
Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) – Local Area Improvement Plan

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<p>Summary:</p>	<p>As part of our ongoing self-assessment of SEND arrangements in Somerset, Somerset County Council (SCC) and Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) conducted an intensive review of the SEND system, with key practitioners leads and Parent Carer Forum representatives, between 10 - 14th June 2019. The self-assessment identified seven priority areas requiring urgent action and determined that a “joint written statement of action” for SCC and CCG would be required to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families.</p> <p>The Somerset SEND Improvement Plan represents a joint written statement of action agreed between SCC and CCG. It outlines actions for each improvement priority (IP) and also shows how each SEND improvement priority links to key themes of the Somerset Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP) and SEND Strategy.</p> <p>The seven priority areas for improvement identified by SCC and the CCG are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Governance arrangements in place in Somerset are not effective in holding leaders to account sufficiently to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND.2. There is currently limited joint planning and commissioning of services, between education, health and care, to meet the needs of those with SEND.3. There is inconsistent application of Somerset’s strategy for identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people at the SEN support stage across the partnership4. A need to strengthen the Local Offer from providers to address the inconsistency of experience reported by families.5. The time it takes to issue EHC plans and the variable quality of these plans, the fact that these plans do not consistently
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	<p>capture a child or young person’s needs and aspirations and that EHC plans are not able to be used as a valuable tool to support the planning and implementation of education, health and care provision to lead to better lived experiences for the child and their families.</p> <p>6. Weaknesses in our approach to supporting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children and young people with SEND who face challenges in relation to their social, emotional and mental health.</p> <p>7. Weaknesses in the identification, assessment, diagnosis and support of those children and young people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).</p> <p>An Executive Summary of the plan was approved by the SEND Improvement Board (SIB) at their meeting on 15th October 2019 and has since been published. This SIB meeting was also attended by the DFE SEND Regional Advisor and the NHS England Advisor who were able to provide external challenge.</p> <p>Progress in improvement will be monitored and reported through the quarterly SEND Improvement Board (SEND IB), which will report to the Health & Wellbeing board through the new Safeguarding Partnership arrangements¹. Additional reporting as relevant and required will be in place to the Early Help Strategic Commissioning Board, Schools Forum, Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership and other internal governance arrangements across both SCC and Somerset CCG. SEND Improvement will also be subject to Children and Families scrutiny arrangements.</p> <p>Monthly monitoring against improvement targets will be reported to the Local Area Improvement Network (LAIN)</p>
<p>Recommendations:</p>	<p>That the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board considers and supports the delivery of the Local Area SEND Improvement Plan as set out in Appendix A.</p>
<p>Reasons for recommendations:</p>	<p>The Local Area (The Local Area is defined as the local authority (LA) ; clinical commissioning groups (CCG; Public Health; NHS England for Specialist Services; Early Years Settings, Schools, Further Education Providers) will shortly receive a Local Area SEND Inspection by OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) and CQC (Care Quality Commission) to assess the Local Area’s effectiveness in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people who have special educational needs and/or</p>

¹ Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership Board, effective 1st Oct 2019

	<p>disabilities (SEND).</p> <p>The Children and Families Act 2014 placed new duties on Local Areas with regard to identification, assessment and provision for children and young people with SEND. Somerset’s progress against the requirements has been slow, the development of the LAIN has seen improvements in many areas however the recent self-assessment of SEND has confirmed that there is still much progress to be made. The seven areas of improvement identified by this exercise were seen as the key priority areas for the next three years.</p>								
<p>Links to The Improving Lives Strategy</p>	<p>Please tick the Improving Lives priorities influenced by the delivery of this work</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="544 680 1466 1146"> <tr> <td data-bbox="544 680 1289 808">A County infrastructure that drives productivity, supports economic prosperity and sustainable public services</td> <td data-bbox="1289 680 1466 808"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="544 808 1289 936">Safe, vibrant and well-balanced communities able to enjoy and benefit from the natural environment</td> <td data-bbox="1289 808 1466 936"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="544 936 1289 1019">Fairer life chances and opportunity for all</td> <td data-bbox="1289 936 1466 1019">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="544 1019 1289 1146">Improved health and wellbeing and more people living healthy and independent lives for longer</td> <td data-bbox="1289 1019 1466 1146">✓</td> </tr> </table> <p>Fairer Life Chances and opportunity for all</p> <p>All professionals and services working with children and young people have a legal duty to work together to ensure that needs of children and young people with SEND are identified and met. Early identification and intervention is key. It is essential that parents/carers and young people/children are involved in key decisions around their needs and support. Children and young people with SEND should have the same opportunities as others and should not be discriminated against due to the special educational needs. They should have access to good quality local support and provision.</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing and more people living healthy and independent lives for longer</p> <p>The Children and Families Act 2014 extended the age range for educational SEND support from 2 – 19 to 0- 25. There is a much greater emphasis from the age of 14 years old on preparing for adulthood and increasing independence of those young people who have special educational needs and/or a disability.</p>	A County infrastructure that drives productivity, supports economic prosperity and sustainable public services		Safe, vibrant and well-balanced communities able to enjoy and benefit from the natural environment		Fairer life chances and opportunity for all	✓	Improved health and wellbeing and more people living healthy and independent lives for longer	✓
A County infrastructure that drives productivity, supports economic prosperity and sustainable public services									
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Improved health and wellbeing and more people living healthy and independent lives for longer	✓								
<p>Financial, Legal, HR,</p>	<p>The Children and Families Act 2014, Section 3 and associated</p>								

