

Supporting our children & young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

Children and Young People Scrutiny November 2020



Inspection Recap – Publication on 27 May 2020

- Between 9 March and 13 March 2020, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC), conducted a joint inspection of the local area of Somerset to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the disability and special educational needs reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014 as detailed in the SEND Code of Practice (2015).
- These inspections evaluate how effectively the local area meets its responsibilities.
- The local area includes the Local Authority (Education, Public Health, Children's and Adult Social Care) Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), NHS England for specialist services, Early Year's settings, Schools and Further Education Providers.
- A Written Statement of Action (WSOA) is required (from both the LA and the CCG) as inspectors identified significant concerns in relation to statutory duties - 60% of local areas inspected to date have been required to produce WSoA.
- WSoA has been submitted and further revised – waiting for formal sign-off – work is progressing on all the priority areas

Progress on the Written Statement of Action (WSoA)

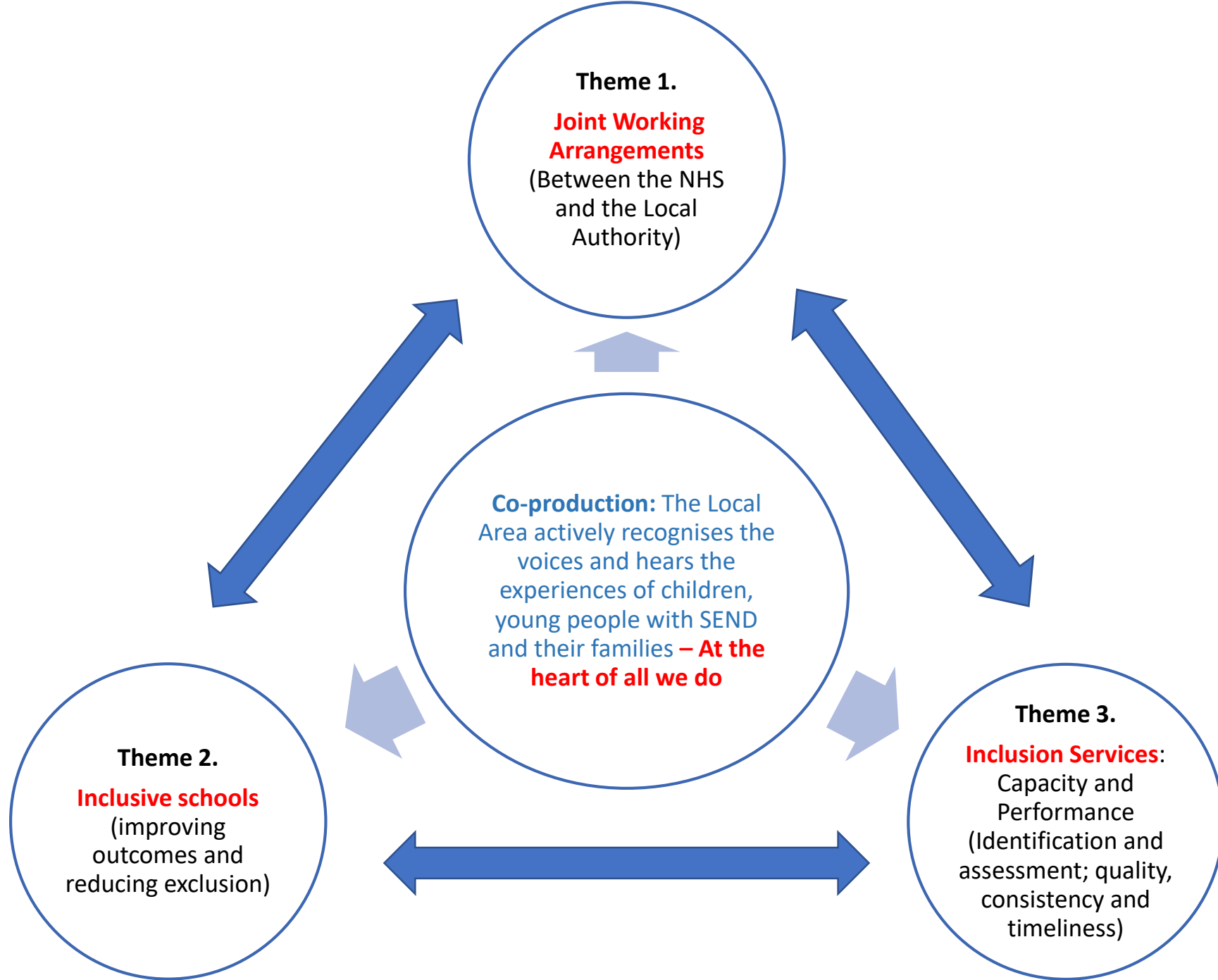
Inspectors have requested further details to be included in the WSoA as to how the LA & CCG will ensure:

