

Public Report  
Improving Lives Select Commission

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**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Improving Lives Select Commission – 12 September 2023

**Report Title**

Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Ofsted/Care Quality Commission -  
Written Statement of Action Update (WSoA).

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

No

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Nicola Curley – Strategic Director, Children & Young Peoples Service

**Report Author(s)**

Mark Cummins SEND Transformation Project Lead  
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**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

The report gives an update on progress against the Written Statement of Action following support and challenge meeting 5 with the Department for Education and NHSE.

**Recommendations**

1. For the Improving Lives Select Commission to accept the report and note the progress made following the final support and challenge meeting as part of the Joint Written Statement of Action
2. For Improving Lives Select Commission to note the planned activity and progress as part of preparation for inspection under the new framework and SEND Development plan for Rotherham.

**List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 - Written Statement of Action

Appendix 2 - Performance reporting pack for support and challenge 5

## **Background Papers**

Ofsted/ Care Quality Commission SEND Local Area Inspection – Written Statement of Action – Cabinet paper 08/03/2022

[Area SEND inspections: framework and handbook - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/area-sen-send-inspections-framework-and-handbook)

## **Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

Name of Committee – Click here to enter a date.

## **Council Approval Required**

No

## **Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## **Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Ofsted/Care Quality Commission - Written Statement of Action Update (WSOA).**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 Between 5 July 2021 and 9 July 2021, Ofsted, and the Care Quality Commission (CQC), conducted a joint inspection of the local area of Rotherham to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the disability and special educational needs reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND (Special Education Needs and Disability) Code of Practice.
- 1.2 Following conclusion of the inspection it was judged that Rotherham local area should have a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) – (Appendix 1), as a result of four main areas of identified significance weakness:
  - The variability in the quality of EHC plans, including the contribution of health and social care partners.
  - The effectiveness of the graduated response to identify and meet children and young people’s needs, especially in key stages 1 and 2.
  - The quality of provision for children and young people’s preparation for, and transition to, adulthood.
  - Communication with all parents and carers of children and young people with SEND about the local offer, and the accessibility of the very valuable information included within the local offer.
- 1.3 Following the local area inspection in Rotherham there has been significant focus on addressing the direction given. Senior leaders across Education, Social Care, Health, and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have met to ensure that processes are in place to address the delivery of Rotherham’s Written Statement of Action. This included the creation of a SEND Executive Group that includes RMBC Directors of Children’s/Adult Services/ Senior Leaders from across a range of health partners and other leaders across education/health.
- 1.4 The SEND Executive Group is a key decision-making group addressing any identified challenges and support for the subgroups for the four areas of identified weakness to make continued progress/improvements.
- 1.5 The SEND Strategic Partnership Board, jointly chaired by RMBC Director of Children’s services and CCG (now known as Integrated Care Board -ICB) Executive Place Officer agreed that there should be four subgroups established each one of them leading on an area of weakness.
- 1.6 From March 2022 each sub-group has met on a monthly basis to deliver against defined action plans linked to the original inspection. Each sub-group

has multi-agency representation across health, social care, education, adult services and from Rotherham Parent Carer Forum.

- 1.7 Each sub-group has a set of KPI's which form the WSoA performance scorecard, each sub-group also produces a monthly highlight report which identified key progress, issues and risks which are presented to SEND Executive Group
- 1.8 The Department for Education and NHSE have held 5 support and challenge meetings to measure progress against the WSoA. Each meeting is supported by a note of visit with feedback on progress and recommendations for the next period.

