



Audit and Standards Committee Report

Report of: Andrew Jones Director of Education and Skills

Date: 24th March 2022

Subject: SEND Statutory Services and Compliance

Author of Report: Rose Ward

Recommendations:

That the Audit & Standards Committee:

- Note the information set out in the report and appendices.
- Request any further information or briefing on SEND
- Support and challenge regarding SEND development

Background Papers: None

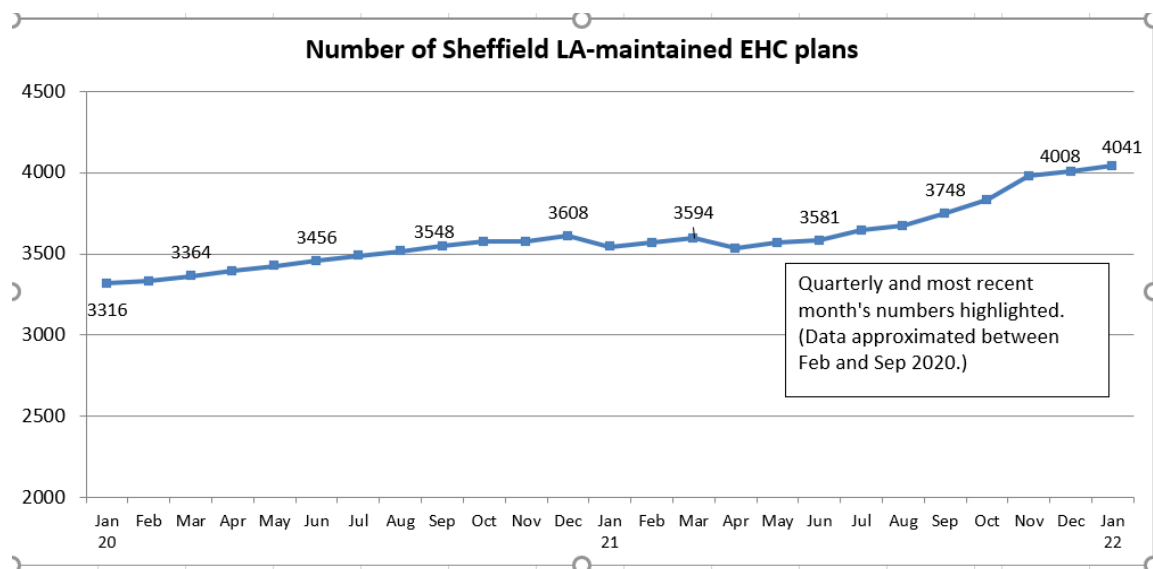
Category of Report: OPEN

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

| |
|---|
| Financial Implications |
| NO |
| Legal Implications |
| NO |
| Equality of Opportunity Implications |
| NO |
| Tackling Health Inequalities Implications |
| NO |
| Human rights Implications |
| NO: |
| Environmental and Sustainability implications |
| NO |
| Economic impact |
| NO |
| Community safety implications |
| NO |
| Human resources implications |
| NO |
| Property implications |
| NO |
| Area(s) affected |
| None |
| Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Member |
| Councillor Terry Fox, Cabinet Member for Finance |
| Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council? |
| NO |
| Press release |
| NO |

Summary:

- In Sheffield there are 4041 Children and Young People with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) (just under 5% of the child population)
- A third of EHC Plans are held by Young People who are post 16
- The west of the city (Localities E, F & G) have the highest number of children (under 16) with EHC Plans, Locality F has the highest overall.



SEND in Sheffield was subject to a Written Statement of Action from the Joint Ofsted and CQC Area Inspection, conducted in November 2018.

7 areas of weakness were identified, and an action plan developed to address each of the 7 areas: (in brief)

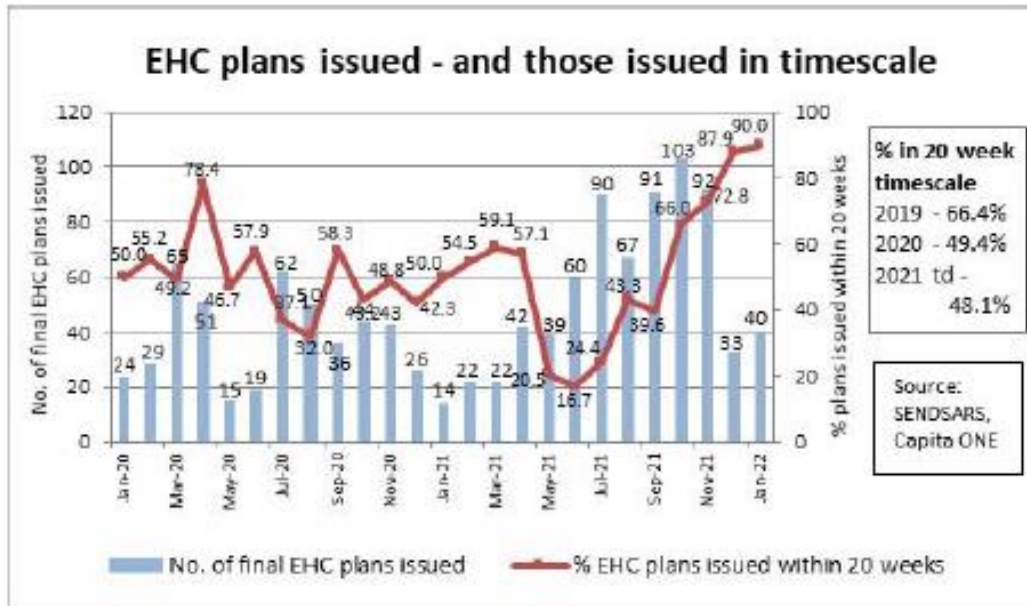
1. To develop an Inclusion Strategy and Implementation Plan
2. Improve communication – children, families, and partners
3. Improvements in CCG – waiting times, joint commissioning
4. Improve joint commissioning and commissioning arrangements for SEND
5. EHCNA / P compliance, quality, and oversight
6. Mainstream education – identification, assessment, and response to needs
7. Multi Agency Transition arrangements

Progress has been made in all areas, areas where progress began to decelerate or had worsened were identified in May 2021, these areas were number 5 and 7 of the WSOA.

