

Bracknell Forest Local Area

Summary of the Bracknell Forest local area's

Written Statement of Action (WSOA)

for children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) aged 0-25

June 2022



1. Foreword

This statement follows a joint inspection by Ofsted and the CQC, between 29 November 2021 and 3 December 2021, of Bracknell Forest to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. On 22 February 2022, inspectors issued their findings that the Local Area (the Local Authority and the relevant CCG) needed to produce a Written Statement of Action (WSOA).



Our WSOA sets out our plan to address the nine areas of significant weakness identified by Ofsted and the CQC.

In addition, the inspection identified areas for development and improvement that we have plans in place to address as well as areas of strength that we plan to build upon.

Local leaders recognise that our ambitions to support children and young people with SEND to achieve excellent outcomes had not been met prior to the inspection. It is the right of every child and young person to have access to high quality education, with the right support so that their personal ambitions can be realised. Unfortunately, for a period children and young people and parents and carers were not given access to the right support in a timely way to achieve these outcomes. We sincerely apologise to our parents, carers, young people, children, and education leaders for the weaknesses in the service and have welcomed the opportunity to engage with parents, carers, young people, education colleagues and the voluntary sector to develop a robust response and plan to address these weaknesses over the coming months and year.

As part of this work, Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) and Frimley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have jointly renewed our commitment to children and young people with SEND. Both organisations recognise that children, young people, and their families deserve much better services and we fully intend to deliver this. Developing and implementing this WSOA is seen as a key corporate priority, is being fully resourced and has strong political backing.

The feedback provided from Ofsted, the CQC and stakeholders is accepted as a fair judgment by local partners. Post pandemic, and prior to the inspection, we had already started reviewing our service offer and had ourselves identified areas for improvement and development.

Ensuring all children and young people with SEND are supported in achieving their aspirations is of paramount importance to us. Areas for development are already being addressed, but there are significant challenges ahead. Standards are not yet at the high level we expect of ourselves, or at the standard our children, young people and their families deserve.

We are determined to work with our partners to develop processes around co-production and ensure this is embedded at all levels. We can then produce strategies that lead to co-delivery of services, making the best use of resources available for SEND.

We acknowledge the significant financial challenges in balancing the High Needs Block budget at the same time as introducing rapid and significant improvements. To ensure we make progress with this we are participating in the DfE Delivering Better Value (DVB) in SEND programme which will provide additional support.

The Government's 'SEND review: right support, right place, right time' was published on 11 April 2022. The Government stated it is determined to level up opportunities

for all children and young people – without exception. The SEND review emphasised that the ambition for children and young people with SEND should be in line with every other child. That ambition is matched locally by Bracknell Forest Council, Frimley CCG, and other key stakeholders.

Some changes will take time to establish and embed. However, work is already underway to deliver improvements, and as part of our co-production work on this WSOA we have identified some urgent actions that will be delivered at pace.

We will work together with our partners and families of children and young people with SEND to ensure we put children, young people, and families at the heart of what we do.



Grainne Siggins,

Executive Director: People at Bracknell Forest Council



Cllr Dr Gareth Barnard,

Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning at Bracknell Forest Council



Fiona Slevin-Brown,

Managing Director, Bracknell Forest Place, for Frimley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

2. Introduction

Ofsted and the CQC have determined that the Local Authority and the CCG will be jointly responsible for submitting this statement to Ofsted. The Written Statement of Action (WSOA) will address nine areas of significant weakness raised by the inspection, namely:

1. the lack of a clear, co-produced strategy for how the much-needed improvements and change will be brought about
2. parents' and carers' lack of confidence in the education, healthcare and social opportunities for children and young people with SEND, alongside their frustration at the poor communication they experience with the SEND team
3. the lack of co-production with children and young people with SEND and their families, and with professionals. This includes the limited parental representation at a strategic level
4. the lack of appropriate educational provision for a significant proportion of children and young people with SEND in the borough
5. the lack of support available to children and young people while waiting excessive amounts of time to access occupational therapy services. Also, the lack of capacity in the occupational therapy team, resulting in delays to their contributions to EHCPs
6. the high number of children and young people with SEND who reach a mental health crisis because of a lack of timely support to prevent further escalation
7. the lack of established, effective panel arrangements to decide next steps in the graduated approach used for pupils who receive SEND support
8. insufficient long-term planning for young people as they move into adulthood
9. parents' and carers' lack of awareness of available advice, support, or social care provision. The lack of age-appropriate social opportunities for older children and young people with SEND.

