continued focus on customer focus in SENDSARS through launch of best practice service communication guidance and further reconfiguration of IT systems
- Further focus on quality of EHC Plans through audit and developed quality assurance process
- Map resource in SENDSARS regarding the time needed to complete case work.

WSOA – Area 6 – Inconsistencies in identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND in mainstream primary and secondary schools

Developments:

- Training on Sheffield Support Grid (SSG) and graduated approach completed with over 95% attendance by SENCOs.
- Parent guidance on the SSG published on the Local Offer.
- As planned, 50% of schools were moderated on their SSG levels in 2018/19. Plan in place for remainder of schools to be moderated in 2019/20.
- Schools, MATs and locality groups are opting for SEND review programmes to take place in 2019/20 academic year.
- Development and roll-out of whole-school Vulnerable Learner Reviews (VLRs) to support consistent and early identification of need. Pilots to look to integrate with other advisory services are taking place.
- Inclusion & SEND Sector Leadership has been commissioned to lead and develop schools' involvement across the area, including a framework around an inclusion gateway that will develop as the next step on from the existing Primary & Secondary Inclusion Panels. This will ensure a fast and consistent approach to directing targeted support.
- Development of data around children and young people not accessing school to drive support.
- Commissioning of the Birmingham SEN toolkit across the city. This is a set of resources to support teachers with the identification, provision and tracking of progress for SEND pupils with cognition and learning difficulties who are working significantly below the level of their peers. The local authority has funded 50% of this resource with schools funding the remainder. All schools will be trained through 2019/20.
- A core training programme for schools and services was delivered in 2018/19 focusing on a graduated approach to meeting needs and the

SSG. A programme has been planned for 2019/20 focusing on ensuring consistent processes.

Evidence of impact:

- We are currently developing case studies to demonstrate the difference we have made to individual children on the VLR and transition pathways.
- We are also working with our performance and analysis team to look at the key measures that will demonstrate an impact on service users both from the VLR and the transitions pathways.
- We are also developing our Inclusion Tracker which is specifically targeted at measuring outcomes of interventions and their impact on individual pupils and cohorts.
- We can evidence the level of need against a consistent measure (the SSG) across the city

Next steps:

- Mop up graduated approach and SSG training to take place in 2019/20 academic year to catch the few SENCOs that missed it last year and for new ones. Short training videos are also being created and will be accessed online.
- Roll out of core programme of training to schools and services to include review, outcomes and person-centred practice
- Continue programme of moderating SSG levels during 2019/20 with work to tackle inconsistencies.
- A new assessment toolkit, aimed at SENCOs, will soon be published to encourage consistency and provide guidance on making assessments.
- Further work to monitor and provide support where a child or young person is not accessing full-time education due to SEND needs - future work includes addressing inaccuracies in the reporting of permanently excluded children and creating better links with children who are electively home educated and have an EHC Plan.
- Accurate monitoring of children and young people on reduced timetables, alongside other data around children not accessing full time education, brought together and used to direct support and monitor performance in localities and individual schools.

WSOA – Area 7 – Weaknesses in securing effective multi-agency transition arrangements for children and young people with SEND

Developments:

- Increased integration of the early years inclusion team with the broader multi- agency working in early years to support identification of SEND and appropriate offer of support

- The school readiness pathway is in place and increasing numbers of young children/families are being identified. Work is now taking place to ensure a clear referral process that enables early identification.
- The Vulnerable Learner Review (VLR) model has been evaluated with schools and received positive feedback as well as suggestions on how this can be developed further. This model continues to roll out across the city.
- Y9 reviews - pilot complete and resources co-produced with young people and families to ensure focus on preparation for adulthood. Next step is to provide training to schools and roll out.
- Our work with the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTI) on post 16 progression pathways is now complete and will inform the development of pathways and our post-16 offer.

Evidence of impact:

- We are currently developing case studies to demonstrate the difference we have made to individual children on the VLR and transition pathways.
- We are also working with our performance and analysis team to look at the key measures that will demonstrate an impact on service users both from the VLR, the early years partnership process, and the transitions pathways.

Next steps:

- Referrals to the Early Years Inclusion team will form part of the early years partnership process during the Autumn term.
- Provide training to schools on new Y9 review paperwork which focusses on preparation for adulthood – to complete by 2019.
- Further work to develop VLRs to identify children and young people who require key-working approach to enable them to move seamlessly from primary to secondary school and to prepare for adulthood. VLRs took place in 25 schools in 2018/19 – gaps/needs analysis taking place to understand the needs of the children and schools and determine the capacity/resource we need to accommodate this. In addition trials of models that combine the educational psychology meetings and VLRs with schools are taking place.
- Implementation of joint action plan which has been developed with health, social care and education to support whole system involvement in processes and assessments that support preparation for adulthood.
- The 16-25 Offer and the 18 plus social care offer to be developed and articulated with short, medium and long term plans which include links to the employment strategy.

Programme management and oversight

Governance of the Inclusion improvement plan remains with the Inclusion Improvement Board, made up of leaders across the sector. The board receive monthly highlight reports to ensure that planned progress is on track.

As of October, 60% of actions in the WSOA are recorded as on track or yet to start. 6% are complete. 34% are either behind target or are recorded as a significant risk. Much of the slippage against timeframe is within 1 or 2 months and is being carefully monitored to ensure that they cannot slip further. Some have been deliberately extended due to alignment of work and with agreement of partners.

To drive forward continued change a programme manager has been appointed who will start in November with a focus on driving forward system change. This post is sponsored by the Director of commissioning, inclusion and learning.

3 What does this mean for the young people of Sheffield?

Sheffield children will have a more fit for purpose system across Education, Health and Care to ensure that their additional needs are effectively met in a timely manner

4. Recommendation

The committee is asked to consider the update on progress made