<p>Social value and partnership Implications:</p>	<p>regulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 ➤ The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014 ➤ The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015 ➤ The Children and Families Act 2014 (Transitional and Savings Provisions) (No 2) Order 2014 <p>place statutory requirements upon the Local Area to fulfil their legal duties towards children and young people with SEND and they must be able to demonstrate that the arrangements in place locally for identification, assessment, provision including access to services enables the local area to fulfil their statutory duties.</p>
<p>Equalities Implications:</p>	<p>The Equality Act 2010 sets out the legal obligations that schools, early years providers, post-16 establishments, local authorities and others have when supporting children and young people with special educational needs and/or disability. In addition to this public bodies such as local authorities must have regard to the provisions set out by the public sector equality duty and must have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.</p>
<p>Risk Assessment:</p>	<p>There is a detailed risk register being developed alongside the detailed action plan to support the SEND Improvement Plan. The risk register is monitored and updated on a monthly basis at LAIN.</p>

1. Background

1.1. The Children and Families Act 2014 obtained royal assent and became law on 13 March 2014. This was a landmark and wide-ranging act designed to fully reform services for vulnerable children, by giving them greater protection, paying special attention to those with additional needs, and also helping parents and the family as a whole.

1.2. The largest part of the Act (Section 3) deals with laws and provisions relating to children who have special educational needs or disabilities. It was determined that the previous system simply did not perform well enough for these particularly vulnerable groups of people, and that a new approach was required, following reports and green papers published by the Department of Education in years preceding the Act. Major changes revolved around giving families better control over the welfare of their child. New provisions put in place by the Act included the following:

- A new Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan based on a single

assessment process will replace special education statements. EHC plans are documents that support children, young people and their families from birth to 25.

- The commissioning and planning of services for children, young people and families is now run jointly by health services and local authorities as a result of the Act.
- Extends the rights to a personal budget for the support to children, young people and families
- Local services available to children and families must be made available in a clear, easy to read manner.
- Local authorities must involve families and children in discussions and decisions relating to their care and education; and provide impartial advice, support and mediation services.

The Local Area has found the requirements of “the Act” challenging and although there has been a systemic approach to improvement over the past 18 months, there are still significant progress to be made

2. Improving Lives Priorities and Outcomes

- 2.1.** As detailed above, the SEND Improvement Plan supports and extends the vision for improving lives priorities and outcomes in Fairer Life Chances and Opportunity for all and Improved health and wellbeing and more people living healthy and independent lives for longer.

3. Consultations undertaken

- 3.1.** The SEND Improvement Plan has been developed by Senior Leaders across the Local Area following a self-assessment exercise based on the principles of the OFSTED/CQC Inspection Framework. Somerset Parent/Carer Forum were involved in the self-assessment and have supported the development of the SEND Improvement Plan.

4. Request of the Board and Board members

- 4.1.** To receive this report and endorse the seven areas of improvement within the SEND Improvement Plan, noting the monitoring arrangements including the potential for escalation, if required to the Health and Wellbeing Board
- 4.2.** To support and identify a member of the Board to act as a SEND Champion

5. Background papers

- 5.1.**
- Local Area SEND Improvement Plan Executive Summary
 - Local Area SEND Risk Register

6. Report Sign-Off

6.1

	Seen by:	Name	Date
Report Sign off	Relevant Senior Manager / Lead Officer (Director Level)	Julian Wooster	12/11/19
	Cabinet Member / Portfolio Holder (if applicable)	Frances Nicholson	Click or tap to enter a date.
	Monitoring Officer (Somerset County Council)	Scott Wooldridge	12/11/19