We recognise that to respond to these areas of weakness we will need to deliver a wide range of improvements. Alongside our families of children and young people with SEND, representatives, and partners, we have co-produced a range of objectives and actions within the plan below. We believe these actions will substantially improve outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND in the borough.



Improvement area 1	The lack of a clear, co-produced strategy for how the much-needed improvements and change will be brought about.
Intended outcomes	<p>Completion of a new strategy for SEND that includes a co-produced vision for children and young people with SEND that focuses our work in the future.</p> <p>The new strategy will support alignment and co-production around a rigorous focus on meeting needs of children and young people with SEND.</p>
What does good look like for children and families?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will have a new strategy in place that sets a clear vision and aspiration for children and young people with SEND in the borough. This will be highly visible and understood and will set the standards we will work towards. 2. The strategy will be co-produced and will be shaped by the views of children, young people, their families, schools, and other partners who have contributed to establishing objectives and actions. It will outline the way that all partners will continue to work together to drive improvements.
<p>Objective/Vision</p> <p>1.1 To ensure there is a clear, co-produced strategy for how the improvements and change will be brought about.</p> <p>1.2 To ensure that we have an up-to-date SEND Strategy, and all related key strategic documents for the local area are up-to-date and complementary.</p>	



Improvement area 2	Parents’ and carers’ lack of confidence in the education, healthcare and social opportunities for children and young people with SEND, alongside their frustration at the poor communication they experience with the SEND team.
Intended outcomes	<p>Develop a co-produced communication and engagement charter, and fully embed two-way communication between the parents/carers and the SEND service.</p> <p>Parents/carers will be confident that their children’s needs will be met holistically, they will report an effective partnership with the SEND service, where communication is timely*, accurate and supportive and they feel listened to.</p>
What does good look like for children and families?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clear pathways for children and young people 2. Quality of delivery (in line with code of practice), which is tailored, integrated and continuous 3. Efficient and effective communication, with timely* responses and a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) within SEND Team 4. Improved engagement with all key stakeholders, to include health, social care, and other agencies 5. A well embedded professional partnership approach with families and carers, to ensure children and young people with SEND fulfil their potential, achieving good outcomes, through collaborative working. <p>*As set out within Communication Charter to be developed</p>
Objective/Vision <p>2.1 To ensure that deadlines and legal requirements are adhered to, thereby ensuring children and young people’s access to appropriate educational provision.</p> <p>2.2 To ensure consistent and high-quality communication between parents and professionals regarding the production of EHCPs.</p> <p>2.3 Improve the communication processes between the SEND team, parents and carers, and schools to improve quality of communication.</p> <p>2.4 Improve parents’ perception that they are ‘going into battle’ when trying to access provisions for their child’s needs by actively signposting available support services, including charities.</p> <p>2.5 To ensure all children and young people educated out of area have access to appropriate healthcare.</p> <p>2.6 To improve oversight in the healthcare system of children and young people with SEND who are home educated.</p>	

Improvement area 3	The lack of co-production with children and young people with SEND and their families, and with professionals. This includes limited parental representation at a strategic level.
Intended outcomes	To embed as business-as-usual a co-production approach with children and young people with SEND and their families, and with professionals.
What does good look like for children and families?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Voice of child-based stakeholders is considered to ensure council services are aligned 2. Person centred planning approaches are routinely used 3. Learner voice captured through an appropriate medium depending on their needs 4. Familial representation at a strategic level.
Objective/Vision 3.1 To improve co-production with children and young people with SEND and their families, and with professionals. 3.2 To ensure that EHCPs are consistently good quality, include up- to-date information and reflect the views of children and young people. Within this, ensuring that contributions from health professionals, e.g., school nurses and health visitors, are included in the EHCP process, and their contributions are accurately reflected.	



Improvement area 4	The lack of appropriate educational provision for a significant proportion of children and young people with SEND in the borough.
Intended outcomes	Develop and provide quality, accessible, appropriate educational provision for the large proportion of children and young people with SEND in the borough.
What does good look like for children and families?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having the right schools, in the right place, with the right support available in the borough 2. Clear levels of tiered provision that meet the needs of children and young people, from SEND support to the most complex SEND with EHCP, agreed, and developed across the borough with the aim that the vast majority of children and young people are educated in their locality.
Objective/Vision <p>4.1 To address the lack of appropriate educational provision for the large proportion of children and young people with SEND in the borough.</p> <p>4.2 To provide clarity and detail around application and attendance process for children and young people with SEND to access the newly opened special resources provisions to increase in borough service utilisation.</p> <p>4.3 To reduce fixed term exclusions for children and young people with SEND.</p>	