- Co-production and Leaders learning from the lived experiences of children, young people and their families – across all services
- Quality assurance arrangements in all aspects of the SEND System
- Effective Joint Commissioning arrangements
- Timeline for different aspects the Autism Pathway
- Further detail in relation to Public Health & School Nursing plans to address the issues identified
- Data gaps are addressed, and that targets are both sufficiently ambitious and also realistic.

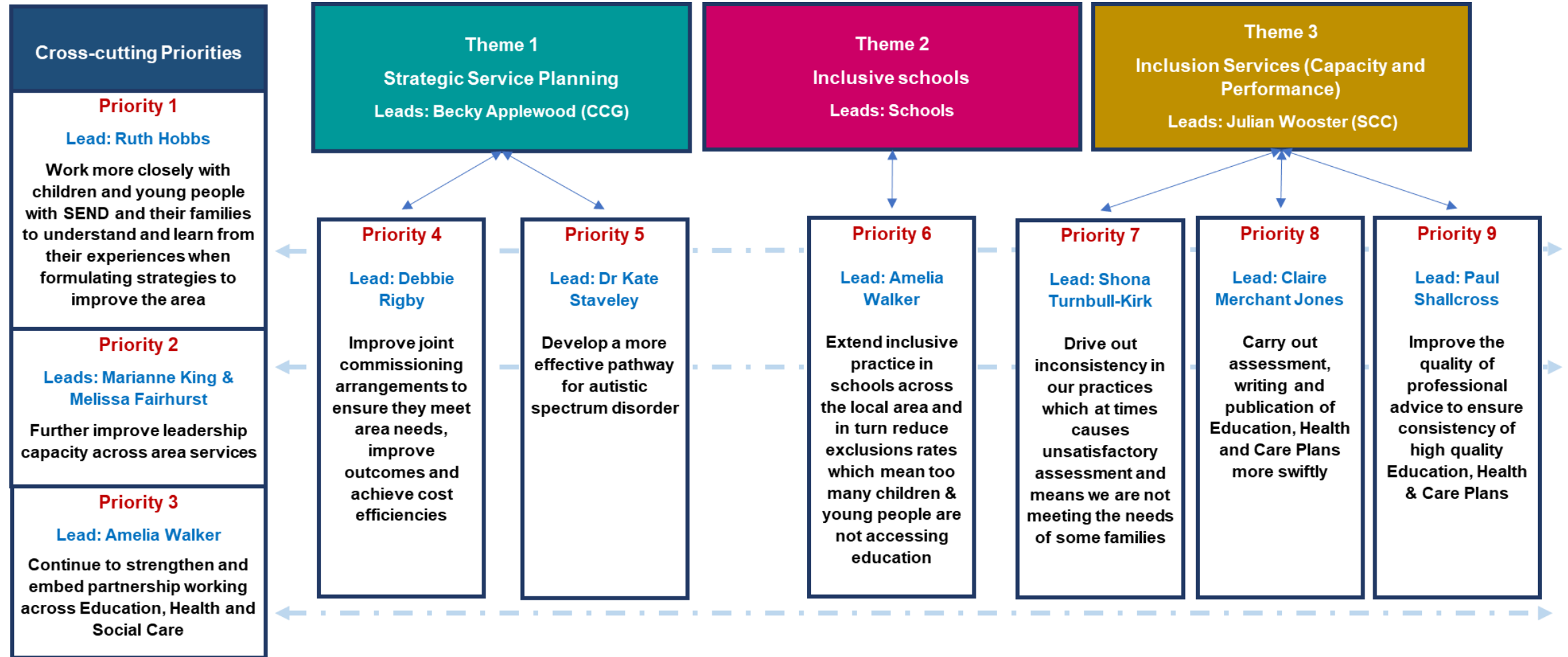


The following are the nine statements to address the areas of significant weakness.

