



SHROPSHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD Report

Meeting Date	14 th July 2022			
Title of Paper	SEND Local Area Inspection Action Plan Update			
Reporting Officer and email	David Shaw, Assistant Director Education and Achievement. David.shaw@shropshire.gov.uk			
Which Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy priorities does this paper address? Please tick all that apply	Children & Young People	X	Joined up working	X
	Mental Health	X	Improving Population Health	X
	Healthy Weight & Physical Activity	X	Working with and building strong and vibrant communities	X
	Workforce	X	Reduce inequalities (see below)	X
What inequalities does this paper address?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special educational needs and/or disabilities 0-25 			

1. Executive Summary

This paper provides the committee with an update on work to deliver the written statement of action (WSoA) following the joint Ofsted/CQC inspection of services for children with a special education need and/or disability (SEND). It also provides the committee with an update on preparations for a further inspection of the local authority and its partners.

Whilst there has been progress in some areas identified as significant weaknesses during the inspection in January 2020, this has not been consistent. Staffing changes within the SEND Partnership have led to challenges in the efficient delivery of the SEND system. This has been compounded by the Covid pandemic and managing the response.

The SEND summary self-evaluation shared with Ofsted in June 2022 as part of the annual conversation outlines the following impact (what difference have we made?) and next steps (what do we still need to do?);

What difference have we made?

- Increasing the specialist education placements available through mainstream SEND Hubs and a new Special Free School - Keystone Academy (YES Trust) opening Sept 22.
- Progress and attainment data for pupils with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)s remains above national average (KS4).
- 56% Year 6 to 7 phase transfer reviews completed (48% for all EY/Primary)
- EHCP QA standards co-produced and now used in moderation of all new EHC plans.
- Secured joint funding (CCG/LA) for the implementation of Talk Boost across Early Years (EY), KS1 and 2.
- Developing a broader universal offer as part of the Neurodevelopmental (ND) pathway development and working with the CCG to resolve the clinical assessment approach to be used.
- Continued to provide additional high needs funding to 332 CYP pre-statutory assessment to

enable improved outcomes.

- Supported attendance levels to remain in line with national despite the pandemic challenges.
- Reduced the number of exclusions (FTE/PEX) experienced by Children and Young People (CYP) with SEND during 2020/21.

What do we still need to do?

- Finalise the SEND accelerated action plan including WSoA and SEND Strategy key priorities.
- Increase the variety of preventative interventions and targeted use of finance to build capacity within the Early Years, schools and 16-25-year sector to effectively identify and meet the needs of children and young people with SEND so they all consistently achieve great outcomes.
- Continue to improve the achievement of all children and young people with SEND (particularly at SEND Support) across all phases of education, including promoting opportunities to develop independence and preparation for employment.
- Implement the workforce development programme across the partnership to enhance the partnership approach to delivering the best outcomes for CYP with SEND.
- Develop a CYP participation strategy across the People's Directorate and ensure the involvement from CYP with SEND.
- Re-design the SEND assessment team processes and systems to ensure maximum efficiency and minimise staffing costs as forecasting predicts continuous growth in demand for statutory services up to 2030.
- Continue to improve the breadth and diversity of provision available in Shropshire, or close to Shropshire, so that children and young people can attend local placements instead of out of borough or in-borough independent special schools, whilst ensuring outcomes identified in their EHC plans continue to improve.
- Develop focussed recovery plans to eliminate the Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) and ND pathway waiting lists over an agreed time period and monitor the delivery of the plans via the SEND Partnership Board.

