

LOCAL AREA SEND INSPECTION – UPDATE ON WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ACTION

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1. Summary

- 1.1 The Children and Families Act 2014 requires that all English local authorities and CCGs work together to identify need and deliver a coordinated offer across education, health and social care for children and young people (aged 0 – 25) who have a special educational need and/or disability (SEND).
- 1.2 Shropshire Council works in partnership with the CCG and other key stakeholders including parents and carers to develop a co-produced SEND offer meets the needs of children and young people; supporting them to achieve their full potential and prepare for life as an adult.
- 1.3 A joint SEND CQC and Ofsted Inspection took place in Shropshire across education, health and social care between 27 January and 31 January 2020. The final letter, published on 6 May 2020, identified many strengths but also highlighted those areas that required further development as well as some areas of significant concern.
- 1.4 As a result of the findings of this inspection and in accordance with the Local Area Inspection Framework the Chief Inspector determined that a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) is required because significant areas of concern were identified.
- 1.5 A report on the inspection was presented to the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee on 29th July 2020 when it was agreed that the People Overview Committee would monitor the implementation of SEND within Shropshire. The People Overview

Committee considered this in a closed session at their meeting on 30th September 2020.

- 1.6 The WSoA was agreed to be fit for purpose by Ofsted/CQC in November and is now presented to the Health & Wellbeing Board for their information and consideration.
- 1.7 In addition to the WSoA the SEND strategy has also been refreshed, this is attached at Appendix C. This strategy is co-produced and reflects the aspirations of the Shropshire SEND community. The strategy will support the Local Area to focus on those aspects that are important to children and young people with SEND and their families. The Strategy aspires to eradicate inequalities and support Shropshire children and young people with SEND to live the life that others have come to expect.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Health & Wellbeing Board endorse the actions contained within the WSoA and the priorities contained within the SEND Strategy
- 2.3 That the Health and Wellbeing Board agree to review progress against the actions, and to receive periodic updates including holding organisations to account as necessary.
- 2.2. That the Health & Wellbeing Board acknowledge and endorses the priority that this work needs to be afforded across the system in order to make the necessary improvements.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

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

- 3.1 Disability is one of recognised characteristics of the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.2 Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) experience a range of health and social care

inequalities. A robust EHC process should assist with improving the co-ordination of services and enhancing their life chances

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from this inspection, in order to address the issues identified it is likely that investment will be required. This has not been quantified at this point in time and will be developed as the WSoA is further developed.
- 4.2 The high rate of school exclusions does impact significantly on the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools grant, and reductions in the rate of exclusions will reduce the high costs placed on this budget.
- 4.3 In order to realise long term savings in the high needs block it is likely that short term investment will be required in order to provide effective support services to schools as part of a multi-agency response to early identification and meeting need. This will be further developed within the WSoA.

5. Background

- 5.1 The Children and Families Act 2014 required local areas to introduce significant reforms with regard to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and placed requirements on local authorities and CCG's to work together to implement Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities up to the age of 25.
- 5.2 Currently within Shropshire the implementation is overseen by the SEND Strategic Board, which feeds into the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 5.3 A joint SEND CQC and Ofsted Inspection took place in Shropshire across health, social care and education between 27 January and 31 January 2020. The inspection is therefore not just of the work of Shropshire Council, but also of the CCG and its commissioned health providers and other key stakeholders. The final letter was published on 6 May 2020 (attached Appendix A).
- 5.4 As a result of the findings of this inspection and in accordance with the Children Act 2004 (Joint Area Reviews) Regulations 2015, the Chief Inspector determined that a Written Statement of Action is required because of the areas for improvement identified. Ofsted have agreed

via a joint meeting with LA and CCG meeting that the date of publication of the Written Statement of Action is September 25th 2020.

- 5.5 The findings of the inspection were discussed in detail at the meeting of the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee held on 29th July 2020, which was attended by the Health lead.
- 5.6 The Performance Management Scrutiny Committee agreed at their meeting on 29th July 2020 that the People Overview Committee should oversee the implementation of SEND in Shropshire. The People Overview Committee considered the WSoA (attached at Appendix B) at a closed session at their meeting on 30th September 2020.
- 5.7 A strategic board has been established of key partners, who will meet at regular intervals to monitor and implement the WSoA.

<p>List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)</p>
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<p>Report to Performance Management Scrutiny Committee 29th July 2020 (“Update on the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Local Area Inspection”) and minutes of that meeting.</p>

<p>Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)</p>

<p>Councillor Ed Potter</p>

<p>Local Member</p>

<p>All Members</p>

<p>Appendices</p>

<p>Appendix A – Ofsted inspection report</p>
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<p>Appendix B – Written Statement of Action (WSoA)</p>
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<p>Appendix C – Draft Shropshire Local Area SEND Strategy</p>
