

DfE progress review meeting

Bracknell Forest Written Statement of Action

10 October 2022



General update

June to September 2022

- Focus during this quarter has been on putting foundations in place and getting the basics right
- There is now a permanent team of Bracknell Forest Council SEND officers in place, with a new permanent manager
- The SEND team launched a new set of service standards on 3 October
- We have begun participation in the DfE's Delivering Better Value in SEND programme and engaging with the Rise Partnership
- We are working with the DfE Capital Funding Programme to identify funding for additional SEND places



Progress update – area 1

Lack of a clear, co-produced strategy for how the much needed improvements and change will be brought about



Progress to date

- A SEND strategy co-design approach and toolkit was developed in July in collaboration with the Bracknell Forest Parent Carer Forum
- Several engagement sessions took place in August with children, young people and families, both online and in local parks
- Engagement and co-design with Bracknell Forest Council staff, schools and health partners began in September and will continue throughout October
- A draft 2023-2025 SEND strategy is in draft form, based on the co-design work that has taken place

Next steps

- The deadline for finalising the strategy is 30 November 2022. Once the co-design and drafting stage is finalised this month, the strategy will go through the appropriate governance process to be signed off and adopted

Progress update – area 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



Progress to date

- The restructure of the SEND service is complete, meaning we now have a stable, permanent team of SEND officers
- Significant focus has been given to inducting the new staff, with the priority being the development of service standards for communication with families, settings and partners, which went live on 3 October 2022
- The council has worked in partnership with the Parent Carer Forum to co-design a Communication and Co-production Charter
- An infographic has been designed to promote awareness of the Local Offer, IASS, Family Information Service and the Parent Carer Forum, following work done in partnership with the PCF to explore the range of information, advice and guidance accessed by local families

Next steps

- Following the implementation of the SEND team Service Standards on 3 October 2022, leaders will regularly monitor how effective individual team members are at meeting the targets
- Development of a SEND handbook, which is being co-produced with the Parent Carer Forum

Progress update – area 3

Lack of co-production with children and young people with SEND and their families, and with professionals. This includes limited parental representation at strategic level



Progress to date

- The Parent Carer Forum has worked hard to raise the profile of the Forum and increase membership, with events scheduled across the day and evening, using both virtual and face to face approaches
- The Chair of the Parent Carer Forum has been appointed as the co-chair of the SEND Improvement Partnership Board and is also a member of the East Berkshire SEND Committee
- Parent/carer representation has been secured for all project teams working on the delivery of the WSOA actions

Next steps

- Develop a SEND youth forum by 31 December 2022, ensuring children and young people's voices are clearly heard and CYP play a key role in co-production

Progress update – area 4 (1)

Lack of appropriate educational provision for a significant proportion of children and young people with SEND in the borough



Progress to date

- The development of the Capital Strategy for School Place Planning and SEND Provision started in September 2021 and the final areas are now under review, ready for publication in early 2023. This has identified several key areas for development in SEND
- A banding tool has been developed following collaborative work between the council and the Schools Forum High Needs Working group. The banding tool's primary focus supports a consistent and shared understanding of how top up funding is allocated for children and young people with an EHCP
- The process for monitoring pupils in receipt of less than 25 hours of provision has been reviewed and updated, with the first monitoring return requests sent to schools on 1 October

Next steps

- Kennel Lane Special School, awaiting DfE survey 2022 to inform next stage development
- All Saints vacant site: Feasibility study due end of October 2022 will inform next stage of development for SEND provision
- SEMH Hub: working group to agree scope and timeline for implementation. In early stages
- Secondary SRP: planned opening September 2023
- DfE Free school bids for one ASD and one SEMH school to be submitted 21 October 2022. Decision known summer 2023 – **see next slide**

Progress update – area 4 (2)



In October the council submitted a bid to the 2022 DfE free special school capital fund seeking funding for two free special schools

- DfE funding will cover all build and associated costs and no financial match funding is required. Each LA can apply for up to two schools. In addition, ESFA will provide £220,000 to each successful school to support set up costs
- Utilisation of All Saints vacant site proposed
- Second site, DfE will support search and acquisition if required
- Data indicates that we would benefit from two new special schools as outlined below. If funding for only one school is agreed, demand will be for the ASD provision

One ASD special school

to meet the needs of children from KS1 to KS5, creating 100 new special school places in Bracknell Forest

One SEMH special school

to meet the needs of children from KS2 to KS4, creating 70 new specialist placements in Bracknell Forest

Progress update – area 4 (3)



If in borough provision is created, there is significant potential cost avoidance against the High Needs Block

Free school ASD	Number	Commissioned place cost @£10k	Top up @ 20k	Total	Equivalent cost INMSS*	Saving
Year 1	30	£300,000	£600,000	£900,000	£1,800,000	£900,000
Year 2	67	£670,000	£1,340,000	£2,010,000	£4,020,000	£2,010,000
Year 3	100	£1,000,000	£2,000,000	£3,000,000	£6,000,000	£3,000,000

Free School SEMH	Number	Commissioned place cost @£10k	Top up @ 20k	Total	Equivalent cost INMSS*	Saving
Year 1	23	£230,000	£460,000	£690,000	£1,380,000	£690,000
Year 2	45	£450,000	£900,000	£1,350,000	£2,700,000	£1,350,000
Year 3	70	£700,000	£1,400,000	£2,100,000	£4,200,000	£2,100,000

