

SEND Inspection and Improvement Update

Children's and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee

17 October 2024



Aims for this session

- to share what we know about the inspection, including learning from other areas.
- to update on preparedness for the Area SEND inspection
- to update on areas of improvement focus
- to highlight the impact our work has had for children, young people and their families
- to share our priorities for the next 12 months



What we know about the inspection

- we will be inspected by the end of 2025 calendar year.
- TH and Hounslow are final two London local areas with a WSoA left to have an inspection called.
- Ofsted mindful of inspection traffic in local areas and will ensure a 6-month gap between inspections.
- more weight on feedback from children, young people and parents – above what we might say.
- includes evaluation of alternative provision.
- six cases will be selected to test quality and impact of support across all services



What we know about recent inspection outcomes

- of the 41 local areas already inspected:
 - 27% rated positive
 - 46% rated inconsistent
 - 27% rated as having widespread and/or systematic failings
- themes from recent inspections include:
 - EHCP timeliness and quality; absence of child and young person voice
 - annual review timeliness and quality; many EHCPs out of date
 - long waiting times for neurodevelopmental and specialist health assessment
 - lack of multi-agency working and information sharing
 - fewer families benefitting from antenatal and 2-2.5-year-old review visits
 - lack of effective preparing for adulthood support



How we are preparing for inspection

- SEND self-evaluation developed, sense checking with parents, young people and schools
- multi-agency inspection preparation group established.
- risk log regularly updated.
- annex A data and evidence being assembled.
- multi-agency audit team confirmed, and trial run planned.
- data led approach for operational and strategic reporting with a commitment to system-based recording.



Learning from other local areas

- new inspection process is now much more intensive.
- led by experiences of children, young people and parents.
- multi-agency audit process tests effectiveness of partnership working.
- political engagement essential.
- inspectors will not read through all documentation submitted.



Outcome of the last inspection

- local area inspected by Ofsted & CQC in 2021.
- inspectors found that much of the support provided was of a good quality.
- Written Statement of Action required to address the following areas identified for improvement:
 - poor quality and oversight of Education, Health and Care plans including the annual review process.
 - lengthy waiting times for assessment and diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder.
 - fragmentation in the provision of speech and language therapy.
 - weaknesses in communication between area leaders and parents.



Progress against our Written Statement of Action

- recognition from DfE and NHSE on significant progress made since last inspection.
- continued focus on evidencing the impact of our work.
- EHCP advice tracker developed to monitor progress and enable better interagency coordination.
- SEN taskforce undertaking review and audit of all annual reviews to identify gaps and ensure efficient tracking.
- ASD discharge targets consistently exceeded.
- ASD waiting time performance remains stable and has been impacted by sustained high referral rate.
- social communication pre-diagnosis support rolling out across four localities.
- good uptake and positive feedback on social communication parent coaching sessions.
- early years therapies model launched; good progress on school therapies model – 55 schools signed up to Verbo.
- four transition themed Let’s Talk SEND events established annually, reaching a wider range of parents.
- over 300 parent forum members contributed their experiences via drop-in sessions, surveys, or consultations in 23/24; membership has grown from 245 to 682.



Areas of improvement focus

- SEND strategy and 12-month delivery plan
- Self-evaluation
- Inclusion framework
- Resource base review
- SEND front door for information and support

Highlights include:

- **London East Alternative Provision rated Outstanding by Ofsted**
- **Youth justice SEND quality lead status** with child first commendation
- **Relationships with parents, carers, and young people** continue to be strengthened with the expansion of the SEND volunteer programme



What impact are we having?

- since January 2024, 222 EHCPs ceased, or in the process of ceasing

- EHCNA timeliness
– year to date

Within 20wk Timescale?	Total	Total (%)
Completed Outside 20 Weeks	2866	61.7%
Completed Within 20 Weeks	1578	34.0%
OOB/Manual DM	199	4.3%

- average ASD diagnostic waiting time is 92 weeks (below national average)
- 51 families accessed parent coaching offer for social communication with 90% positive feedback.
- over 300 SEND parent forum members contributed their experiences via drop-in sessions, surveys, or consultations in 23/24.
- regular and well-attended Let's Talk SEND events are reaching a wider range of parents.
- of parents surveyed at the last Let's Talk SEND event:
 - 65% agreed that their child's EHCP adequately helps to support the child and their needs.
 - 85% were satisfied or very satisfied with the ongoing monitoring and assessment of their child/young person's needs.



Priorities for the next 12 months...

1. Finalise and implement the SEND and Inclusion strategy; strengthen the SEND Improvement Board
2. Improve internal systems and processes – particularly around EHCP timeliness, annual reviews, quality assurance and our use of data – “on time, every time”
3. Implement the DBV programme, including tackling the DSG cumulative High Needs deficit through a funding review of resource bases and EHCP banding
4. Build on existing early help and intervention systems so that we can both support schools, settings, parents and carers before they feel they need to pursue statutory assessment, particularly targeting the under 5s
5. Launch the Inclusion framework with schools
6. Support children and families at transition points, including Post 16 vocational opportunities
7. Embed innovation including research projects into the prevalence of ASD amongst Somali children, the Phoenix specialist classroom autism pilot
8. Streamline our local offer, co-production and communication channels for parents, carers, children, young people and professionals
9. Secure sufficiency across local provision utilising capital investment and enhancing existing services, particularly to address the increasing demand for specialist provision in autism and speech and language



Questions and discussion

