

Bracknell Forest Local Area

Written Statement of Action (WSoA)

for Children and Young People
with Special Educational Needs
and Disability (SEND) aged 0-25

June 2022



29 November 2021 to 3 December 2021, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC), conducted a joint inspection of the local area of Bracknell Forest to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. On 22 February 2022 they issue their findings that the Local Area (the Local Authority and the relevant CCG) needed to produce a Written Statement of Action (WSOA).

The Written Statement of Action sets out our plan to address the significant areas of weakness and other improvements identified by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission. The local area is required to submit the WSOA by 7 June 2022.

**19 areas
identified as
requiring
development**

**4 areas identified
as requiring
improvement**

**9 areas identified
as being areas of
significant
weakness**

Our Written Statement of Action will address the 9 areas of significant weakness:

- 1) Lack of a clear, co-produced strategy for how the much-needed improvements and change will be brought about
- 2) Parents' and carers' lack of confidence in the education, healthcare and social opportunities for children and young people with SEND, alongside their frustration at the poor communication they experience from the SEND team
- 3) Lack of coproduction with children and young people with SEND and their families, and with professionals. This includes limited parental representation at strategic level
- 4) Lack of appropriate educational provision for a significant proportion of children and young people with SEND in the borough
- 5) The lack of support available to children and young people while waiting excessive amounts of time to access occupational therapy services. Also, the lack of capacity in the occupational therapy team, resulting in delays in their contributions to EHC plans
- 6) The high number of children and young people with SEND who reach a mental health crisis because of a lack of timely support to prevent further escalation
- 7) The lack of established, effective panel arrangements to decide next steps in the Graduated Approach used for pupils who receive SEND support
- 8) Insufficient long-term planning for young people as they move into adulthood
- 9) Parents' and carers' lack of awareness of available advice, support, or social care provision. The lack of age-appropriate social opportunities for older children and young people with SEND

Developing the WSOA

The SEND Improvement Partnership Board had previously been working on improvements across 5 priority areas. These areas were reviewed in light of the inspection report, and 5 new working groups were established. The workstreams were tasked with addressing the 9 areas of significant weakness as a priority, as well as all areas for improvement and development identified by the inspection.

A

Governance

Effective leadership, governance, and accountability of SEND

B

**Commissioning
and resource**

Effective use of resources, including the High Needs Block

C

**Provision and
support**

Implementing early support and intervention

D

Coproduction

Strengthen and improve coproduction with children, young people, their parents and carers and professionals

E

Transition

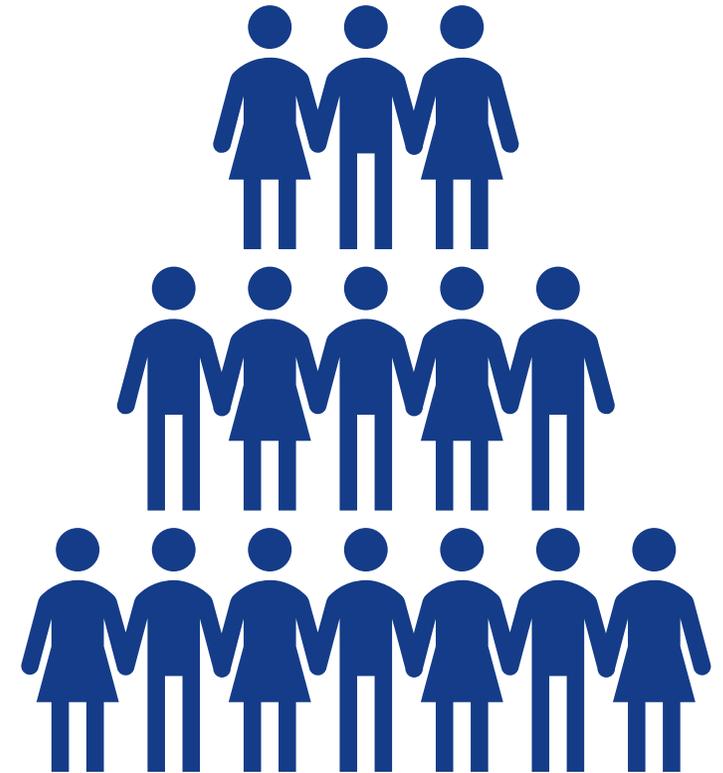
Children and young people to have successful transitions at all stages

Stakeholders

The following stakeholders have been instrumental in developing the action plan, through their attendance at the weekly workstream meetings:

- Bracknell Forest Council
- Frimley Integrated Care System (ICS)
- Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (BHFT)
- Schools
- Further education
- Parents and carers
- Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)

A focus group has taken place to capture the voice of children and young people. We are committed to developing a SEND Youth Forum which will be one way in which we continue to involve children and young people in the delivery of our action plan.



Co-producing our WSOA

Each of the 5 workstream groups has met weekly since late March. The chairs of each workstream group have also met weekly to feedback and plan actions and objectives for the following week to ensure consistency of approach. The weekly focus of each workstream meeting is outlined below.

April 2022

SHAPING THE VISION

- Where are we now?
- What does good look like for children and families?
- What actions are required to deliver improvement?
- How will we know? What impact will the action have?
- What are the building blocks needed to underpin the work?
 - Shaping effective processes
 - System development and partnership working
 - Strategy and governance

May 2022

DEVELOPING THE ACTION PLAN

- Refining of actions to ensure they are SMART
- Identify who is responsible for delivery of each action
- Identify quick wins and priority actions
- Identify key performance indicators
- Workshop to review “do the objectives and actions fully address the areas of significant weakness?”
- Consider timescales and resource requirements

Alongside development of the action plan, the narrative section of the WSOA is being developed

What are our strengths?

