

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel

DATE: 18th April 2018

CONTACT OFFICER: Cate Duffy, Director of Children, Learning and Skills
(For all Enquiries) (01753) 875751

Report produced by Vikram Hansrani (Head of Service,
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)),
Slough Borough Council

WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY UPDATE

1. Purpose of Report

To provide members with an update of the work undertaken by the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) service since transferring back to Slough Borough Council in October 2017.

2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Panel is requested to note the report and comment as appropriate.

3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan

3a. Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

Priorities:

- Protecting vulnerable children
- Improving mental health and wellbeing

3b. Five Year Plan Outcomes

This report refers to priority outcome 1

- Our children and young people will have the best start in life and opportunities to give them positive lives.

4. **Other Implications**

(a) **Financial**

There are no financial implications to the proposals in this report.

(b) **Risk Management**

Each of the targets within the Outcome 1 plan are already included within the service planning framework of the relevant council directorates and overseen by the corporate Five Year Plan Board, Cabinet and Scrutiny Panels.

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
Legal	None	
Property	None	
Human Rights	None	
Health and Safety	None	
Employment Issues	None	
Equalities Issues	Seeking to close gaps between peers and vulnerable groups	
Community Support	None	
Communications	None	
Community Safety	None	
Financial	None	
Timetable for delivery	None	
Project Capacity	None	
Other	None	

(c) **Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications**

There are no significant Human Rights Act or other Legal implications.

(d) **Equalities Impact Assessment**

There is no need for an equalities impact assessment.

5. **Supporting Information**

Introduction

5.1 The SEND service transferred back to Slough Borough Council from Slough Children's Service's Trust on the 1st October 2017. Since this time, the service has been working on accelerating the delivery of the SEND reforms, which came into place in 2014 (The Children and Families Act 2014).

5.2 Key changes to the legislation include:

- Extending the statutory age range of those with SEND in education to 0-25
- Including children, young people and parents in decision making
- A stronger focus on high aspirations and improving outcome for children and young people

- Joint planning and commissioning of services to ensure close co-operation between education, health services and social care
- 5.3 The definition of SEND provision is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for others of the same age, i.e provision that goes beyond differentiated approaches and learning arrangements normally provided as part of high-quality, personalised teaching.
- 5.4 There are four broad areas of need outlined in the Code of Practice 2015, which is based on Part 3 of The Children and Families Act 2014. The broad areas of need are:
1. Communication and interaction
 2. Cognition and Learning
 3. Social, emotional and mental health
 4. Physical and/or physical needs
- 5.5 National statistics show that up to 20% (14.4% in 2017) of all children/ young people have some level of SEND. Most children/young people with SEND attend a mainstream school and are supported by resources, which form part of the school's core budget.
- 5.6 Since 2014, 'School Action' or 'School Action Plus' was replaced with 'SEN Support', which is additional notional funding to support children/young people with additional needs.
- 5.7 Based on 2017 School Census data , there were just over 30,000 children/young people in Slough with slightly over 3,000 (10%) receiving SEN support compared to 14% nationally.
- 5.8 Nationally, 2.8% of all children/ young people will have a level of SEND that requires a statutory assessment of their needs and a legally-binding document to ensure provision to meet those needs. This document was previously called a Statement of Special Educational Needs, however from 2014 the Government introduced Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) to replace Statements.
- 5.9 As of March 2018 there are approximately 1,400 pupils in Slough that have an Education, Health and Care Plan/Statement, which equates to roughly 4.6% of the school population. These children and young people will attend either a specialist provision, resource base provision or mainstream provision of education, usually based in Slough or close to their residence, based on their individual needs. Approximately 3% of those children and young people with EHCPs access independent provision 'out of borough'. This is typically based on the complex nature of their needs or if they are Children Looked After.

5.10 The table below explains the funding that is provided via the High Needs Block (HNB) of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for a pupil with a Statement/ EHCP.

Funding	£
Element 1 (AWPU) – all pupils	Approximately £4,000 per pupil
Element 2 – SEN Support	Notional £6,000 funding to support additional needs
Element 3 – Top up funding for pupils with Statements/EHCPs	Based on individual need

Providers will receive element three ‘top up’ funding to support children/young people with a Statement or EHCP. This funding is based on the pupil’s needs and is calculated using a banding mechanism.

** Independent providers do not receive Element 1 or 2.*

Conversions of Statements of Special Educational Need to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

5.11 The deadline for the conversions of Statements to EHCPs was the 31st March 2018. Conversions should take 20 weeks to complete to allow for meetings with children/ young people and parents, professional reports to be completed and consultations to be sent to education providers.

5.12 In August 2017, there were over 650 outstanding conversions to be completed in Slough. Since then, the SEND service has worked closely with colleagues within healthcare and social services, educational providers, parents/carers and children and young people to finalised EHCPs. The SEND service has ensured that that this process has been a person-centred, multi-agency process and not solely a paper-based activity.