2. Recommendations

- Note the report and appendices.
- Seek assurance that the SEND Partnership is working towards the objectives of its written statement of action.
- Identify any areas of concern for the portfolio holder.
- Request a further update in 6 months following the final draft of the accelerated action plan and impact this is making to improve the experience and outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

3. Report

Background

In January 2020, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission conducted a joint inspection of the local area of Shropshire to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the disability and special educational needs reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. In particular the inspection sought to evaluate the effectiveness of the local area in;

- identifying children and young people's special educational needs and/or disabilities
- meeting the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities and
- improving outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Following the inspection, Ofsted and the CQC raised significant concerns about the effectiveness of the local area to meet the needs of these children, in particular:

- Inconsistent strategic leadership and weak strategic planning across the area, most notably in the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), including the ineffective use of data to accurately commission and plan services.
- The lack of inclusion of health services' input into the area's SEND action plan.
- Significant waiting times for large numbers of children and young people on the autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) diagnostic pathways.
- Significant waiting times for those needing assessment and treatment from the speech and language therapy service.
- Inconsistency in the quality of input from education, health and care into education, health and care (EHC) assessment and planning.
- The high rate of exclusions for children and young people with an EHC plan and the high rate of repeat fixed-term exclusions for those receiving SEND support.

The inspection report is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

Shropshire Council and its partners were therefore required to produce and submit a written statement of action (WSOA) to explain how they would tackle these areas of weakness. The completed statement is attached as Appendix 2.

The WSoA focuses on the six priority areas for change as listed in paragraph 3.2 above and provides an action plan to deliver the required improvements. The intended impact of these improvements is also included within each priority area. The statement also explains how the SEND partnership has strengthened its governance arrangements following the inspection.

The People Overview Committee considered a draft of the WSoA at its meeting in September 2020 and the Health and Wellbeing Board reviewed the final WSoA in January 2021. It endorsed the statement of action, the new governance model and the priorities detailed in the plan. It asked the service to provide a further update in due course to the committee and the Health and Wellbeing Board on its work to implement the plan.

Delivering the action plan

Progress in delivering the statement is overseen by the SEND Partnership Board and reviewed in a series of review meetings with the Department for Education and NHS England. In order to support delivery of the action plan, Shropshire Council and its partners have carried out a number of actions according to the following priority areas.

Inconsistent strategic leadership and weak strategic planning across the area, most notably in the CCG, including the ineffective use of data to accurately commission and plan services

- The partnership has reorganised itself under a new governance structure as contained in the WSoA. This includes joint oversight of SEND agenda from CCG and health providers through strategic and partnership board. This is now being strengthened with the establishment of the Quality Assurance Group (QAG).
- Recruitment of a new Assistant Director for Education and SEND Service Manager. These officers started in February & March this year
- Production of a new SEND strategy in April 2021.
- Production of Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) completed.

The lack of inclusion of health services' input into the area's SEND action plan.

- The appointment of a joint commissioner with Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin CCG is creating a market position statement to understand the provision available to people in Shropshire.
- CCG involvement in producing the WSoA has resulted in greater health involvement in all workstreams.
- The CCG has contributed required data to the JSNA

Significant waiting times for large numbers of children and young people on the ASD and ADHD diagnostic pathways.

The service is developing a different model to support children, with intervention taking place while it is decided whether or not assessment and diagnosis would be best for the child. This model is based on an approach pioneered by Coventry SEND and is attached at Appendix 3.

- Work is also underway to recruit 2 higher learning teaching assistants and a senior educational psychologist.

Significant waiting times for those needing assessment and treatment from the speech and language therapy service.

- Workstream established to ensure consistency of approach and to support whole system including provider to secure improvement. Place- based consultations undertaken with staff, parents and young people.
- Speech and language therapy (SALT) advice line, handbook and Facebook page launched. Remote SALT service offer including parent/ educator training.

Inconsistency in the quality of input from education, health and care into EHC assessment and planning.

- Designated Clinical Officer (DCO)/Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO) and SEN lead working together on agreed QA framework and data set, group established with plans to trial QA tool.
- Established process of feedback from SEN2 Panel directly to SEND leads within health providers (ShropComm).
- Developed EHCP standards as foundation step on Quality Assurance ladder
- Health specific CAMHS specific EHCNA exemplar template in development. Training session delivered to 20 CAMHS practitioners; Social Care delivering training to new staff
- 20-week performance remains at 71% despite staff changes.
- Challenges around annual review completion have been acknowledged and a recovery plan developed as part of the accelerated action plan to resolve this issue.

The high rate of exclusions for children and young people with an EHC plan and the high rate of repeat fixed-term exclusions for those receiving SEND support.

