

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Action Plan Education, Skills and Growth Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Reason for review:

Nationally, the number of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) increased to 1.37 million pupils in 2020. During the Covid-19 pandemic the attainment gap between SEND and average pupils was reported to have increased by over 20% across all age groups at a national level.*

Locally, Bracknell Forest Council and its partners recently underwent a SEND inspection. The Panel intends to scrutinise how leaders are responding to the outcome of the inspection by tracking the SEND Action Plan. In particular, the Panel is keen to understand how inclusive the Council and its partners have been when developing support and services for children and young people with SEND and their parents/carers, to ensure Bracknell Forest provision enables children and young people with SEND to lead fulfilling lives.

The Panel acknowledges supporting SEND children throughout the Covid-19 pandemic temporarily impacted on the local authority's ability to provide services and support.

*[Special educational needs and disability: an analysis and summary of data sources - May 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Objectives/scope

Key questions:

- Do we have an agreed local vision for our children's services including those with SEND? What is the policy on inclusion?
- Do we know how we are performing in SEND? (by understanding our data and need, for example?)
- How are our parents voices heard and responded to? What mechanisms do we have in place?
- How do we hear the voice of children and Young people and can we show how they influence our decisions?
- What are our mechanisms for joint commissioning and multi-agency working and do we know if they are delivering what families need?

Stage one – scrutinise the following information:

- Bracknell Forest's Special Needs and Disability Improvement Strategy 2020-2021
- Bracknell Forest's SEND Action Plan 2021
- Data regarding attainment and attendance (potentially exclusions) of children and young people with SEND
- The number of children and young people with EHCPs compared to national and comparator authorities, specifically looking at age of identification and protected characteristics

Stage two – develop key lines of enquiries by:

- Reviewing recent local authority SEND inspections and interviewing representatives in other local authorities
- Interviewing lead officers in Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust; East Berkshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Bracknell Forest Council

- Interviewing the Bracknell Forest Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning
- Interviewing third sector organisations (including Berkshire Autistic Society and Pinc
- Interviewing representatives from Bracknell's Child Development Centre
- Interviewing parent/carer forum representatives (National Network Parent Carer Forums, NNPCF)
- Interviewing children and young people with SEND
- Visiting schools with specialist provision and interviewing education representatives i.e. Head Teachers, governors, SENCOs and Family Support Workers

At the conclusion of this work the Panel will produce a report highlighting its findings and propose recommendations to the Executive.

Delivery methods: Desk top reviews; interviews, case studies, observation, mystery shopping and school visits.

Council theme: Education and Skills

Council team: People

Review due: May 2021

Proposed by: Cllr Mrs Gill Birch

Equalities Impact Assessment

This review will specifically impact children with special educational needs and disabilities and their parents/carers.

Financial and legal implications

There are potentially legal and financial implications of any recommendations arising from this review which will be fully addressed in the review report.

Climate Change implications

The review may have an impact on climate change issues. Any issues will be identified during the review and addressed in the final report.