## **2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 The most recent support and challenge meeting was held on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June. The overarching aim was to judge the rate of progress for each area of the WSoA accounting for implementation and focusing on evidence and impact measures.
- 2.2 The performance reporting pack submitted for support and challenge 5 is included as Appendix 2. The performance reporting pack included updated action plans, performance data and narrative document which detailed key developments during the period.
- 2.3 In line with the recommendations from previous support and challenge meetings there was a renewed emphasis on demonstrating evidence of impact and outcomes, this included providing a range of additional quantitative and qualitative measures including performance metrics, case studies, questionnaires and direct feedback from parent carers and young people.
- 2.4 As part of Support and Challenge 5 the local area were keen to demonstrate the significant investment into creating a shared multi-agency commitment to SEND in Rotherham. To facilitate the initial part of the meeting focused on Senior Leaders providing updates from across Social Care, Education, Inclusion, Health, Adults, Rotherham Parent Carer Forum, and the Cabinet Member for CYPS.
- 2.5 Comments from the draft note of visit following support and challenge 5 suggested that Rotherham has made considerable progress in its focus on 'impact'. Impact relates primarily to "the day-to-day lived experiences of children, young people with SEND and their families".
- 2.6 Following support and challenge meeting 5 it was confirmed that Rotherham wouldn't be subject to a re-visit based on progress against the Written Statement of Action, instead any re-inspection would form part of the timetable under the new framework. To support a multi-agency SEND Inspection planning group has been established to identify key activity for preparation for inspection under the new framework.

- 2.7 We also received confirmation that the formal support and challenge process in its current form will not extend beyond meeting 5 and that progress will be embedded as part of business-as-usual practices and the SEND Development plan for Rotherham.
- 2.8 To support with next steps in line with the SEND Development Plan, each sub-group is currently reviewing its membership, governance, action plans and future performance requirements. This will ensure that progress against each area is maintained along with a focus on preparation for inspection. This work will continue to be overseen by the SEND Executive Group.
- 2.9 The SEND Development plan will inform the new SEND Strategy for Rotherham, this will build on learning from our Written Statement of Action with an increased emphasis on measuring impact.
- 2.10 The current position of the Written Statement of Action has been presented as part of the Performance Board with actions continuing to be formally signed off as part of the established evidence challenge panel process.

### **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 3.1 This report is for information purposes and to provide feedback on the progress made against the Written Statement of Action.

### **4. Consultation on proposal**

- 4.1 There are no specific proposals as the report is for information and feedback purposes only.

### **5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

- 5.1 Not applicable as this report is for information purposes only.

### **6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications**

- 6.1 Not applicable as this report is for information purposes only.

### **7. Legal Advice and Implications**

- 7.1 Not applicable as this report is for information purposes only.

### **8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

- 8.1 Not applicable as this report is for information purposes only.

### **9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

- 9.1 Referenced within the report and Appendix 1

### **10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

10.1 Referenced within the report and Appendix 1

## 11. Implications for CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 Wider consideration of indirect implications or unintended consequence of work in this area has on CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions and Climate Change is considered across all partners as we are committed to long term targets to mitigate these areas of concern in the borough.

## 12. Implications for Partners

12.1 Ongoing updates are provided to key stakeholders including Parent/carers forum, health leaders, school leaders, Schools Forum, and other associated stakeholders. The SEND Executive and SEND Partnership board involve all Key Stakeholders and SEND is a Place Priority for Rotherham.

## 13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 All areas of SEND Written Statement of Action report to SEND Executive Board with all risks and mitigations accountable to the board. SEND is an also a Rotherham Place Board Priority.

### Accountable Officer(s)

Name, Nicola Curley - Strategic Director Children's Services

Name, Nathan Heath – Assistant Director Education and Inclusion

Approvals obtained on behalf of:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chief Executive		Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.
Assistant Director of Human Resources (if appropriate)		Click here to enter a date.
Head of Human Resources (if appropriate)		Click here to enter a date.
The Strategic Director with responsibility for this report	Nicola Curley – Strategic Director, CYPS	15/08/23
Consultation undertaken with the relevant Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People - Councillor Cusworth	30/08/23

*Report Author: Mark Cummins, SEND Mark Cummins SEND Transformation Project Lead*

This report is published on the Council's [website](#).