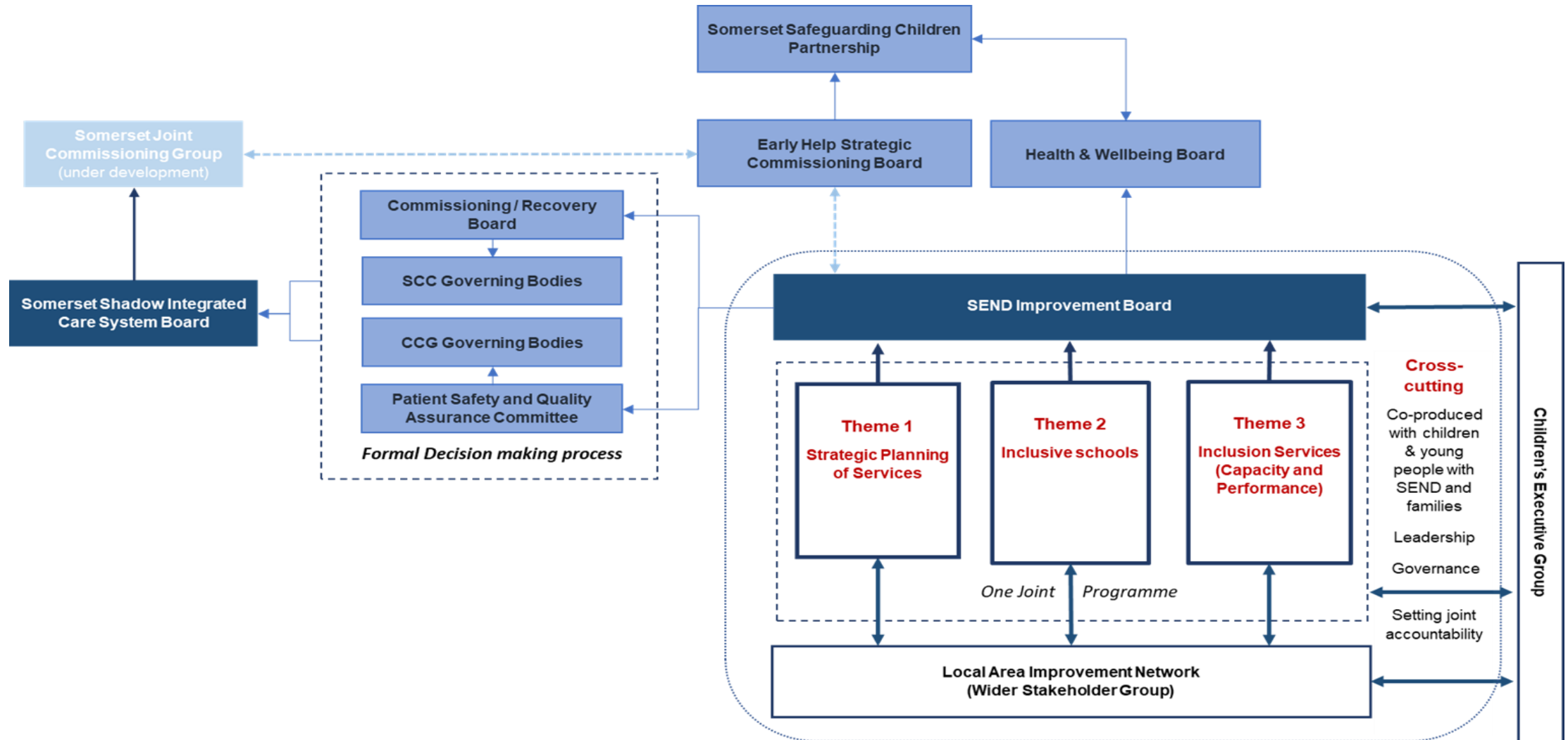
1. We all need to work more closely with children and young people with SEND and their families to understand and learn from their experiences as we develop strategies to improve the area. Inspectors recognised that there are many strengths in this area, but we are not consistent in our practice.
2. We need to improve leadership capacity across services in Somerset to provide effective support to children with SEND.
3. We need to continue to strengthen and embed partnership working across Education, the NHS, Public Health and Social Care.
4. By improving joint commissioning arrangements between Somerset County Council and the NHS, we can improve leaders' abilities to ensure they meet area needs, as well as improving outcomes and achieving cost efficiencies.
5. Our pathway for children with autistic spectrum disorder needs substantial development to address the poor service too many families are receiving.
6. We need to extend inclusive practice in schools across the local area and in turn reduce exclusion rates which currently mean too many children and young people are not accessing education.
7. We need to improve the outcomes for all children with SEND, through ensuring effective identification of needs and the right support to make the difference for children.
8. The multi-professional assessments and planning required for Education, Health and Care Plans needs to be carried out more swiftly.
9. The quality of professional input for Education, Health and Care Plans needs to be at a consistently high level.