Improvement area 5	The lack of support available to children and young people while waiting excessive amounts of time to access occupational therapy services. Also, the lack of capacity in the occupational therapy team, resulting in delays to their contributions to EHCPs.
Intended outcomes	<p>Children/young people, families and carers feel supported whilst waiting for specialist support from the occupational therapy services. Families will be clear about what support is available and how this can be accessed.</p> <p>Contribution from an Occupational Therapist will be correctly identified and provided as part of the EHCP process within the expected time frame.</p> <p>There will be a reduction in waiting times for access to occupational therapy for a specialist assessment.</p>
What does good look like for children and families?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children and young people requiring support and input from occupational therapy services will receive this within an acceptable timescale in line with the aims of national benchmarking 2. Children/young people and families receive support to enable their needs, relevant to occupational therapy, to be met 3. Contributions to the EHCA process from occupational therapy will be completed within timescale.
Objective/Vision <p>5.1 To improve access to the occupational therapy service for children and young people.</p> <p>5.2 For families to feel supported and confident to meet their child’s needs whilst they are waiting to access occupational therapy services.</p>	

Improvement area 6	The high number of children and young people with SEND who reach a mental health crisis because of a lack of timely support to prevent further escalation.
Intended outcomes	To provide timely early mental health support to children and young people with SEND. To reduce the number of children and young people with SEND who end up in mental health crisis.
What does good look like for children and families?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children and young people receive appropriate and timely mental health support 2. Understanding of how and where to access support for mental health 3. Increased support, resources and communication available whilst awaiting specialist services.
Objective/Vision 6.1 To provide timely early mental health support to children and young people with SEND. 6.2 To reduce the number of children and young people with SEND who end up in mental health crisis.	



Improvement area 7	The lack of established, effective panel arrangements to decide next steps in the graduated approach used for pupils who receive SEND support.
Intended outcomes	<p>We will have robust and effective decision-making groups in place to ensure that consistent decisions take place in a timely way. These will be open and transparent and trusted by local partners, including parents of children and young people with SEND. There will be clear and effective communication between all professionals involved inside and outside of the panel. We will ensure there is appropriate engagement and involvement, including schools, on all panels</p> <p>Increased confidence in the system leading to fewer complaints and reduced frustration from parents.</p>
What does good look like for children and families?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children and young people are able to access the right support in the right place at the right time 2. Children, young people and families feel included in the decision-making process 3. Quality assurance processes will evaluate effectiveness and support a process of continuous learning.
Objective/Vision <p>7.1 To ensure that Bracknell Forest’s decision-making process, to support schools’ use of the graduated approach, is fit for purpose and that there are established, effective panel arrangements to decide next steps.</p> <p>7.2 To ensure that for children and young people who receive SEND support, schools use the graduated approach (assess, plan, do, review).</p>	



Improvement area 8	Insufficient long-term planning for young people as they move into adulthood.
Intended outcomes	<p>Increased number of children and young people in education, employment and training (EET)</p> <p>Children and young people having individual needs met by increased offer, and appropriate pathways for long-term living</p>
What does good look like for children and families?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will not go above national Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) levels for children and young people with SEND 2. Creative use of personal health budgets - more bespoke packages to allow them to stay in the local area 3. Voice of the young person's needs, aspirations and interests is captured in a way that is best for the young person and identified as soon as possible 4. Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) planning will be reflected across all agencies working with young people. Within health there will be evidence that young people are being offered, attending and benefiting from an annual health review with their GP, starting from age 14.
Objective/Vision <p>8.1 Improve long-term planning for young people moving into adulthood.</p> <p>8.2 To improve levels of aspiration for the future for children with the most complex needs within EHCPs.</p> <p>8.3 To reduce the number of young people with SEND who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) by improving the planning of Preparation for Adulthood (PfA).</p>	

