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| Report of: | Rob Brown – Director for Education and Partnerships Cllr Mieka Smiles – Executive Member for Communities and Education |
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| Submitted to: | Executive – 24 November 2020 |
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| Subject: | Annual Update: Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities 0-25 |
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Summary

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| Proposed decision(s) |
| N/A |

| Report for: | Key decision: | Confidential: | Is the report urgent?¹ |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--|
| <i>Information</i> | N/A | N/A | No |

| Contribution to delivery of the 2020-23 Strategic Plan | | |
|---|--------------|-----------------|
| People | Place | Business |
| Ensuring Middlesbrough has the very best schools | | |

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| Ward(s) affected |
| N/A |

What is the purpose of this report?

1. To provide an update to members re Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities 0-25 in Middlesbrough since the local area revisit in July 2019.

Why does this report require a Member decision?

2. This report is for information only.

Report Background

3. The Children and Families Act and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (2015) pushed forward the Government's commitment to improve services for vulnerable children and young people and support strong families.

4. The Children and Families Act transforms the system for disabled children and young people and those with Special Educational Needs, so that services consistently support the best outcomes for them. The reforms created a system from birth to 25 through the development of coordinated assessment and single Education, Health and Care Plans; improving cooperation between all services responsible for providing education, health or social care; and giving parents and young people greater choice and control over their support. Within Middlesbrough there are approximately 1300 children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan. This figure continues to rise as it does year on year across the country.

5. The majority of statutory duties in relation to Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities rest at a local area level, predominantly with local authorities but now also with Clinical Commissioning Groups. The Children and Families Act 2014 strengthens local authorities' key duties in respect of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities across the 0-25 age range, regardless of where they are educated. It places duties on health and education settings to use their best endeavours to meet the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities; and requires local authorities and other listed bodies to have regard to the statutory guidance set out in the Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities Code of Practice: 0-25 years.

6. In March 2017 Middlesbrough Local Area was inspected by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission as part of a new SEND inspection process, 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

7. In July 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 Lead HMI Inspector explained that the inspection team observed sufficient progress in each of the four areas and that Middlesbrough (LA and Health) no longer needed formal monitoring.

8. Across the local area our current SEND priorities are:

- Support children, young people and families in relation to COVID
- Further strengthen Strategic Leadership and Governance
- Continue to improve Joint Commissioning of key services
- Further improve coproduction
- Further improve the voice of the child

- Ensure sufficient educational placements for children and young people within the local area through effective use of data
 - Improve systems for capturing softer outcomes for children and young people
 - Improve processes and opportunities in preparation for adulthood
 - Trained and competent workforce in understanding how to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND
9. We continue to move forward with key developments to ensure that the needs of children and young people with SEND 0-25 in Middlesbrough are met. To support this work we have:
- a. Worked with families seeking feedback on provision and support within the local area. This work includes
 - i. working with our local parents forum Parents4Change
 - ii. membership of parents on key work streams to support coproduction and key priorities
 - iii. feedback surveys
 - iv. parent drop-in sessions
 - v. a range of work with young people
 - b. We have worked with regional colleagues to develop an Outcomes Framework to ensure we collect data on progress for children and young people around softer outcomes. This is now embedded within our Annual Review paperwork and is seen as an example of good practice. We will use this data to provide greater support for children and young people with SEND and develop the required opportunities within the local area.
 - c. In October 2019 we led on a Free School bid for a Tees Valley Free School for children and young people with Social Emotional Needs and for those with Autism. This bid was successful and the new school will be based in Redcar. Work is currently underway and we hope to see this open in September 2022. This will ensure more children and young people will have the education and support they require.
 - d. We have worked with our partners in Tees Valley Education to build a Free School on the site at Natures World which is called Discovery Special Academy and is currently based at Tees Valley Education's site at Brambles Primary Academy. This is for children with severe learning difficulties, some children who may also have needs in more than one area such as a physical disability or sensory difficulties and will be open on the new site in September 2022.
 - e. We have worked with secondary colleagues to develop secondary mainstream Autism provision. A new base is currently being built on the Acklam Grange School site and some places at an existing base are being adapted at Outwood Academy Acklam to make provision for students with

Autism. This new provision has ensured young people have remained within their local area to access the education that they require.

- f. We continue to work closely with Post-16 providers to develop a range of provision which fully supports our young people as they move into adulthood. By doing so we have increased the range of Post 16 opportunities for young people with special needs. Feedback from young people has identified that they feel listened too and are accessing the provision which they feel meets their needs and prepares them for adulthood.
- g. We have worked with our specialist settings to think of alternative ways to deliver provision, meet needs and increase capacity within the local area. This partnership work has seen more children and young people access local provision
- h. We have restructured a number of services through consultation with staff and stakeholders to provide greater support to children, young people, schools and settings at the earliest of stages. This includes our Alternative Provision Service and our SEND Assessment Team. This new service includes increased capacity and a seamless model of delivery.
- i. We have invested in our Educational Psychologist service to ensure greater support is available to our most vulnerable children and young people. The service has also developed a traded arm to their delivery model where schools can purchase additional support through a service level agreement. As part of our COVID Recovery Plan the service is also working closely with schools to understand the impact COVID is having on children and young people and using this information to offer packages of support.
- j. Through COVID we implemented new ways of working to ensure the needs of children, young people and their families are met. This included putting in place a Lead Professional model which ensured all children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan had their plan risk assessed in line with government requirements. This model supported any changes to the plans and changes in agreed support. Since schools have returned in September we have in place a COVID Officer who works with schools to ensure all children and young people who are self-isolating or who can't attend for various reasons receive the support they require.
- k. Our Single Point of Contact which is a direct support telephone line for families and professionals, extended its hours in the first few months of COVID and operated over the weekend to ensure support was available 7 days.
- l. We have maintained our 90% completion rate of Education Health and Care Plans during COVID which ensures that children and young people with SEND are assessed within the required timeframe. This is a significant achievement considering the increased pressures as a result of COVID.

- m. We have worked with the new Designated Clinical Officer within Health to strengthen support systems and improve ways of working. This support has been invaluable during COVID as we have ensured those children with complex health care needs are monitored and supported.
 - n. We are redeveloping our Early Years Specialist Support Service which was based in James Cook Hospital. As a result of COVID the service relocated to Hemlington Initiative Centre and will remain there on a temporary basis for one year.
10. Through the ongoing improved local area strategic governance and oversight alongside the regular contact with our lead SEND advisors both within the Department for Education and Health we can see that provision, opportunities and outcomes for children and young people with SEND have improved and continue to improve across the local area. There are a greater range of opportunities for children and young people and our improved data systems are supporting strategic planning arrangements. Feedback from our regular meetings with our advisors has identified areas of good practice pre and during COVID which are being shared with other local areas.

What decision(s) are being asked for?

- 11. This report is for information only and to provide an update on progress since the 2017 Written Statement of Action and to provide oversight of the Local Authorities statutory duties in relation to SEND

Legal

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

Financial

- 13. There is no financial impact associated with this paper

Actions to be taken to implement the decision(s)

- 14. A further report to Executive will be brought in 2021 to again provide an update and oversight of SEND developments

Appendices

- 15. Appendix 1 - Ofsted Revisit Letter 2019

Background papers

- 16. No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

| Body | Report title | Date |
|--|--|-------------|
| Joint local area SEND revisit in Middlesbrough | Joint local area SEND revisit in Middlesbrough | July 2019 |

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