

Annex B

City of Westminster

Local Area

Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

Self-Evaluation

Executive Summary

Q4 (January to March) 2018/2019

Introduction

Our ambition is to support all children and young people in their journey to adulthood with underpinning principles of early help, personalisation and inclusion, enabling them to achieve their chosen outcomes. Westminster City Council (WCC) and Central London and West London Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) have high ambitions for all children and young people, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). We firmly believe that children and young people, including those with the most complex needs, should have access to good local provision including health care and every opportunity to thrive, whether this be education, employment, independent living or participation in their community.

Over **2014 to 2017**, our local SEND strategy focussed on implementing new assessment pathways; developing the tri-borough SEND Service; engagement with education settings to improve identification and assessment of children and young people with SEND; improving joint working between education, health and social care, including joint commissioning; and, developing relationships and co-production with the parent/carer reference group, led by the Westminster Parent Participation Group, 'Make it Happen'. The impact of the political decision to commit to an integrated tri-borough SEND service in 2014 created an additional pressure at a time when the reforms were being introduced. Initial progress was therefore slower than we would have liked.

In **2018**, the tri-borough arrangements ended but the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and WCC continue to work in a bi-borough arrangement. In the lead up to April 2018 and since that time, the bi-borough SEND Service has focused on completing transfers and maintaining the improvements in the assessment process that started to become evident in 2017-18. A climate of continuous improvement and quality assurance has been introduced and the completion rate for Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessments within 20 weeks, excluding exceptions, now stands at 100% (January to March 2019). In the calendar year 2017, 60.3% assessments were completed within timescales and this increased to 78% in the calendar year 2018. From January to March 2019, 100% of plans were finalised within 20 weeks (excluding exceptions)¹. The Bi-borough is implementing a bespoke case management system for the Service which will be in place by September 2019. CCG commissioning still operates across the tri-borough footprint.

Our **SEND Strategy 2018 - 2021** sets out the following overarching aims:

- support children and young people to achieve the best they can in education and all other aspects of their lives
- support young people to get a job (with support as necessary)
- support children and young people to live as independently as possible (with support as necessary); and
- support children and young people to be healthy, active and visible in their local community.

¹

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 set out specific exemptions from the 20-week timescale e.g. when appointments are missed

This document provides an evaluation of how well the WCC partnership (or 'local area') carries out its statutory duties in relation to children and young people with SEND. It focuses on the effectiveness of the local area in supporting children and young people with SEND, and their families, to achieve the best possible educational, health, social and other outcomes. This evaluation is reviewed on a quarterly basis and provides the basis of a continuous cycle of self-improvement. It forms part of our 'business as usual' quality assurance arrangements and should be read alongside WCC's SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), SEND Strategy and quality assurance framework. See Appendix 1 for our data schedule and Appendix 2 for health related data. This evaluation has been informed by:

- the views of children, young people and their families;
- an extensive review of partnership arrangements, including a review of qualitative and quantitative performance information from commissioners and providers across the partnership and a process of critical review and quality assurance with front-line managers;
- informal benchmarking against the Local Area SEND inspection evaluation schedule;
- informal benchmarking with CCGs in the Central London and West London;
- use of the Council for Disabled Children's audit tool for CCGs.

Leadership and Governance

Progress against the SEND Strategy and the associated action plan are overseen by a bi-borough multi-agency CFA Executive Board which is co-chaired by the bi-borough Executive Director of Children's Services and the Deputy Director of the CCG. This Board includes the Chairs of the parent forums from each borough, providers, schools and settings. See Appendix 3 for the governance structure. Political leaders are involved in shaping the transformation plans and are kept informed of progress through regular Cabinet Member briefings, providing challenge and support. The CFA Executive Board is underpinned by five supporting workstreams:

- Joint Commissioning Board
- Short Breaks and Personalisation
- Preparing for Adulthood
- SEN Support
- Early Years (0 – 5)

Co-production

Co-production is at the heart of our work to implement the SEND reforms and is increasingly the 'business as usual' model. We have a Co-production Memorandum of Understanding, which has been signed off by our Children and Families Act Executive Board, representing the Local Authority, CCGs and parent groups. In order to promote transparency and accountability, we also have an established process for recording our 'You Said, We Will' activity, which results in an annual 'You Said, We Did' summary.

