

Report Title:	SEND Area Inspection Update
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	<i>NO - Part I</i>
Member reporting:	Councillor N Airey, Lead Member for Children's Services
Meeting and Date:	Children's Overview & Scrutiny Panel 20 September 2017
Responsible Officer(s):	Kevin McDaniel, Director of Children's Services
Wards affected:	All

REPORT SUMMARY

1. This report updates the panel on the outcome of the joint local area SEND inspection which took place in July 2017.
2. The inspection undertaken by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission identifies a number of strengths in services for young people with additional needs and / or disabilities. It also identifies a number of areas for improvement.
3. The inspectors found that young people in the Borough do better than their peers nationally in terms of Educational attainment, attendance at school, and their ability to secure gainful employment. They note that services make a great deal of difference to the young people as do many schools and other settings. However they identified that parents find it a continuing challenge to secure the provision they believe their children are entitled to and the systems and processes in use across the area make this inconsistent.
4. This report sets out a draft action plan to be led by the local authority, health colleagues, school leaders and the Parent Forum (PACIP) to make changes so that every young person with additional needs or disability has equal access to the services they require to succeed.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION: That panel notes the report and:

- i) Requests a further update on progress in March 2018.

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 This report updates the panel on the outcome of the joint local area Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) inspection which took place in July 2017. The inspection was undertaken by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission between the 3rd and 7th July 2017. The inspection judged the effectiveness of services across the area in implementing the disability and special Educational Needs reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.
- 2.2 The intention of the reforms were to put the child at the centre of a joined up planning process to ensure they had ease of access to services regardless of how they were provided.
- 2.3 The reforms require extensive co-production (that is the joint collaboration of professionals, parents and carers and the young people themselves) to shape the individual service for a young person through their plan and the wider service delivery for the cohort of young people with additional needs.
- 2.4 The inspectors visited 8 schools and settings, including a nursery, mainstream and special schools, and a college. They spoke to 150 parents through various means and interviewed senior leaders and service managers within the local authority, the CCG, local health providers and schools.
- 2.5 The judgement from the inspection was contained in a letter published on the Ofsted website on Friday the 1st of September 2017. A copy of this letter is included in Appendix A.
- 2.6 The local authority is working with school leaders, health colleagues and parents to prepare an action plan which will build on the strengths identified to tackle the areas of weakness. This will lead to a steering group with representatives of the Authority, Health, parents, early years, primary, secondary and post 16 reps with geographic coverage in Maidenhead, Ascot and Windsor areas. This group will have the remit to represent the constituent areas and direct the development of the plan. The membership and Terms of Reference will be complete by the end of September.
- 2.7 The action plan focuses on:
 - Strategic leadership to set up the co-production model across all services.
 - A new inclusion charter which sets the baseline expectations for each family and every child with additional needs.
 - A communication campaign to promote the refreshed local offer.
 - An overhaul of the EHCP process as currently used by the borough led by a steering group of schools health professionals and LA officers which ensures young people and their parents are heard throughout the process.
 - Early decisions to sit with the frontline professionals in schools, the borough and health providers to ensure needs are met at the earliest opportunity.
- 2.8 One area of development is the way in which we work across the area to shape services and processes. It is therefore important that the action plan is produced collaboratively with parents, schools and health professionals. This process started on Thursday the 8th of September and will continue throughout the month. An early draft of the action plan areas is included in

Appendix B, please note this excludes dates and owners until agreement is confirmed.

- 2.9 The headline change as part of the Act was the introduction of Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs) and the need to convert to them from former Statements of Educational Need. The borough had approximately 850 such statements and at the 1st of September 2017 has just 72 to start conversion before the deadline. We are confident that this transfer will be complete on time however the inspectors expressed concern about the ability to maintain recent improvements in quality while meeting that deadline.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The findings of the inspection note that young people achieve well in our borough and they are safe.
- 3.2 However the inspection team are concerned that there is a lack of pace that the borough will not complete the required transfer of Educational statements to education health and care plans by the deadline of April 2018 and that there are some significant differences in the service received by young people across the area.
- 3.3 The inspectors have therefore judged that they have serious concerns about the implementation of the reforms and have required the Borough work with the Clinical Commissioning Group to produce a written statement of action to be monitored by the department for Education. The first meeting to look at the proposed action plan will take place in the first week of October 2017.
- 3.4 Officers in the children services directorate will continue to collaborate with health schools and parents to develop the action plan ahead of the meeting with the Department for Education set for the 1st week in October 2017. Subject to the agreement of the Department for Education it is expected that the finalised action plan will be published to all schools and parents in October and be reviewed by the new steering group six times a year.
- 3.5 It is proposed therefore that this panel is advised of progress on a 6 monthly basis.

Table 2: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Action plan approved by DFE.		31 October 2017			
Action plan considered complete by DFE.		31 July 2018			

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 The costs of delivering the services are met from the Dedicated Schools Grant, currently £109m which is split between specific need services and the budget provided to every school. It will be important to ensure an appropriate balance is maintained when designing the required actions to improve access to services for young people with additional needs.
- 4.2 The Schools Forum will need to monitor the financial implications carefully and help strike the appropriate balance.
- 4.3 It is likely that the local authority will require additional funds to deliver their contribution to the action plan. This will be developed during September for consideration by the Lead Member for Children's Services.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The local authority has a responsibility to ensure young people with additional needs have access to an appropriate education as set out in regulations for EHC plans. Health and schools have responsibilities to provide services to meet the needs of young people in the area. The inspection judgement is a shared responsibility with the Clinical Commissioning Group.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The Education health and care plan process is just one part of the support for children with additional needs. The inspection considered also those young people who require support in school before meeting the threshold for a long-term support plan. It will be important that any changes in our action plan to maintain that balance to ensure that all young people receive the support they require.

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 7.1 There are no impacts arising from this report, however any changes proposed as a result of the action plan must consider the needs of those impacted, especially those with a disability in this case.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 All schools were invited to a briefing on the 8 September, with 39 different schools in attendance. There will be further meetings with schools and their SENCOs. A meeting with the Parent Forum will also take place in September.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 9.1 The timetable will be confirmed when the Action plan is finalised and agreed with the Department for Education.

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 Appendix A: “Joint local area SEND inspection in Windsor and Maidenhead” letter.
- 10.2 Appendix B: Draft Action Plan

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 11.1 No background documents.

12. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Commented & returned
Cllr N Airey	Lead Member/ Principal Member/Deputy Lead Member	11/9/17	11/9/17
Alison Alexander	Managing Director	11/9/17	
	Strategic Director		
	Strategic Director		
	Section 151 Officer		
	Head of HR		
	Other e.g. external		