

## **Area SEND Methodology Pilots**

### **Overview**

Ofsted and CQC have been asked to develop a new area SEND inspection framework. This framework will focus more on the impact of area SEND arrangements on children and young people and their families. This is a change from the current approach which focuses on how well an area has implemented the government's 2014 SEND reforms.

We have identified critical features of an effective SEND system and what it takes for area SEND arrangements to result in significant and sustained improvement for children and young people with SEND. We will be reviewing how strategic leadership leads to improvement in the experiences, progress and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.

### **Purpose**

We are intending to test different aspects of our methodology in pilots. We will combine the learning from these pilot visits with information from key stakeholders (such as children and young people) and this will inform the development of the framework and the public consultation.

Please do not feel you have to adapt the methodology to "make it fit" in your local area. We want to know what works and what needs adapting.

### **Focus**

Ofsted and the CQC have identified the features of effective local SEND arrangements from research, inspection evidence and consultation with children, young people, families, leaders and practitioners. We have used these features to create the draft evaluation criteria. Inspectors will use the draft evaluation criteria to judge the effectiveness of the area partnership's SEND arrangements and their impact on the experiences and outcomes of children and young people.

Inspectors will evaluate the impact for children and young people, including the extent to which:

- children and young people's needs are identified accurately and assessed in a timely and effective way
- children, young people and their families participate in decision-making about their individual plans and support
- children and young people receive the right help and support at the right time
- children and young people are well prepared for their next steps and achieve strong outcomes
- children and young people are valued, visible and included in their communities

Inspectors will evaluate how the local area partnership work together to plan, evaluate and develop the SEND system, including the extent to which:

- leaders are ambitious for children and young people with SEND
- leaders actively engage and work with children, young people and families
- leaders have an accurate, shared understanding of the needs of children and young people
- leaders commission services and provision to meet the needs and aspirations of children and young people
- leaders evaluate services and make improvements
- leaders create an environment for effective practice and multi-agency working to flourish
- the local authority commission suitable alternative provision to meet the needs and aspirations of children and young people in its local area.

## **Case Tracking**

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We will “track” a small group of children and young people during the pilot. We are doing this to understand better the “lived experiences” of children and young people, and their families.

We will meet (virtually) with parents and carers, the child or young person (if this is appropriate) and a multi-agency group of practitioners across education, health and care who are working directly with the child/young person.

We will identify any queries / “lines of enquiry” from these meetings which we will want to follow up through case sampling and / or meetings and / or reviewing additional documentation.

### **How case tracking works in practice?**

We will track six children and young people through the pilot.

We will start by asking you to provide a list of 100 children and young people with SEND in your area – approximately 60% of these should be in receipt of EHCPs and 40% should be receiving SEN support. We will send you a template to fill in with specific information about these children and young people.

Inspectors will then meet and agree a list of 6 children and young people (plus 4 additional children and young people in case there are any issues with the initial 6) who we would like further information about. We will send you a template to be completed for these 6 children/ young people.

We will ask you to upload this information to a Sharepoint site so that inspectors can review before the pilot.

The lead inspector will ask the LANO to coordinate sharing information with the inspection team about the children and young people being tracked. This information will include:

- a chronology of significant events in the 2 years before the inspection
- a pen portrait of the child or young person, including information about their needs, aspirations and support
- a multi-agency summary of the child or young person's programme and support, including an evaluation of the impact, and learning for the providers and services involved

Inspectors also ask for further information, including the:

- most recent assessment, including early help assessment
- most recent plans, including an EHC plan, personal education plan, or care plan where relevant
- notes of any multi-agency discussions or equivalent
- current commissioning agreement where a child or young person is in alternative provision

### **Meetings with parents / carers, and children and young people**

We would like to set up individual calls with an inspector and the parents or carers of children and young people identified as part of the case tracking. We will let you know the individual inspector who will be talking to parents/carers and their children/young people (if appropriate).

We recognise that some children / young people will not wish to talk to inspectors, for others they may wish to do this supported by parents or carers and others may wish to talk to inspectors on their own or supported by someone else. We will talk to you to identify the best way of engaging with the children and young people we have identified. We will then set up meetings with inspectors and parents / carers, children and young people (if appropriate). These meetings will be conducted virtually and will usually be conducted on the Thursday or Friday before inspectors are on-site. We would really appreciate your support in arranging these meetings using the best virtual platform for parents and carers, and children and young people.

### **Meetings with practitioners**

We would also appreciate your support to identify and set up meetings with practitioners who are working with the child or young person and their family. We intend to have six meetings, one for each child or young person.