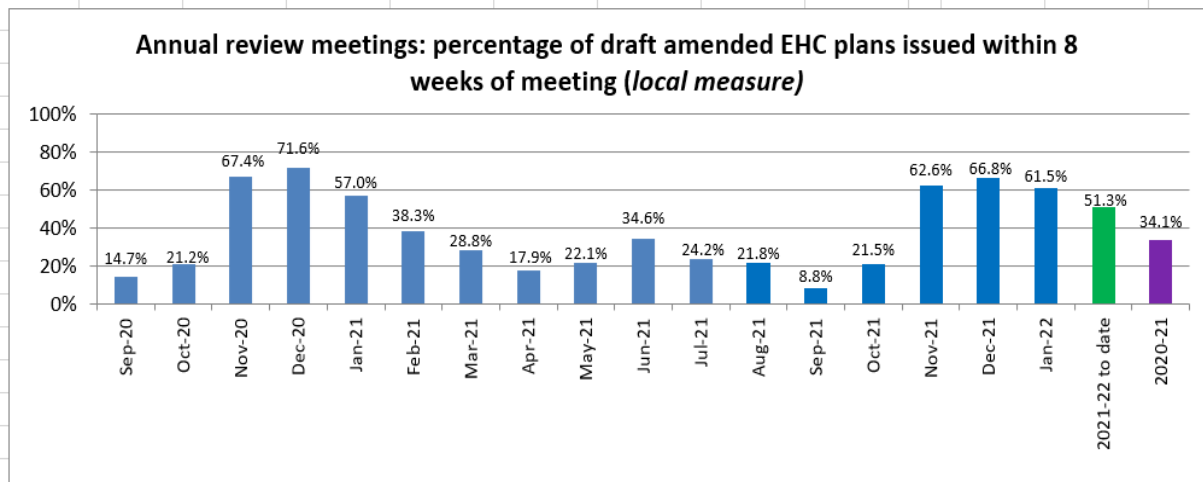
In May – July 2021, the compliance within the 20 weeks Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) process dipped from 32-18% with 102 plans exceeding the statutory 20 weeks' timescale. (National average compliance for plan completion is between 55-65%)

An interim Head of SEND was appointed in post from June 2021, since this time work has been undertaken, the outcomes of which are:

Compliance:



- Professional Advice from Education and Health providers show very view over time scale advice reports within the EHCNA process.
- There are some care advice reports overdue, therefore a new process has been agreed to address this issue.
- Proposed Amended plans following Annual Review has risen from 8.8% to 61.5% within 8 weeks of the review.



Staffing:

- A commitment to ensure establishment remains at the right level for the number of plans (not exceeding 200 per worker)
- Increase from 16 -22 FTE Inclusion Officers
- Recruited to vacant management posts = x 3 Locality Managers (5 now in post)
- Additional resource for the EP service to allow for advice to be completed - Locum and Agency Support (backlog is now cleared and agency / locum arrangements are coming to an end)
- Service Manager vacancy filled.

- Recruitment to new leaders for the Autism Team and HI/VI services
- A new Principal Educational Psychologist is in post
- Recruited to a Post 16 Manager for specific work on Post 16 and PFA pathways alongside Education, Health and Care colleagues.

Audit:

- A new approach to audit has been devised, online platforms have been utilised for immediate response to compliance in all sections of EHC Plans.
- Quality Assurance Multi-Agency group audits advice reports and 2 EHCPs per term with feedback given to the quality assurance management group and back into SENDSARS.
- Quality Audit has been used, but no reporting in place, new audit cycle with feedback has been agreed
- Development of child and family voice being included in the audit process.
- 3 question approach to parents during the EHCNA/P process.

Funding:

- Locality Model of funding is under review
- An increase of funding for children with EHCPs has been submitted to Schools Forum
- Comparatively our High Needs funding agreement for our mainstream schools is low, as a result the LA has overspent in the Exceptional Needs and Growth funding pots.

Sufficiency:

- We do not have sufficient specialist places for children who need them, despite ongoing work with commissioners.
- Shortages are apparent within ASD specialist provision at both Primary and Secondary phases.
- Further IR places are planned from September 2022
- The new Discovery School will open from September 2022.

Performance:

To ensure performance does not dip in the service again and that compliance remains high there have been several new performance management structures put into place:

- Fortnightly compliance meetings and Performance Clinics alternating
- Risk Meetings to consider children who are of concern and actions agreed
- Direction to schools where we have high risk placement breakdowns
- Introduction of practice standards and supervision expectations.
- Audit tools developed to ensure plans are always compliant
- Steering groups for the WSOA have been developed to move forward at pace with continued areas of weakness
- Work with the Inclusion Board to unblock any barriers to progress and support to create a Young People Council
- Development of the Local Offer and agreement for a committed officer to develop this further
- Reporting weekly to SLT and monthly to Director Performance Clinic

This page is intentionally left blank