Representatives from the Parent Forum are actively involved in all aspects of strategic work which includes joining the interview panels for SEN Service staff appointments and being consulted on the content of job descriptions for a variety of roles. 'Make it Happen' holds regular meetings with officers from the LA, CCG and health providers including a termly reference group meeting which is chaired by a parent. The SEN Service attends surgeries with 'Make it Happen' on a regular basis, with focussed sessions on areas raised by parents/carers such as short breaks and therapy interventions with attendance from relevant professionals. Parents are also involved in training officers and participate in evaluations when re-procurement is taking place (relevant to SEND). 'Make it Happen' has also trained Local Offer Parent Champions, who deliver training and work with individual families. They are co-productive partners in the Bi-Borough All Age Autism Strategy Group.

'Make it Happen' is working with Contact, a national charity for families of children with disabilities, to undergo organisational changes to enable the group to become more independent from an umbrella organisation. The LA is supporting this work.

Our improvement work is informed by the views of children, young people and their families through their attendance at the CFA Executive Board, at Workstream Groups, through the termly Reference Group meetings with officers, through the SEND Strategy surveys and surgeries with the SEN Service. The Assistant Director for SEN meets termly with a group of young people at St Marylebone Bridge Special School to seek their views and feed back on actions that have been taken to improve the Local Offer. This group of young people, with the support of our Educational Psychology Service, also interviewed all candidates for the Assistant Director SEN role in spring 2018.

We have recently made changes to our Sensory Impairment Service, creating a more joined up bi-borough model, which has enabled us to increase the capacity of frontline delivery. Consultation workshops with local parents helped us to design the new delivery model, and their feedback is being used to inform future service developments. Children with visual impairment and hearing impairment were involved in the interview process for the specialist teachers in the new service.

CAMHS service reviews have been co-produced with Rethink Mental Illness and local Mental Health Champions since 2015/16 and have gathered feedback from 400 children and young people service users and 175 parents and carers across what was previously the Tri-Borough.

We have ambitions to strengthen our co-production activity with children and young people and are currently recruiting to a new SEND Children and Young People's Participation role. Children with SEND are going to be involved in the interview process for this, which is scheduled for early May.

Executive summary

Key areas that work well

Strategic developments

All partners consistently and systematically work together to drive improvements across the local area. The CFA Executive Board, whilst established in 2014 was re-formed as a Bi-borough group in April 2018, and is co-chaired by the Executive Director of Children’s Services and the Deputy Director of the CCG. The Board provides oversight and challenge. Our Health and Well-Being Board approved our Joint Commissioning Plan and progress is being closely monitored. **The local area has had a dedicated Designated Clinical Officer (DCO)** in post since December 2014, who acts as the health lead for the implementation of the SEND reforms and is the key point of contact for colleagues from the local authority, health teams, schools, ‘Make it Happen’ and within the CCGs. The Local Area has held three multi-agency **Sharing Good Practice events**, most recently an event on Reviews and Transitions. A deep dive meeting was held in March on early years.

Co-production and engagement are increasingly ‘business as usual’. Examples include the coproduction with parents/carers of our SEND Strategy 2018-2021, the strategic development of our local offer (the steering group is parent-chaired), co-development of the short break offer and of a new resource allocation system for personal budgets and improved passenger transport. There have also been service enhancements to the speech, language and communication offer as a result of ongoing engagement with parents and some engagement with children and young people. There are good examples of young people influencing and shaping the local offer, including the development of mental health services, and the appointment process for specialist teachers for children with sensory impairment. This is an area we want to continue to develop to strengthen the voice of the child in all our services. Our published co-production protocol sets out agreed joint working expectations across a wide range of partners.

Our local offer website which has improved and now receives positive comments from parents about how easy it is to access and how useful the information is to them in making decisions about their children and young people.

Identification of SEND

An **improving early years speech and language offer** delivers practical support for parents and practitioners to help identify speech, language and communication needs early, so that appropriate intervention and support can be provided. The Speech and Language Therapy Service also attend Stay and Play sessions to give parents the opportunity to speak about their child’s speech, language and communication needs with a speech and language therapist (SALT) and to identify needs early.

Training and support is provided to Health Visitors, schools and other settings by specialist services including SALT, physiotherapy, CAMHS and Paediatrics to support early identification and specialist staff attend children centre sessions. For example, local CAMHS are delivering a project to identify and support young children under 5 with attachment disorders.