Meetings are intended to last about an hour, although please let practitioners know that if they can't make the whole meeting that they can drop-in to let us know about

the support they provide. We would really appreciate practitioners attending these meetings from across all the services the child or young person is supported by.

Practitioners should be currently working with the child or young person or have worked with them over the past two years.

Some of these meetings will be conducted virtually, usually on the Friday before inspectors come on site.

## **Case Sampling**

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We intend to visit a number of settings and providers across health, social care and education to ensure we can follow up our queries and lines of enquiry. These queries may have been identified from the documentation you sent us, surveys, case tracking and meetings.

The lead inspector will ask for details of education, health and social care settings across the local area. They will then review with the inspection team and decide which settings will be visited for sampling. We would appreciate your support in letting settings know they have been selected for sampling and ensuring that they understand their provision is not being inspected.

Inspectors will meet with practitioners from the setting to discuss a number of children and young people (at least 3 children and young people in each setting). Inspectors will decide which children and young people are to be sampled based on their lines of enquiry and discuss their experiences and outcomes with the setting practitioners. Inspectors will expect to be able to access the following documents:

- most recent assessment, including early help assessments, if applicable
- most recent plans, including an EHC plan, personal education plan, or care plan where relevant
- notes of any multi-agency discussions or equivalent
- current commissioning agreement where a child or young person is in alternative provision

### **Education case sampling**

The primary purpose of these visits is to gather evidence about experience and outcomes of those children and young people who receive SEN support or who have EHCPs. Please remember that the inspection scope covers all those who reside in or are looked after to the local authority. It does not cover those who reside in other areas but attend schools within your boundary.

### **Health provider sampling**

The main purpose of the health provider visits is to further understand the experience and outcomes of children and young people in the assessment, intervention and transition stages of health support.

### **Social Care sampling**

The main purpose of the social care visits is to further understand the experiences of children and young people in the assessment, intervention and transition stages of social care support. These visits could include sampling with the disabled children's team, residential short breaks services, early intervention support and adult social care.

### **Surveys**

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We will send you three survey links when we formally notify

These surveys will be for:

- Children and young people
- Parents and carers
- Practitioners

We would greatly appreciate you sending these out to these groups. We will discuss the best way to do this on our calls before the pilot activity. We would like to send these surveys out to all children and young people, parents and carers and practitioners across the local area. We would welcome the chance to discuss how these surveys can be sent out to capture the most responses across all three groups.

In the pilots we will also include a request in the survey for children and young people, parents and carers and practitioners to give us feedback on whether the survey was easy to complete and asked the right questions.

### **Engaging with different groups of stakeholders**

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#### **Leaders**

Ofsted and CQC inspectors will meet with leaders to:

- a) Set the context
- b) Discuss self-evaluation and development plans
- c) Develop shared learning in agreed meetings throughout the onsite week
- d) Establish additional meetings to understand queries and lines of enquiry
- e) Feedback about surveys

#### **Parent and Carer Forum**

Ofsted and CQC inspectors will meet with PCF co-ordinators and/or members:

- a) Before the onsite visit to discuss the pilot and gain their feedback on the methodology
- b) To develop shared learning through meetings with leaders
- c) To identify lines of enquiry
- d) To feedback about surveys

### **Children and young people**

Ofsted and CQC inspectors will meet with children and young people with SEND:

- a) To discuss the pilot and gain their feedback on the methodology
- b) To identify lines of enquiry
- c) To develop shared learning
- d) To feedback about surveys

### **Parents and carers**

We will discuss with you the best ways to meet (virtually or physically) with groups of parents throughout the pilot. This may be with additional PCF members or with wider groups.

### **Notification call**

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We will ring at 9.00 a.m. (or at a time which you are available) two weeks before the planned on-site visit to formally notify you of the pilot. This call will be made to the DCS. A call will also be made to the nominated individual in the CCG by the CQC lead.

We will also contact the LANO to run through the pilot in more detail. This is likely to be in the afternoon of day 1 (two weeks before the planned on-site visit)

### **What we will share**

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We intend to share our learning on the inspection methodology as we go through the pilot. We have set up shared learning meetings throughout the week. We hope that you will use these meetings to share how it feels for you and any learning we need to be aware of. At the end of the pilot, we will share our overall learning.

There will be no judgements or individual reports published after the visit. The purpose of the pilot inspection is to test the ways in which inspectors will gather evidence, and whether the evidence collected would allow them to fully gauge the effectiveness of local SEND arrangements in improving the experiences, progress and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.