5.13 As of the beginning of April 2018, there are 98 remaining Statements of Special Educational Needs left to convert. The process for conversion has started on all outstanding conversions and there is an expectation that 20% of outstanding conversions will be completed by the end of April, with the remainder being completed by the end of June 2018.

5.14 Correspondence has been issued to all parents/carers or young people who are yet to receive a final EHCP, informing them that there will be no changes to their current provision and informing them of when they should expect to receive their final EHCP to alleviate any concerns that they may have.

Governance and accountability

5.15 Since May 2017 there has been significant work put in place to address improving the governance structures around the SEND service. This has included; increasing the membership of panel members on the SEND panel; finalising the SEND Strategy and the creation of a HNB sub-group that reports to Schools Forum and the SEND Strategic Partnership Group.

5.16 The SEND panel meets weekly to discuss requests for EHC Needs Assessments, changes in banding and changes in provision. The panel also discuss requests for Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF) for those children with additional needs within the Early Years sector. Information on each pupil is collated and disseminated to panel members a week in advance. Since September 2017 there

has been a significant increase in wider panel members to help assist with the decision making process and ensure transparency. Panel members now include; primary school representation; secondary schools representation; Educational Psychologists (EPs); SENCos and Early Years representation. This has allowed for further scrutiny and accountability in regards to panel decisions and has helped to improve schools' understanding of the decision making process.

5.17 The SEND Strategic Partnership Board was initiated December 2017 as a platform to:

- Evaluate outcomes and provision for children and young people with SEND
- Ensure SEND priorities are identified and represented in the Slough SEND Strategy
- Monitor the progress on actions within the SEND service plan and OFSTED inspection preparation
- Receive reports and updated action plans from work streams
- Highlight and celebrate good practice

5.18 The SEND Strategic Partnership Board is chaired by the Director of Children, Learning and Skills (DCS) and has membership from; officers within the local authority; Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (BHFT), Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG); School Head Teachers; voluntary groups and parent/carer representatives.

5.19 The SEND Strategy 2016-2020 had been in draft for two years, however this was finalised after the first SEND Strategic Partnership Board Meeting in December 2017. It was acknowledged that aspects of the strategy would be refreshed within the coming months to ensure that the document reflected the on-going changes that are currently taking place within the service.

Staffing

5.20 After a significant period without an established permanent structure in place, the SEND Service is close to full permanent establishment with only one post for SEND commissioner currently vacant. The SEND service comprises of one Head of Service, one SEND Team Manager, one Senior SEND Officer and nine SEND Officers.

5.21 The DfE SEND implementation grant has been utilised to employ interim staff to support with the conversion of Statements to EHCPs. This grant is on-going for 2018-19 and further agency staff will be employed to continue to support the SEND reforms.

OFSTED Local Area SEND Inspection

5.22 In May 2016, OFSTED and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) launched a new framework for the joint inspection of the implementation of SEND reforms within local areas. The framework inspects the effectiveness of all organisations including the local authority and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in implementing the SEND reforms since September 2014. All local areas will be inspected by April 2021.

5.23 The inspection of the local area will cover and report on the following key aspects in arriving at a judgement about the effectiveness of the local area:

- The effectiveness of the local area in identifying children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- The effectiveness of the local area in assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- The effectiveness of the local area in improving outcomes for children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

5.24 Prior to inspection, the local authority and CCG will receive one week's notice of inspection and will be given further information about the week ahead in regards to schools that will be visited and OFSTED and CQC's lines of enquiry.

5.25 It is important to note that Local Area inspection is not graded, however all the DCS and Chief Executive of the CCG will receive a report of the findings which is published on the Ofsted website. Those local areas who are deemed to have significant areas of weakness be required to produced a joint local authority and CCG written statement of action.

Period	Number of LAs inspected	Number of WSOA
Summer 2016	8	0
Autumn 2016	12	5
Spring 2017	10	4
September – December 2017	8	5

5.26 In September 2017 a SEND OFSTED inspection working group was established that consisted of officers within the Local Authority, healthcare, social care and parent/carers.

5.27 Since September 2017, the Self-evaluation Form (SEF) and a Quality Improvement Action Plan (QIP) has been developed. Members of this working group initially met fortnightly to develop and populate both documents, whilst ensuring that pertinent information was evidenced. As both documents are now being populated routinely, meetings have transitioned to monthly occurrences. OFSTED inspection briefing notices have been issued to all schools within Slough to ensure that schools are prepared for the inspection.

Parents / Carers

5.28 Parent Carer Forums are representative local groups of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities who work alongside local authorities, education, health and other service providers to ensure the services they plan, commission, deliver and monitor meet the needs of children and families.

5.29 Slough has a strong and prominent parent carer form called Special Voices. Special Voices is a group of parents/carers of children and young people with special/additional needs. Special Voices are all volunteers working in partnership with voluntary and statutory organisations. The main aim of Special Voices is to raise awareness about the rights and needs of children/young people with special needs and to ensure that they and their families are consulted and involved in any decisions made during planning or developing services for them.