Key areas that work well

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are increasingly produced within statutory timescales. From January to March 2019, 100% of plans were finalised within 20 weeks (excluding exceptions)². This is a significant improvement on the previous year; previously the local area received support from the Department of Education (DfE) to improve the timeliness of plans. In the calendar year 2017, 60.3% of assessments were completed within timescales and this increased to 78% in the calendar year 2018. Following commissioner action as a result of a dip in performance in the first half of 2018/19, 100% of EHC requests made to Child Development Services were responded to within 6 weeks throughout Q4 in both Central London and West London CCGs.

There are **strong arrangements for the identification of SEND in children who are electively home educated.**

Assessment and meeting needs

There is a holistic and core SALT and CAMHS offer within the Youth Offending Service (YOS), to identify and meet needs which may not have been identified at an earlier age/stage.

There is a rolling programme of **parent workshops**, including understanding autism spectrum disorder (ASD) after diagnosis, support for children with social communication difficulties / ASD, and Makaton signing delivered by SALTs, Occupational Therapists (OTs), Educational Psychologists (EPs) and Clinical Psychologists. There is also a programme of training available to schools and settings.

The **short breaks offer is improving** and becoming more graduated, including an extended core offer through the co-design work with families as part of the Perfect Pathways project. This includes a new offer in south Westminster at Churchill Gardens Primary Academy in response to parental feedback, as well as at the Tresham Centre in Lisson Grove. The support and challenge provided through our inclusion offer is effective in enabling families to access mainstream services.

Place planning work has led to funding of capital initiatives to meet local need, such as the development of a new resource base for September 2019 at All Soul's C of E Primary School and good engagement with Headteachers to explore additional specialist provision to improve local options for families.

Children in care are **very well supported by the Virtual School**; the vast majority of Personal Education Plans for children with SEND are at least good, with several showing outstanding features.

Improving outcomes

2018 educational outcomes for children with SEND show that at both primary and secondary the achievements of children with SEND are well above national comparators. At KS2 38% of children on SEN Support achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics compared with a national average of 24%; 16% of children with an EHCP achieved this measure compared to a national average of 9%. At KS4 44% of children on SEN Support achieved grades 4-9 in English and mathematics compared with a national average of 31%; 23% of children with an EHCP achieved this measure compared to a national average

²

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 set out specific exemptions from the 20-week timescale e.g. when appointments are missed

Key areas that work well

of 11%. Schools report that the Education Psychology liaison visits (3 visits per year), funded by the High Needs Block and agreed at the Schools Forum are highly valued and contribute to making a difference for children with SEN.

The local area performs favourably regarding the proportion of working-age adults with a learning disability known to adult social care in **paid employment**, with 9.3% in employment compared to 6% nationally. We aspire to improve upon this figure and have recruited to a dedicated post that is developing a range of initiatives to improve the pathways to employment for young people with SEND, including a local Supported Internship offer, working with the Westminster Employment Service.

Our **EHCP quality assurance framework is driving up the quality of plans**. The oversight and drive provided by senior leaders has led to significant improvements in case management and data quality. The CFA Executive Board receives reports on the quality of EHCPs and parents have coproduced new arrangements for assessment, planning and reviews.

Key areas for development

Strategic developments

Data shows that a focus on co-production, partnership working and targeted marketing has increased the awareness and usage of our Local Offer website, with a 57% increase in site users from March 2018 to March 2019. However, we will continue to **develop and improve our Local Offer website**, focusing, for instance, on making it more accessible to young people with SEND, building on their feedback.

Our **personal budget** offer needs further improvement and development work is underway. For example, our Policy has been refreshed and we are implementing a resource allocation system. This work is co-designed with parents. We will also offer personal transport budgets as part of our drive to develop alternative travel options and increase independence.

While our SEND Strategy and Joint Commissioning Plan well reflect the views of parents, we recognise that **we need a more consistent approach to co-production with children and young people**, building on particular strengths in CAMHS and wider examples of co-design.

The **YOS** is working to achieve the SEND Quality Mark.

Identification of SEND

An improved pre-birth to 5 local offer will strengthen positive outcomes for young children with SEND. Using a data-driven approach, we will work with partners across the local area to improve the identification of SEND for these children, associated pathways, planning and interventions. We will support this with target funding and support for 0-5s in the PVI nursery sector. Take up of Disability Access Funding and SEN inclusion funding is low and work is underway with parents in early years settings to increase awareness and support for the application process. Through our involvement in the Early Intervention Foundation's Early Years Transformation Academy we will work closely with partners across the pre-birth to 5 pathway to improve multi-disciplinary pathways and onward referrals, strengthen early identification (including take up of the 2-2.5 year old checks), improve our targeted offer of support and school readiness.