- The draft Shropshire Community Inclusion Policy has been presented to the Schools' Central Policy Group on 10th June 2021 and was well received there and will be updated based on changes to recent government guidance on attendance and behaviour.
- A task force approach is in place so that professionals can respond quickly to support children and schools and provide hands on support. A weekly Safeguarding and Behaviour panel has been arranged where issues can be raised, and a solution focused approach is applied to situations.
- A Peer Challenge took place in February 2021; one of the focus areas being permanent exclusions. An action plan has now been drafted based on the issues identified and reducing exclusions for children with SEN.
- Multi-agency collaborative meetings extended to include mainstream schools.
- Tuition Medical & Behaviour Support Service (TMBSS) primary delivery model ratified and ready for implementation from September 2021 (this was delayed from January 2021 due to the pandemic and lockdowns).

Next steps

A Quality and Assurance Group (QAG) has been introduced by the SEND Partnership to drive the effective implementation of the accelerated action plan, resolve issues impacting delivery of better outcomes and experiences for children and young people and assure the operational delivery of the SEND Strategy on behalf of the SEND Partnership Board. This group meets weekly to accelerate progress in the areas outlined in the report.

The Local Area SEND Partnership will be subject to an Ofsted/CQC revisit inspection shortly. There is no date fixed for this, but officers expect it to happen imminently.

An accelerated action plan is in development following a comprehensive self-evaluation exercise in March/April 2022 and submission of the SEND self-evaluation to Ofsted as part of the annual conversation process in June 2022.

The action plan will incorporate analysis of impact to date, feedback from families, schools and young people to enable the secure improvement to the key areas identified by Ofsted in January 2020 and the delivery of the SEND Strategy. This will also include clear reference to the service recovery plans developed by CCG/ICS commissioned service providers to ensure service waiting lists are eliminated over an agreed time period.

Risk assessment and opportunities appraisal

(NB This will include the following: Risk Management, Human Rights, Equalities, Community, Environmental consequences and other Consultation)

- Transfer from the CCG to ICS on the 1st July 2022 and the clarity, consistency and accountability around regional vs local commissioning arrangements.
- Significant waiting lists remain for both the Speech and Language service and BeeU (CAMHS) services.
- Significant work remains to implement a clear clinical diagnostic pathway for neurodiverse children and young people 0-25.
- Further review and remodelling of SEND processes within Shropshire Council are required to ensure a highly efficient and effective Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessment and annual review process.
- The SEND Partnership hold a risk register which is updated by the workstreams and then reviewed by the SEND Partnership Board.

Financial implications

(Any financial implications of note)

- £70,000 of funding to support the deployment and implementation of the KS2 Talkboost programme was secured through the High Needs Block Dedicated Schools Grant (HNB DSG) and reported to Schools Forum in June 2022.
- Further review and remodelling of SEND processes within Shropshire Council are required to ensure a highly efficient and effective Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessment and annual review process. This will include capacity to deliver the EHCP annual review recovery plan where EHC plans have not been updated either annually and/or to the quality standard introduced by the SEND Partnership.
- CCG commissioners are working with providers to develop service recovery plans. These are in development for Speech and Language Therapy services and the BeeU (CAMHS) service, with other service recovery plans considered for development based on the risk analysis/waiting list position of the service. Local Authority SEND leads and NHS England advisors are engaged with CCG commissioners to support this process.

Climate Change Appraisal as applicable

Not applicable for this report

Where else has the paper been presented?

System Partnership Boards	SEND Strategic Board and SEND Partnership Board
Voluntary Sector	
Other	

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) or your organisational lead e.g. Exec lead or Non-Exec/Clinical Lead (List of Council Portfolio holders can be found at this link: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=130>)

Cllr. Kirstie Hurst-Knight, Portfolio Holder for Children and Education

Appendices

- Ofsted/CQC Local Area SEND Inspection Report for Shropshire – Appendix 1
- Shropshire Written Statement of Action Final Nov 20 – Appendix 2
- Coventry's Neurodevelopmental Pathway: A Guide for Parents – Appendix 3