5.30 Slough SEND Service, acknowledge the importance of Special Voices and thus the service works very close with them on both strategic and operational issues. Special Voices sit on the SEND Strategic Partnership Board, Local Offer steering group and have also attended SEND panel as observers. Any changes to documents that are used by parents/carers are consulted on via Special Voices.

SENCo Support to Schools

5.31 It has been acknowledged that a lack of local authority support for schools during the period of the SEND reforms has resulted in poor practice in some schools and a lack of understanding of statutory duties within some educational provisions.

5.32 In January 2018, a SENCO School Effectiveness Officer was confirmed in post. This post was created to support, up-skill and develop SENCOs at schools and to develop a SENCo network forum for all Slough Schools.

5.33 Although this post is relatively new, feedback from SENCOs within schools has been very positive. This member of staff will be responsible for developing a SENCo forum within Slough, which will provide thematic training and development opportunities. The role of the SENCO Effectiveness Officer is to also support school SENCOs in providing the appropriate information that will be considered at SEND panel for their students.

5.34 There is an expectation that that the development opportunities that are offered to schools will further help to promote the notion of inclusion within all settings in Slough.

Current Working Groups – Developments (Banding, Resource Bases)

5.35 There are currently two important working groups that are taking place to develop the SEND offer within Slough attributed to banding (individual top-up funding for schools) and Resource Bases (discrete specialist provision within mainstream settings).

5.36 The Banding working group endeavours to develop a transparent, top-up banding structure which meets the needs of children and young people with SEND within Slough, based on areas of identified need in the Code of Practice. The Banding working group has participation from a number of Head Teachers and Business Managers within Slough schools.

5.37 The Resource Base working group endeavours to ensure that the Local Authority utilises and commissions existing Resource Bases to ensure best outcomes for all SEND children and young people. The working group also endeavours to ensure that Resource Base provision promotes inclusion and promotes access to learning in mainstream settings for SEND children and young people.

Resource Bases within Slough:

#	School Name	Type
1	Baylis Court Nursery	Early Years Setting
2	Chalvey Nursery School	Early Years Setting
3	Slough Centre Nursery	Early Years Setting
4	Priory School	Primary
5	Colnbrook CofE Primary	Primary
6	Foxborough Primary	Primary
7	Godolphin Infant School	Primary
8	Godolphin Junior School	Primary
9	St Ethelbert's School	Primary
10	Marish Primary School	Primary
11	Castlevew School	Primary
12	Ryvers School	Primary
13	Westgate School	Secondary
14	Langley Academy	Secondary
15	Slough and Eton School	Secondary
16	Ditton Park Academy	Secondary
17	Wexham School	Secondary

5.38 There is an expectation that both working groups will conclude by the end of the calendar year, in readiness for a new banding system to be in place for April 2019 and new Resource Base admissions criteria for September 2019.

Local offer

5.39 As part of the SEND reforms, local authorities are required to publish an online SEND 'Local Offer' which sets out all of the available services, information, advice and facilities available to children and young people with SEND across education, health and social care. This information should be pertinent for both pupils with and without an EHCP.

5.40 The local offer must include the local authority's area and provision outside the local area that the local authority expects is likely to be used by children and young people with SEND for whom it is responsible.

5.41 The local offer has two key purposes:

- To provide clear, comprehensive, accessible and up-to-date information about the available provision and how to access it
- To make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly involving children and young people with SEND, parents and service providers in its development and review

5.42 Slough's Local Offer has been subject to a £22,000 revision and was re-launched at an event on the 23rd November where 300 people attended. The Local Offer was re-launched during the annual 'Special Voices' exhibition and conference, an event that is run by Slough's parent/carer forum.

5.43 The Local Offer can be accessed using the link below:

<https://www.sloughfamilyservices.org.uk/kb5/sloughcst/directory/localoffer.page>

5.44 The new Local Offer has been used by both parent/carers and sampled by the Department for Education (DfE). The DfE mentioned that the new site was easier to navigate and that the information was clearer. Parent/carer feedback has been intrinsic to the development of the site and thus there is parent/carer representation within the Local Offer steering group to ensure that feedback is listened to.

6. **Comments of other Committees**

This report has not been considered by any other SBC Committees.

7. **Conclusion**

The SEND Service within Slough Borough Council is currently on a rapid journey to accelerate the delivery of the SEND reforms of 2014, whilst ensuring that the great level of change does not adversely affect children and young people with SEND. The transfer back from Slough Children's Services Trust to Slough Borough Council in October 2017 has helped to mitigate a number of historical issues. Although there is still considerable work to do, the service is now on track to provide the best possible outcomes for children and young people with SEND in Slough.

8. **Appendices Attached**

'A'	-	National Statistics for SEND
'B'	-	Conversion data
'C'	-	SEND Organisational Structure
'D'	-	SEND working groups – overview

9. **Background Papers**

1. Slough SEND Strategy (on request)
2. Slough SEND Strategic Partnership Board Terms of Reference (on request)
3. Banding Task + Finish Group Terms of Reference (on request)
4. Resource Base Task + Finish Group Terms of Reference (on request)