Improvement area 9	Parents’ and carers’ lack of awareness of available advice, support, or social care provision. The lack of age-appropriate social opportunities for older children and young people with SEND.
Intended outcomes	Provide consistent signposting and easy access to sources of advice, support and social care provision to the families, parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. Improve access to age-appropriate social opportunities for older children and young people with SEND.
What does good look like for children and families?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Local Offer is coproduced to provide what children and young people with SEND want and need, allowing parents and carers to access the services they require 2. The Local Offer is a valued resource for children and young people with SEND, including professionals, allowing children and young people to have their needs met effectively and early 3. The Local Offer is used to understand gaps in the system and informs commissioning, ensuring children and young people have provision that they want and need.
Objective/Vision <p>9.1 Provide consistent signposting to sources of advice, support and social care provision to the families, parents and carers of children and young people with SEND.</p> <p>9.2 To ensure that children and young people with SEND have their social care needs assessed in a systemic and comprehensive way, including those not known to children’s social care.</p> <p>9.3 To ensure that children and young people, with a particular focus on older young people, are able to develop wider interests, develop independence and participate fully in their community by raising awareness of, and providing access to, social opportunities.</p> <p>9.4 To ensure consistency in the provision of advice, support and social care provision to children, young people, and families with SEND.</p>	

2022 SEN2 data - A data return that is a statutory requirement placed on Local Authorities. The information collected via the annual SEN2 survey form provides the major national source of data collected by central government on children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) (formerly statements of SEN)

Capita One - Capita One is a software system which is utilised to record child data and EHCPs for children and young people known to the SEND Service

CCG - Clinical Commissioning Group is a GP led organisation, responsible for understanding local health needs and planning and commissioning health services for the local population

CQC - Care Quality Commission. www.cqc.org.uk/

DfE - Department for Education. www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education

DMG - Decision Making Group. Decisions by local representatives made up of Health, Social Care and Head teacher representatives who allocate local resources and services

DBV - Department for Education's Delivering Best Value in SEND programme. This programme is part of the DfE's support package to help local authorities maintain effective SEND services while functioning sustainably.

EHCA - Education, Health and Care Assessment. A detailed process to find out what the child's or young person's special educational needs are and what provision should be put into place to meet them

EHCP - Education, Health and Care Plan. This is a legal document that describes a child or young person's special educational, health and social care needs. It also details the additional and/ or specialist support they need and the type of school placement they require to meet those needs and achieve the best outcomes

Executive - The Executive is made up of the Leader of the Council and 9 other Executive Members. www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/decision-making/how-we-make-decisions

High Needs Block - Funding provided by the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as part of the school's block to allow Local authorities to fund children and young people with SEND

IASS - Bracknell Forest Information, Advice and Support Service provides free, confidential impartial advice and support to parents, carers and children and young people who have, or may have, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Bracknell Forest www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-and-family-services/special-educational-needs-and-disability-send/information-advice-and-support-service

ICS - The Frimley ICS brings together the Local Authorities, NHS organisations and voluntary sector with a clear shared ambition to work in partnership with local people, communities and staff to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals, and to use our collective resources more effectively

ICB - Integrated Care Board. Each Integrated Care System (ICS) will have an Integrated Care Board (ICB) a statutory organisation bringing the NHS together locally to improve population health and establish shared strategic priorities within the NHS. When ICBs are legally established, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) will be abolished

ICT - Information and communications technology (or technologies), is the infrastructure and components that enable modern computing

JSNA - Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

KPI - Key Performance Indicator. A quantifiable measure of performance over time for a specific objective

LLDD - Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Local Area - the Local Authority area and relevant Clinical Commissioning Group; in this case Bracknell Forest Council and Frimley CCG

Local Offer - The Local Offer gives children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities and their families information about support services that are available SEND Local Offer. www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-and-family-services/special-educational-needs-and-disability/send-local-offer

Ofsted - Office for Standards in Education Ofsted. www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

OT - Occupational Therapy. It aims to improve someone's ability to do everyday tasks if they are having difficulties

PfA - Preparation for Adulthood

SEMH - Social Emotional and Mental Health

SEND Code of Practice - This document outlines the legal requirements and statutory duties as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014, the Equality Act 2010, and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

SEND - Special educational needs and disabilities

SIPB - SEND Improvement Partnership Board. A board which includes representatives from the council, early years, schools and colleges, Frimley Integrated Care System (ICS), Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (BHFT), Bracknell Parent Carer Forum and the voluntary and community sector

SLA - Service Level Agreement is a contract that establishes a set of deliverables that one party has agreed to provide to another

SMART actions – Actions that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timed

SPOC - single point of contact

VCS - voluntary and community sector

Workstream – a workstream is the completion of tasks carried out by different people from different teams on a project. A workstream uses a collaborative approach where the workstream group can make the necessary adjustments as the project evolves

WSOA - Written Statement of Action; an action plan to address significant weakness identified in the joint SEND inspection

