

Report of:	<i>Councillor Barrie Cooper - Executive Member for Children’s Services Helen Watson - Executive Director for Children’s Services</i>
Submitted to:	<i>Executive - 19th November 2019</i>
Subject:	<i>The Improvement in Special Educational Needs Provision for Children and Young People in Middlesbrough</i>

Summary

Proposed decision(s)
<i>That Executive notes the recent Ofsted and CQC report and the continued development in provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.</i>

Report for:	Key decision:	Confidential:	Is the report urgent?¹
<i>Information</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>

Contribution to delivery of the 2018-22 Strategic Plan		
Business Imperatives	Physical Regeneration	Social Regeneration
<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>The report sets out the improvements evidenced in Special Educational Needs Provision and outcomes for children and young people across the town, including preparation for adulthood and employment</i>

Ward(s) affected
<i>Children and young people in all wards are affected by the content of the report</i>

What is the purpose of this report?

To explain the improvement in Special Educational Needs provision across Education, Social Care and Health for children and young people in the local area as evidenced in the Ofsted and Care Quality Commission report attached.

¹ Remove for non-Executive reports

Why does this report require a Member decision?

The report is for information purposes only.

Report Background

1. In March 2017 Middlesbrough Local Area was inspected by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission for the quality of our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities provision for children and young people. The inspection included scrutiny of the contribution of Education, Social Care and Health in ensuring that children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities make good progress and have their needs met in a timely manner. The outcome of the inspection in 2017 resulted in a Written Statement of Action to address significant concerns around:

- I. Weaknesses in the strategic leadership, governance and implementation of the disability and special educational needs reforms in the local area.
- II. Strategic planning was weak and there was no strategy for jointly commissioning services across Education, Health and Social Care.
- III. Children, young people and families had too little involvement in discussion and decision-making about the services and support they need. The Local Offer was poor and, as a result, children, young people and families had a weak understanding of the resources and support available in Middlesbrough.
- IV. Leaders had an inaccurate view of the local area's effectiveness. They did not gather, analyse and use information and data to drive improvement in provision and outcomes for children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in the local area.

2. Progress against the actions within the Written Statement of Action were monitored for a year by appointed monitoring advisors Cath Hitchen, DfE and Chris Brown NHS England. At the end of the first year of action, these advisors wrote to Nadhim Zahawi, Minister for Children and Families, explaining that they were happy with the Middlesbrough Local area and our progress towards improvement. The Minister responded to their report in a letter acknowledging the improvement journey we had embarked upon. He was keen to see that we could maintain and build on the progress made and asked that we write to him to provide a further update by the end of September 2019.

3. On July 8th-10th 2019 the same Ofsted and CQC inspection team revisited the local area to inspect the sustained progress since March 2017 and to identify if sufficient progress had been made on each of the four areas for development. The revisit report is attached as Appendix A. Lead Inspector Nick Whittaker, HMI, explained that the inspection team have observed sufficient progress in each of the four areas to recommend that we no longer need formal monitoring.

4. Our progress has been the result of serious and deliberate change, including the development of very strong collaboration between Middlesbrough Children's services and the CCG to effect the required improvements. We have continued to accelerate the high quality developments which we had begun in 2017.

Some of the main areas of our improvement include:

5. Strategic leadership

- Strategic Ownership at the highest level across the LA and Health is secure. SEND has a greater profile across Education, Health and Social care. CCG Executives, Council members, LA Chief Executive and the Mayor are all informed and involved
- Strong strategic partnerships across Education, Health and Social Care this includes a Strategic Leadership group which monitors developments within the local area and reports progress and areas for further development to the Children's Trust
- Staff across Education, Health and Social Care have developed their skills and knowledge through a comprehensive and tailored system of professional development opportunities and are more confident in meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND
- Clear strategic plans are in place to support short, medium and long term planning across all work streams identified from areas for development above. These plans are closely monitored, quality outcomes are challenged and actions accelerated where possible

