

Cabinet 26 July 2023	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: James Thomas, Corporate Director of Children and Culture	Classification: Unrestricted
SEND Improvement Board Annual Report 2022/23	

Lead Member	Cllr Maium Talukdar (Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning)
Originating Officer(s)	James Thomas, Corporate Director of Children and Culture Lisa Fraser, Director of Education
Wards affected	All wards
Key Decision?	No
Forward Plan Notice Published	21/04/2023
Reason for Key Decision	This report has been reviewed as not meeting the Key Decision criteria.
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	Accelerate Education

Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the progress and impact of SEND improvement work during 2022/23. The report will show how NHS Northeast London and the Council have been working together with other partners across the local area to deliver on priorities set out in the SEND Strategy and SEND Improvement Plan.

The report includes input from children & young people and parent & carer representatives.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the contents of the SEND Improvement Board Annual Report 2022/23

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 Not applicable.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

2.1 Not applicable.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Tower Hamlets SEND Improvement Board (SIB) Annual Report provides an overview of key achievements in 2022/23 and priorities for improvement in 2023/24 as well as work to address areas of significant weakness as identified by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).
- 3.2 The report features an introduction from the Chair and Vice Chair of the SIB, as well as reflections on the year from the Chair of the Independent Parent and Carers Forum and the Chair of the 'Our Time' Young Person's Forum. Contextual and performance data is also included.
- 3.3 The report is organised around the five priorities of the SEND Strategy (2020-24), with sections devoted to summarising the difference made on the ground for young people and their families, including examples of *You Said We Did* actions. The report also includes two case studies setting out where good practice and collaborative working has made a difference to young people with SEND and their parents.
- 3.4 Areas of significant progress during 2022/23 include:
- 'You Said, We Did' reporting has embedded across the local area, with a mechanism of quarterly feedback being established. This information is publicly disseminated to young people, parents and carers via the local offer and communications channels, as well as with the SEND Board. It draws on feedback received from across the SEND system, including the young person and parent / carer issues tracker maintained by the SEND Improvement Board.
 - The positive outcome of the OFSTED focused visit in July 22 looking at arrangements for children in care. Inspectors found - *Social workers .. are effective advocates for disabled children. This practice ensures that children's needs are prioritised, and the quality of their lives improved.*
 - Termly Let's Talk SEND events continue to build momentum, providing an opportunity for parents to feedback to senior leaders directly on the pace of improvement. The event in November co-produced with the SEND Independent Parent Carer Forum, was the most successful yet, with over 80 parents and 30+ professionals in attendance.
 - Parental engagement via social media continues to be an important channel of communication, with a 16% increase in use in 2022 compared to 2021 (across Whats App groups, Instagram, and Twitter)
 - SEND Parent Ambassadors attended 48 events and coffee mornings in 2022 reaching 642 parents and carers.
 - Revision of EHCP templates has ensured quality of content has improved greatly: individual feedback from parents and schools, as well as external review and continued audits confirms this. The Quality Assurance matrix

and framework introduced in Sep 22 continues to show impact, with 90% of new plans sampled accurately reflect advice received.

- Our EHCP timeliness has increased and improved from years before. Our cumulative timeliness is now around National Average (50%), and our month-by-month timeliness is in excess of this, around 70% on-time.
- Take up of Early learning placements has increased to 68% (Jan 23) – the highest ever recorded in Tower Hamlets.
- Average Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) assessment waiting time has reduced to 80 weeks from a high of 144 weeks last year- a reduction of 45%.
- London Autism Clinic commissioned to deliver additional diagnostic assessments; 33 assessments have been completed since Nov 2022-start of contract. ASD Assessment Service waiting list patients prioritised for referral to this new service based on length of wait. Positive feedback from families, with 97% reporting a Good or Excellent service from the London Autism Clinic.
- SEN Co-ordinator (SENCo) and Inclusion Co-ordinator (INCo) training needs survey completed, and work commenced to enhance the training, support and development offer available.
- A multi-agency group has been developed to look at ways in which we can further develop in-house opportunities for vulnerable children and young people.
- An internal apprenticeship programme at Tower Hamlets Council was launched in January 2023. Part of the Local Supported Employment (LSE) initiative, the programme will provide 8 internal apprenticeships for young people with SEND.
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3.5 The annual report also sets out areas for further improvement in 2023/24:

- Insourcing the management of seven leisure centres from April 2024, with a focus on providing a service that benefits hard-to-reach communities, such as Black Asian and Multi-Ethnic (BAME) women and SEND children.
- £13.7m investment to transform youth services - Young Tower Hamlets, will provide a diverse programme of opportunities and support for young people aged 11-19 (25 with SEND) across the borough.
- Work to refresh the SEND Strategy which runs until 2024, will commence.
- Launch SEND communications strategy
- Our Time Forum to work with professionals to develop a Co-production Charter for Young People with SEND – including a survey of young people with SEND to find out about their experiences of Youth Service Providers.
- We have made significant progress in reducing the time it takes for an EHCP assessment, but more work is needed to increase our timeliness further and maintain a performance figure of above national averages, month-by-month, of 70%.
- Continue bringing EHC plan writing in-house to further embed co-production meetings as an integral part of our working.

- Launch of ASD and Social Communication Difficulty Navigation Model in South-West Locality by September 2023; across whole Local Area by January 2024.
- Speech and Language Treatment service for age 3-5s to launch in 2023.
- Implement a pilot project with the Phoenix outreach service, which aims to improve the inclusion of high-needs autistic students in 10 mainstream settings through the development of flexible specialist classroom provisions - 19 schools currently set to benefit from the project.
- To co-produce a LBTH Inclusion Framework document with stakeholders that sets out the provision that must be made ordinarily available for CYP with SEN in mainstream schools to help improve consistency and accountability.
- SEN Service to undertake a wholesale review of its SEND Sufficiency, both specialist provision and placement numbers. This work will factor in analysis of the numerical growth in demand and growth in type of need from recent years, as well as projections for the years ahead and consideration of need within each setting and age range now. This work will take input from LA colleagues, schools, parents and carers, health and social care into consideration to reach a valid projection of SEN need for years to come. A comprehensive plan for how to address each area of need, again through a combination of provision and placements will be made.
- Increase co-production through more young people and parents becoming members of the Transitions Board so that they can participate in all of the groups work alongside the Parents Engagement Service.
- Launch of the pathways document (known as the 'Tube Map') for those who have an EHCP but will be experiencing transition to adulthood without children's social care services. The map will provide information to make all aspects of the pathway to adulthood clearer, including employment, independent living, community inclusion and health pathways.
- 'Let's Work' SEND employment event will take place at The Art Pavilion, E3 4QY. This will be a unique event designed, developed and operated by young people with SEND. The event focuses on stimulating greater engagement between employers and young people.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The SEND improvement work is directly concerned with equalities and by driving improvement work will improve outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:
- Best Value Implications,

- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

5.2 There are no other specific statutory implications.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 requires local authorities to provide services to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and to keep the provision made for these children and young people under review. Section 27 of the Act requires local authorities to consult a wide variety of people and bodies when reviewing their SEND provision, including young people with SEND and their families, and local schools. The proposals set out in this report comply with the above legislation.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE.

Appendices

- SEND Improvement Board Annual Report 2021

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

Linsey Bell, Strategy & Policy Officer - Children and Culture