	Annual savings if we secure 2 schools
Year 1	£1,590,000
Year 2	£3,360,000
Year 3	£5,100,000

Progress update – area 5



The lack of support available to children and young people while waiting excessive amounts of time to access OT services. Also, the lack of capacity within the OT team, resulting in delays in their contributions to EHC plans

Progress to date

- Occupational Therapy Service - October; Wait time in Triage – **8 weeks** - reduction from **22 weeks** in June – currently on track to reach our aim of 2 weeks in December 2022.
- Occupational Therapy Service October; Longest wait for assessment - **98 weeks** – reduction from **174 weeks** in June - currently on track to be below 18 months by 31/12/22 & below 12 months by 31/3/23.
- Occupational Therapy Service October; Longest wait for Sensory Processing Workshop (SPW) - **36 weeks** – reduction from **85 weeks** in June (*1 child/young person at 45 weeks as the parent does not have access to the internet at home – working with partners to enable this parent to attend – parent/carer has been invited into school to join the workshop*).
- Occupational Therapy waiting times and EHCNA compliance data has been shared at SIPB and will be a quarterly standing agenda item.
- Mapping of what support/information is already available to families whilst they are waiting for Occupational Therapy has been completed.
- There has been consistent representation from health at Bracknell DMG SEND panel.

Next steps

- Continue to work to reduce the number of children waiting over 53+ for the Occupational Therapy service and EHCNA compliance. Ensure any child/young person with outstanding advice/input receives it.
- Work with the Parent/Carer Forum to review what current information/advice/support is available for those waiting for Occupational Therapy service.
- Continue work around the Integrated Therapies Project.
- Review impact of health attendance at Panel.
- Continue to increase staffing within the Integrated Therapies Service.

Progress update – area 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



Progress to date

A number of actions within this Priority are scheduled for Spring 2023 onwards as outlined within the Written Statement of Action (WSOA). However, this does not mean that work is not already underway to transform and improve the local support/services that children, young people and their families receive in regards to all aspects of their emotional wellbeing.

- The ICS has increased capacity within the Children and Young Peoples Portfolio (CYPP) and has welcomed Ali Woodiwiss into post. Ali has joined as Head of Transformation and will oversee all the work taking place across mental health, neurodevelopment and SEND agendas.
- Within the Children and Young Peoples Portfolio (CYPP) Frimley ICS has identified the transformation of children and young people's mental health services as one of the five priorities for 2022-2024.
- Within the ICS, children and young people's mental health also now has a dedicated board and steering group which feeds into the Frimley CYP Transformation Board.
- A date has been set in October 2022 for partners to come together to explore a common understand of the term 'mental health crisis'.

Next steps

- Mapping out of all actions and meetings across the three East Berkshire authorities required to deliver the WSOA. This will better inform what activity needs to happen at place and what needs to happen at system.
- Undertake deep dive into several mental health crisis cases to consider early flags, to increase understanding of early identifiers, to develop services to support early intervention, and avoid missed opportunities.
- Map what current support is available and what resources are accessible to children, young people, parents, and carers in relation to SEMH, neurodiversity and those who are awaiting access to specialist services.

Progress update – area 7



The lack of established, effective panel arrangements to decide next steps in the graduated approach used for pupils who receive SEND support

Progress to date

- Terms of Reference for the Decision Making Group have been circulated to schools, the SENco forum and the Parent Carer Forum
- Meetings have been held with schools and parents to communicate the DMG approach and ensure all parties are aware of the communication flow
- A review of the DMGs has been conducted by a consultant and the findings have informed improvements
- Each case discussed at panel is RAG rated for the quality of evidence provided and systems around notifying schools, families and finance about decisions have been tightened

Next steps

- A full review of the DMG panel process by the council's QA team and an analysis of the RAG rating of each case to allow us to identify areas that have improved and those requiring further advice or training

Progress update – area 8

Insufficient long-term planning for young people as they move into adulthood



Progress to date

- SEND Officers are now attending children's and adult social care transition planning meetings to discuss young people approaching adulthood
- Approaching Adulthood working group activities are in progress and working towards a late October completion date.
- Economic Development meetings with LEP and providers are taking place, with SEND young people's pathways as a high priority.
- FE providers are now attending strategy meetings and engaging with officers in developing appropriate pathways for young people post 16 and beyond.

Next steps

- Work has begun to map the current educational provision, courses and other pathways for young people with SEND moving into adulthood. This will further identify any strong areas for building on and gaps that will need to be filled. This work will be picked up with the Approaching Adulthood group and incorporated into the work of the working party.

Progress update – area 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

Progress to date

- A new families e-newsletter has launched to create a channel to promote key information for families throughout the borough. This provides an opportunity to include SEND messaging and information to a wider audience
- In partnership with the Parent Carer Forum we have produced an infographic to promote the Local Offer, IASS, Family Information Services and the Parent Carer Forum
- The first of a regular 6-weekly Short Breaks newsletter was distributed in September

Next steps

- The working party for Preparation for Adulthood will consider the social needs of young people with SEND as well as their education, employment and training needs.
- Access to more hobbies and special interests in the borough for young people with more complex needs will be a priority area.