6. Data, Quality and Outcomes

- Pupil outcomes in Middlesbrough are improving, with some exceeding or nearing national average. Outcomes for children and young people with SEND are improving, with the gaps to their non-SEND peers narrowing
- Robust quality assurance processes for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) and SEN Support Plans have been implemented which involves all stakeholders across Education, Health and Social Care which have been shared with other local authorities
- Improvement in the quality and scope of data and development of data systems across Education, Health and Social Care which support the early identification of needs, place- planning process, identifying gaps in provision and forecasting needs. This is one of only two systems nationally
- An increase in the proportion of children with a new EHCP accessing mainstream provision
- An increase in the number of children in early years accessing mainstream provision with appropriate support
- Multi agency involvement begins at an earlier age which supports identification and access to timely and appropriate provision and support
- A multi-agency EHC panel is in place which supports the EHCP process and has been recognised as an area of good practice by other local authorities
- Completion of the EHCP within the 20 week process is above national average. This currently stands at 97%
- A multi-agency approach has led to the development of an comprehensive Inclusion Strategy

7. Involvement of children and families and the Local Offer

- Dedicated leadership is in place to support the gathering and embedding of the views of children, young people and parents/carers across Children's Services and Health which has resulted in changes to resources, practice, services and an increase in the involvement of parents, carers and young people.

- A multi-agency approach to identify and improve outcomes for young people with SEND who are preparing for adulthood has been implemented. This includes the recruitment of Specialist Careers Officers, a restructure of the SEND Assessment Team to include a 0-13 and 14-25 SEN Team Leader and 14-24 Case Officer, Lead Officer for Employment, completion of multi-agency preparing for adulthood audit tool and an increase in the number of Supported Internships across the Local Area.
- A dedicated Educational Psychology Service has been recruited which has developed a Traded Arm to further support schools and settings to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.
- Coproduction and further development of the Local Offer has led to increasing use by all stakeholders
- An exciting cycle of children and young people's events is now business as usual.
- A range of media and events for communicating with parents and carers, including many events lead by children and their parents has been facilitated

8. Joint Commissioning and planning

- A Strategic Needs Assessment is in place with agreed priorities, this is supported by a Joint Commissioning Strategy and we are working with other key partners to deliver more effective and efficient services.
- A review of Speech and Language Therapy provision, and a new jointly commissioned service commenced April 2019
- Development of Young Commissioners Panel supports these processes
- A Joint Tees Children's Equipment Store commenced in September 2019
- Submission of CAMHS multi agency bids has led to integrated models being developed for more effective support for schools, children and young people.

9. Next steps

Strategic leaders in the local area are determined to make ongoing improvements and will embed the recommendations in the new report by Ofsted and CQC into our development plans to ensure we further target the improvement in our provision. We will also take forward our own areas for development, especially how services are organised to support a highly inclusive education system for children and young people, especially those with emotional and mental health issues. We are highly ambitious for the nature of the services which we and our partners provide for Middlesbrough children and young people with Special Educational Needs.

10. What decision(s) are being asked for?

That Executive notes the recent Ofsted and CQC report and the continued development in provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

11. Why is this being recommended?

It is best practice for Members to review reports from Ofsted and the CQC on the performance of work within its statutory provision.

12. Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended

Not applicable

13. Impact(s) of recommended decision(s)

Not applicable

14. Legal

The report will assist the Council in meeting its statutory duty under the SEND Code of Practice Jan 2015.

15. Financial

SEND provision is funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant, High Needs Budget. Any additional costs will be negotiated within the multi-agency approach and with the consent from the DfE.

16. Policy Framework

No Policy Framework implications have been identified

17. Equality and Diversity

The Ofsted and CQC report has implications for all children and young people with Special Educational needs in Middlesbrough from 0-25 years and will be published on the Council website.

18. Risk

The improvement of Special Educational Needs provision beyond the Written Statement of Action is part of the strategic risk to the Council. The risk has been mitigated and future improvement will be the focus of the sustained Local Area action plan.

19. Actions to be taken to implement the decision(s)

The SEND strategic leadership group comprising senior representatives from Middlesbrough Council and Health, will continue to drive forward plans and ensure progress is reported to the Children's Trust, to South Tees Health and Well-being Board and to elected members as appropriate at regular intervals.

20. Appendices

Appendix A Report from Ofsted and the CQC on the Joint Local Area SEND Revisit in Middlesbrough

21. Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
Department for Education	Special Education Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0 to 25 years	Jan 2015

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