

Committee:	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub Committee	08/02/2019
Subject: Special educational needs and disability (SEND) – Update	Public
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Summary

This report provides an update to the Safeguarding Sub Committee on the progress of the special educational needs and disability (SEND) work in the City of London (COL).

The City Parent Carer Forum (CPCF) has been established as the representative voice of SEND families in the COL. Although it is a small group, it is highly effective.

Work is underway to develop co-production with children and young people with SEND – those with the most complex needs that are being addressed through an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, and those who are receiving special educational needs (SEN) support through the resources available at educational settings.

The COL is currently working on the procurement of the Short Breaks provision for the City with the London Borough of Hackney. It has been agreed that the CPCF will be a part of the procurement process, with briefings provided to enable the CPCF to undertake this role. The COL Commissioning team is also represented on the SEND Programme Board and the Co-production Working Group, and is a standing agenda item on the Co-production Working Group.

The report notes the progress on outcomes for children since the Local Area SEND Inspection in March 2018. The report includes that aspirations and outcomes are reflected in the EHC Plans and makes recommendations for further improvements. This has been reported to the SEND Programme Board and steps are in place to take forward the recommendations.

Recommendation

Members are asked to: Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The SEND Update of 19/09/2018 reported on the priorities for development for 2018/19 and progress following the Local Area SEND Inspection of March 2018. These priorities are set out in the SEND Improvement Action Plan 2018/19. The action plan is comprehensive and covers all the key actions from the Local Area SEND Inspection, as well as the priority areas identified in the SEND Joint Strategy 2017–2020.
2. The key priorities that have been a focus for the service during the autumn term 2018, and where the most progress has been made are:
 - increasing the participation of children, young people and families in co-production (a way of working where children and young people, families and those that provide the services work together to create a decision or a service that works for them all¹) so that their voices are integral and impact on the design, quality and delivery of commissioned services
 - ensuring that the commissioning arrangements reflect and meet the needs of City children and young people with SEND, and developing ways to inform the joint commission of services and the monitoring of contracts for children and young people and their families
 - continuing to pursue ambitious outcomes for children and young people with SEND, and their families
 - developing closer relationships, including data-sharing protocols, with Early Years settings, schools and colleges outside the COL local area and in the independent school sector where City-resident children and young people with SEND are educated.

Update on progress

Co-production

3. This action is being addressed with vigour. The CPCF was established as the representative voice of SEND families in the COL. Although it is a small group, it is highly effective. A representative from the CPCF is co-chair of the SEND Programme Board with the Assistant Director – People.
4. Since September 2018, the CPCF and the COL SEND team have been working together to revise how the CPCF can contribute further to the work of the SEND Programme Board. We have jointly developed an approach of focusing on co-production and established a set of priorities that are suitable within this context. The proposal for establishing a co-production working group was agreed at the SEND Programme Board on 7 December 2018. A working group was established in

¹ Ofsted definition

September 2018, with representatives from the COL's Education, Social Care and Commissioning services and the City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group.

5. Governance structures were enhanced, with the Co-production Working Group reporting to the SEND Programme Board. The group has identified what co-production means for them:

Co-production means co-designing as equal partners through trusted relationships for the benefit of the COL SEND community.

6. The structure of the meetings will include themed group workshops (education, health and social care). The development of the Carers Strategy 2019–2022 and the revised home-to-school transport policy are examples of the areas of work undertaken this term. The CPCF will also be part of the recruitment and selection process with Tower Hamlets SEND Information Advice and Support Service for a Family Partnership and Development Officer, a dedicated worker for City families.

Participation – Young people

7. Work is underway to develop co-production with children and young people with SEND – those with the most complex needs that are being addressed through an EHC Plan, and those who are receiving SEN support through the resources available at educational settings.
8. The Council for Disabled Children and KIDS (a national charity providing support services to disabled children, young people and their families) have been commissioned by the Department of Education to deliver a participation programme for children and young people with SEND. This includes providing local areas with support in developing strategies to ensure the engagement of children and young people in co-producing services to best meet their needs. KIDS has drawn up a training programme in consultation with Prospects and the Education Service for training to be delivered on 22 January 2019.

Commissioning

9. The COL is currently working on the procurement of the Short Breaks provision for the City with the London Borough of Hackney. It has been agreed that the CPCF will be a part of the procurement process, with briefings provided to enable the CPCF to undertake this role. The COL Commissioning team is also represented on the SEND Programme Board and the Co-production Working Group, and is a standing agenda item on the Co-production Working Group.

Outcomes for children and young people

10. An independent review of the quality of the EHC Plans was carried out prior to the SEND inspection. The inspectors found that this had “enabled leaders to sharpen and simplify the expected outcomes that are included in the EHC Plans”.

11. This work has been extended with an independent review of the aspirations and outcomes in EHC Plans. Progress has been made in how children, young people and their families are supported to identify, set and achieve high aspirations. The report notes the progress since the Local Area SEND Inspection in March 2018. It highlights that aspirations and outcomes are reflected in the EHC Plans and makes recommendations for further improvements. This has been reported to the SEND Programme Board and steps are in place to take forward the recommendations.
12. The report also identifies key strands that run through the EHC Plans that need to be addressed through joint commissioning. These include support for the development of communication, for social, emotional and mental health and for independence.
13. Work on the communication strand has started with a planned workshop on oracy at the COL Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) Forum meeting in February 2019.
14. In terms of mental health, significant mental health developments were already underway prior to inspection and this work has continued. Two SENCO workshops have been held to improve knowledge and understanding in this area and Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School is participating in a major project with the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families (a children's mental health charity).

Data-sharing protocols

15. One of the main areas for development identified by the inspectors was "for leaders to improve the City's data collection with providers that educate City children outside the local area".
16. Accessing this information is affected by the Department for Education's restrictions on the national pupil database. Also, there is no requirement for academies or independent schools to share information on pupil outcomes with local authorities. Despite this, progress has been made and three of the four independent schools in the City have agreed to sign data-sharing agreements, with the fourth agreeing to share statistical information that will allow us to gather data about the educational landscape of the school.
17. Data-sharing agreements have also been personalised for all schools located outside of the COL where City children have historically attended or are attending. These data-sharing agreements will help us to identify children receiving SEN support so that we can monitor outcomes for these pupils, including attendance and exclusions. There is a separate report to Committee which details this work and the progress made.

Conclusion

18. The Local Area SEND Inspection provided an independent external evaluation of how well the COL local area carries out its statutory duties in relation to children and young people with SEND to support their development. The evaluation identified many strengths as well as areas for further development, which are being addressed through a SEND Service Improvement Action Plan and monitored through the SEND Programme Board.

19. Since the inspection of the local area, there has been development in terms of funding and support arrangements for local areas to further embed the SEND reforms. In December 2018, the Secretary of State for Education announced additional high-needs funding for local authorities, alongside the 2019–20 Dedicated Schools Grant allocations to local authorities.
20. For the COL, this is an additional £12, 631 for 2019/20. Another of the non-funded measures introduced by the Secretary of State is to support local areas in the establishment of the SEND System Leadership Board, which will work to improve joint working and commissioning in local areas. We will want to see the benefits of this, and will report the results to a future Committee meeting.

Appendices

- None

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