Written Statement of Action delivery model



SEND Improvement Governance Arrangements with effect from 1st September 2020



WSoA – Improvement Headlines

Engagement with Families (IP 1)

- Engagement events with practitioners and families held to understand experiences of the ADHD/ASD and neurodevelopmental pathways
- Increased use of technology, has increased multi agency attendance at meetings – and increased in parental involvement.

Our Capacity (IP2)

- Key appointments across the Local Area which increases the leadership capacity across the Local Area
- Appointment of Deputy Director, Woman, Children and Maternity (CCG)
- Appointment of Assistant Director, Schools, Partnership & Skills (SCC)
- Appointment of permanent Assistant Director, Inclusion (SCC)
- Appointment to newly created post of Deputy Designated Clinical Commissioning Officer role (CCG)
- Assignment of project management roles to support key initiatives e.g. development of the ASD/Neuro-developmental pathway (CCG)
- Additional resource increasing nursing capacity for supporting Children Looked After (CLA) with SEND who will act as SEND champion for the CLA nursing team
- Confirmation of permanency for all SEND Statutory Team Staff, and the agreement to recruit a further five Assessment & Reviewing Officers (SCC)
- Additional capacity secured for the SCC Children's Service Quality Assurance Team to support quality improvement within SEND (SCC)
- Creation and recruitment to an additional, jointly funded Children's Commissioner post (SCC/CCG)



WSoA – Improvements to Date

Our Partnership Arrangements (Improvement Priority 3)

- Review of SEND Governance Arrangements including membership, with Terms of Reference agreed and published on the Local Offer
- Initial meetings of the newly formed SEND Improvement Board (SIB) held, minutes published on the Local Offer
- Creation of a new Children's Executive Group to oversee and support the implementation and operational delivery of the WSoA (enabling group)
- 2nd level Information Sharing Agreement completed, signed off and published (*this means that the Local Area can share information confidentially about individuals with SEND*)
- Privacy notice has been updated, signed off and published



WSoA – Improvements to Date

Our Strategic Planning of Services (Improvement Priority 4 & 5)

- Co-produced a working together document with key actions and milestones
- SCC and NHS have recruited a Joint Strategic Commissioner
- Institute of Public Care have started Joint commissions for SEND workshops and interviews
- Coproduction workshop with parents and children of a primary aged pre diagnostic pathway
- Established multidisciplinary triage of referrals into the community paediatricians
- We have mapped the “as is” provision for Somerset for the pre diagnostic pathways for each age band
- A workshop with the Autism assessment providers
- Review of the needs of children with ADHD

WSoA – Improvements to Date

Our Schools (Improvement Priority 6)

- Schools signed-up to the Inclusion Inquiry TOR agreed, and leads identified
- Schools reporting more effective joint working through the COVID arrangements
- School Attendance has been consistently high in comparison to other areas
- Reduced schools exclusions this term
- Increase in number of SENCOs obtaining Level 3 Early Years SENCo award
- SEND Statutory Team & Educational Psychologist Involvement in the Multi-agency HUB discussions with special schools, to identify risks for those children and young people not accessing school (during the pandemic)
- Involvement by all relevant agencies in Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) discussions regarding specific young people who are not accessing school or college and for whom risks have been identified, in order to agree a joint plan / response to providing appropriate support and services



WSoA – Improvements to Date

Our Inclusion Services (Improvement Priorities 7, 8 & 9)

- Development and publication of The SEND Effective Support Framework
- Single point of contact for parents seeking SEND advice, support and guidance from the Local Authority
- Requests for and receipt of some professional advices are now managed online
- Completion of pilot for Citizen's Portal, enabling families to track progress of an assessment
- Delivering Better Outcomes Together (DBOT) Outcomes Training delivered to staff across the Local Area (151 participants)
- Education, Health and Care Plan writing training secured and introduced to SEND Statutory Team
- Development of a training programme for SEND Statutory Team Officers