In addition to the areas for improvement identified by Ofsted, there were also areas of strength, outlined below:

- Professionals in the child development centre (CDC) have positive working relationships, and communication between them is strong. Consequently, families' needs are identified early and are considered in a holistic way
- Education and healthcare professionals who support children in the early years are well equipped to identify children with SEND
- Children in early years generally get off to a good start. This is because of the effective identification of needs and well-targeted support
- Education and health professionals have benefited from useful training from a range of other professionals across health and social care, including school nurses and mental health practitioners
- Parents talk of the undeniable positive impact of the SEND information, advice and support service (IASS)
- The local offer website contains useful information. Recent improvements to the website have incorporated parents' requests. Post-16 learners have recently worked with the SEN team to review and improve information available for them
- Once the needs of children and young people with SEND are identified, education leaders have good knowledge about how well they are achieving
- The work of education leaders to support and improve all schools is leading to appropriate support strategies which help some children and young people with SEND to improve their academic outcomes
- There have been no permanent exclusions for children and young people with EHCPs in the last five years. There has also been a reduction in fixed-period exclusions for this group of children and young people

Progress pre- and post-inspection

Prior to the SEND inspection, work had already begun to review our post-pandemic services and make improvements

Pre-inspection improvements

- Work on the development of a capital strategy and school places plan
- Design of new panel arrangement processes and Decision Making Groups (DMGs)
- SEND sufficiency analysis to understand needs
- Design of the SEN service structure to ensure sufficient capacity and resource
- Additional staff capacity secured for the SEN service to address the backlog of EHCPs
- Completed our self-evaluation and action plan for service improvement in preparation for the inspection, which was praised by Ofsted

Post-inspection improvements

- The capital strategy and school places plan has been agreed by Executive
- Discussions with schools regarding Special Resource Provision (SRPs)
- The new panel arrangements (DMGs) have been embedded and an evaluation will take place next month
- The Parent Carer Forum has been commissioned to provide support to parents and work with us to co-produce our WSOA and ongoing activity
- Root cause of some communications issues identified and resolved (telephony)
- More than doubled completion rates of EHCPs within statutory timelines (from 2020 to 2021)
- Head teachers engaged in SEND panels and SEN recruitment

Key elements of the action plan

In developing our action plan, the workstream groups have identified some cross cutting themes that will be key to the successful delivery of our improvement plan:



COMMUNICATION: We will improve our communication with children and families, setting clear expectations around how and when we will contact people and ensuring these are adhered to



CO-PRODUCTION: We will ensure that coproduction is embedded within everything we do; from developing strategy to individual EHC plans



DECISION MAKING: We will fully embed, and regularly review, our Decision Making Groups (panels) to ensure consistent, transparent and robust decision making arrangements



IMPROVED COORDINATION: We will strive towards the 'Tell us Once' approach, ensuring a collaborative and coordinated approach to accessing services and support



PROVISION: We will continue to focus on developing sufficient, appropriate, in-borough provision for children and young people with SEND

Action plan summary (1)

The publishable version of the WSOA is a high level strategic document. Sitting behind the published WSOA is a more detailed action plan that will support delivery of the work.

Improvement area 1

- Develop a new SEND strategy that outlines how the improvements and change will be made

Improvement area 2

- Develop communication charter that aligns with corporate standards and outlines what communication parents, carers and professionals can expect
- Redesign and improve the customer journey
- Ensure that as new processes and systems are developed that they have communication points built in
- Develop a skilled workforce, with sufficient capacity within the service to ensure legal compliance

Improvement area 3

- Embed co-production with parents, carers, children and young people and professionals
- Develop a SEND youth forum
- Involvement in reviewing of systems and processes re EHCPs

Action plan summary (2)

Improvement area 4

- Increase appropriate in borough provision, including the development of an SEMH hub
- Driving up quality of provision of current provision in the borough
- Develop robust data sets to support projection planning

Improvement area 5

- Review of the commissioning of integrated therapies to achieve a reduction of waiting times in line with national standards
- Improve the consistency of input from OT services into the statutory assessment process for an EHCP
- Understand gaps in provision for CYP waiting for OT services and develop resources to address this

Improvement area 6

- Review current early intervention for mental health offer and identify gaps to inform commissioning plans
- Programme of training to parents, carers and professionals to provide early intervention and support to children and young people

Action plan summary (3)

Improvement area 7

- Embed new panel arrangements (Decision Making Groups) to drive quality of early intervention, ensuring vulnerable children and young people get their needs met early
- Establish a process for timely reporting on conclusions of panels to parents and schools

Improvement area 8

- Develop clear and robust employment and/or education pathways for young people with SEND
- Early planning to support seamless transitions, to begin at age 14
- Influence and broaden the offer within the further education sector
- Clear support offer for children and young people with SEND who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET

Improvement area 9

- Continued improvement to the Local Offer website
- Raise awareness of the advice and support available via the Local Offer
- Influence and increase social opportunities for children and young people with SEND



Final edits, proof reading and design work to take place, accommodating any feedback from today's Executive meeting



The WSOA has been signed off by the Frimley ICS and is currently going through the final stage of the governance process within the council, leading up to the submission date of **7 June 2022**



Once the document is signed off by Ofsted and the CQC, delivery of the action plan will continue as scheduled in the WSOA. The SEND Improvement Partnership Board (SIPB) will monitor and scrutinise the delivery of the plan. Formal governance of delivery will be provided by CMT (bi-monthly) and the Executive (quarterly)



The WSOA output will also be monitored by the DfE and CQC, on behalf of Ofsted, to ensure the action plan is being delivered and is on track to achieve its aims and timelines