

All Different, All Equal: SEND Improvement

Wednesday 23 March 2022

Progress made but more still to be done

Joint Local Area SEND revisit by Ofsted and CQC

The recent visit by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission has found improvements in Dudley's SEND services but concludes that more needs to be done.

Between January 31 and Feb 3, inspectors visited Dudley Council to assess its children's services and what progress had been made within SEND (Special educational needs and disabilities) services since its last visit in 2019.

Following this 2019 visit the council and the Black Country and West Birmingham CCG had to submit a [written statement of action \(WSOA\)](#), which was declared fit purpose in December of that year.

In the most recent visit, inspectors recognised there had been "sufficient progress" in eight areas, previously identified as areas of weakness.

This included an improvement in embedding strategies, better co-production and engagement with parents and carers, improved understanding about inclusion in schools in Dudley and increasing the number of young people with SEND progressing into training and employment opportunities.

Inspectors, however, found that more needs to be done to be make progress in six areas including improving parent satisfaction and the management and sharing of information within EHC plans and

The report also recognised that throughout the pandemic we continued to prioritise the needs of children and young people with SEND.

Next Steps

We are now required to submit a SEND Accelerated Action Plan (SAAP) to address the six areas of concern where we have made insufficient progress.

Over the next few weeks, we will be working with stakeholders including the Parent Carer Forum to develop this plan which will set out how we are going to address the issues, the outcomes that we want to achieve and how we are going to measure success against them.

We will submit the plan to the Department for Education (DfE) within 5 weeks. This plan, together with our overall SEND Improvement Plan will be published onto the

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[Local Offer](#) and [Health and Wellbeing Board website](#) and the SAAP will be monitored at least six monthly by the DfE.

We would like to assure parents and carers that we will continue our journey of improvement and are determined to make significant progress across all 14 areas in the coming months.

There is further work to do as we build on the progress made. Dudley is in a different place to where we were three years ago, and we are committed to working with parents, families, children and young people to secure continued and sustainable improvements for the future.

- Read the [Ofsted/CQC Letter](#) in full
- Read [news release](#) issued today
- More on the [Dudley SEND Strategy and Improvement Programme](#)

Regards,

Catherine Driscoll, Director of Children's Services, Dudley

Neill Bucktin, Dudley Managing Director, Black Country and West Birmingham
Clinical Commissioning Group