Reducing the waiting times for ASD diagnosis, reduce the age of diagnosis and addressing the under-diagnosis of girls with ASD. An all-age, multi-disciplinary Autism Strategy is in development and focused work is underway to improve pathways and reduce waiting times. Between December 2018 and February 2019, waiting times for diagnosis reduced from 54 weeks to 43 weeks for under-5s, and from 131 weeks to 76 weeks for school-age children.

Assessment and meeting needs

Commissioners have worked together with our main provider of therapies, Central London Community Healthcare (CLCH) NHS Trust, to address areas of variable performance around waiting times for speech and language therapy (SALT) and occupational therapy (OT). Whilst performance for SALT has improved significantly, waits for OT remain too long. There has also been historic mis-reporting of waiting times by the provider, which has now been rectified. We continue to work closely with CLCH to improve performance and ensure clinical risk to children is minimised/mitigated.

We recognise that whilst our targeted offer of support for school age children without an EHCP has been strengthened more needs to be done to ensure all children get the right support. We will continue to work with schools in close partnership with CLCH to develop and embed a **whole system model to speech, language and communication**.

We will continue to improve the range and quality of **mental health and emotional well-being support** available and develop clearer and better communicated pathways. West London CCG (NHS), in partnership with MIND and WCC/Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC), has been chosen to be part of the first wave of Trailblazer sites for the new **Mental Health Schools Support Teams**. The programme will cover the Queen's Park and Paddington area of North Westminster. We will strengthen the whole school approach to speech, language and communication needs and emotional health and wellbeing at the targeted level and embed a graduated offer. This includes the development of a whole school approach.

The current short breaks contract with the Westminster Society ends shortly and this provides the opportunity to reshape the offer to meet the **increased demand for more specialist support for children with complex needs** and introduce a more graduated offer for families.

Parents would like us to develop our own Disabled Children's Centre through the re-designation of the Tresham Centre in Lisson Grove from June 2019. The Council is investing in the redevelopment of the Centre, working closely with parents, in order to expand the short breaks offer for disabled children.

Through the Vulnerable Children's Collaborative, we aim to **improve the attendance** of children with multi-sensory impairment, profound and multiple learning difficulties and those with physical disabilities in particular. We will review our offer for children who are unable to attend school due to ill-health. We will undertake further work to understand the reasons for the increase in the **persistent absenteeism** of children with EHCPs and aim to ensure all children attend school regularly. Out-borough schools are now required to submit attendance data with their termly invoices for resident pupils on their roll.

The Designated Nurse for Looked After Children (LAC) is working with the Local Authority, Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust and Chelsea & Westminster NHS Foundation Trust to **increase the proportion of initial health assessments (IHAs) for LAC** completed within 20 days.

Improving outcomes

Outcomes based commissioning will be strengthened; improved reporting will enable us to better understand service impact and areas for improvement. This includes the implementation of new outcome measures.

Fixed-term exclusion rates (incidents of exclusion as a percentage of pupils on roll) for pupils with SEN in local secondary schools are higher than the national average and we are working closely with our schools, Early Help, SEN Outreach and our alternative provision settings. Beachcroft and the Westminster Centre through the multi-agency Vulnerable Children's Collaborative are working with our mainstream schools to provide specialist support to young people at risk of exclusion and reduce overall exclusion rates.

We will **reduce the participation gap** between young people aged 16-18 with SEND and their peers; and continue to reduce the rate of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or are not known. Our latest figures show that 1.1% of 16-17 year olds are NEET in WCC, compared with 1.8% in London and 2.6% nationally.

Through the process of annual review, we will **further improve the quality of EHCPs**. Our quality assurance framework, findings from the national Personal Outcomes Evaluation Tool (POET), a new case management system and new outcome measures will all help to drive up standards.

We will **continue the current pace of work to develop arrangements to support young people aged 16-25 with SEND**. Priorities include ensuring that:

- our new Standard Operating Procedures for Transition to Adult Services are fully understood by frontline staff and implemented;
- contracts include a requirement to implement a clear transition protocol and that transition activity and performance form Key Performance Indicators;
- care leavers are supported by CAMHS to age 25.

Appendix 1: Governance structure

SEND Local Area Governance (Bi-Borough)

