

Classification: Open	Decision Type: Non-Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 13 June 2024
Subject:	Bury Local Area SEND Inspection Report	
Report of	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	

Summary

1. Between the 12th and 16th February, Bury's local area SEND services were inspected by the Care Quality Commission and Ofsted. The inspection team identified widespread, systemic failings in services and highlighted the challenge that we need to do more to improve the outcomes of children and young people with special educational needs.

The inspection identifies 6 priority actions which Bury Council and NHS Greater Manchester ICB are jointly responsible for, along with 3 areas for improvement. As a result of the inspection outcome, the local authority will be issued with an Improvement Notice, and we will be subject to monitoring visits followed by a re-inspection in approximately 18 months.

Recommendation(s)

2. Cabinet is recommended to review the cabinet report and Priority Impact Plan

Reasons for recommendation(s)

3. To ensure Cabinet Members are sighted on progress of SEND improvement activity following our local area inspection.

Alternative options considered and rejected.

4. Not applicable.

Report Author and Contact Details:

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5. Background

In January 2023, Ofsted & CQC launched an updated inspection framework in relation to local area SEND inspections.

The scope of the inspection:

- Extent to which local area partnership arrangements ensure children and young people's needs are identified and assessed correctly, with participation from families in the decision making, leading to them receiving the right help at the right time and are well prepared for their next steps, achieve strong outcomes and are valued and visible in their communities.
- How the local area partners work together to plan and evaluate the SEND system, including the extent to which leaders are ambitious for children and young people with SEND, actively engage with children and families, have an accurate and shared understanding of local need, commission and plan services to meet these needs, evaluate services and create an environment in which effective multi-agency practice can flourish

There are 3 possible outcomes to a local area inspection:

- 1) The local area partnership's SEND arrangements typically lead to positive experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The local area partnership is taking action where improvements are needed.
- 2) The local area partnership's arrangements lead to inconsistent experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The local area partnership must work jointly to make improvements.
- 3) There are widespread and/or systemic failings leading to significant concerns about the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND, which the local area partnership must address urgently.

The inspection framework is also more closely aligned to the ILACS framework, for example:

- Local areas are subject to judgement inspections every 5 years
- Where weaknesses have been identified (or if there are serious concerns), monitoring visits will take place
- Annual engagement meetings between Ofsted and the local area, which will include a review of our self-evaluation (SEF)
- Thematic visits

Of the 33 inspection reports published so far under the 2023 inspection framework, 9 have been found to provide positive experiences, 14 inconsistent experiences and 10 have had systemic failings. There have been 5 inspections in the North West region – 2 were found to have inconsistent experiences (Warrington & Trafford) and 3 had systemic failings (Oldham, Halton & Bury).

Development of Priority Action Plan

As a result of the inspection outcome, the Bury local area is required to produce a Priority Action Plan, which we are locally referring to as our Priority Impact Plan (PIP).

The PIP will by default will become the main strategic plan for SEND, setting out what needs to be delivered in the next 18-24 months with key milestones and key performance indicators.

Co-production has been central to our approach in the development of our PIP. We have made every effort to co-produce this with stakeholders, including parents and carers, however our methods of co-production in this instance have not been as measured nor inclusive as we would normally strive for due to the speed at which the plan has needed to be delivered (deadline for submission was within 5 weeks of the report being published). Timescales have proved challenging, including for our parent carer forum who have been fully committed and engaged in the process and have given up significant chunks of time over the 5-week period to ensure their views and lived experience shaped the plan.

A working group was formed to include key stakeholders from across the local area including our parent carer forum Bury2Gether, representatives from schools and colleges, Council, local Integrated Care Board (ICB), Virtual School, Pennine Care Foundation Trust, our SEND Youth Ambassador and our independent Chair of our SEND Improvement & Assurance Board.

Two workshops were held where we:

- agreed the values and principles which we felt were important in how we worked together, this included curiosity, courage, commitment, confidentiality, confidence and creativity.
- agreed the structure of the priority plan – what was important for us to capture?
- reflected on the priority actions and areas for improvement and through group activity, collected ideas and feedback for the actions needed in each section of the plan.

Following the workshops, we held two further development sessions and included our DfE and NHSE Advisers, to broaden the scope of the feedback. Our Parent Carer Forum (PCF) Bury2Gether have been committed and engaged, present at every workshop and action planning meeting and have provided detailed feedback at every step. To ensure all parents and families have had opportunity to provide feedback, we shared a draft, working copy of the plan on our Local Offer and invited feedback from all stakeholders through an online form.

Our SEND Youth Ambassador and Inclusion Advocate engaged with our children and young people in different group sessions, including:

- Millwood Primary School's school council
- Bury's SEND Youth Voice Network
- Wicked Wednesdays SEND Youth Club
- Bury's Children in Care Council
- Bury's Youth Cabinet

There are parts of the revised Project Safety Valve agreement (agreed in January 2024) that currently sit outside the PIP – particularly the development of new local specialist provision - and we are considering how best to communicate the synergy of the two interventions in our governance arrangements (see below).

As detailed within our Priority Impact Plan, we are also reviewing our performance reporting around SEND improvement so while headline key performance indicators

have been included, there will be a more detailed and robust dataset that will be reported into the SEND Improvement & Assurance Board.

The first action with our Priority Impact Plan is to distil the local area SEND Strategy taking a 'Plan on a page' approach, co-producing this with our parents, carers and young people. This will be written to and for our children, young people and families and will clearly set out the strategy we have taken in Bury in the last 18-24 months which has been to improve early identification and support, improve the availability of resources and improve access to services (including reducing waiting times). We intend to complete this work in draft in June and fully launch in September. A review of the SEND system communications and new Communications Strategy is also a key action within the plan.

Governance arrangements

The newly formed SEND Improvement & Assurance Board (SIAB) is accountable to the Cabinet within the Council, and to the GM Integrated Care Board via the Locality Board, which operates as a sub-committee of the ICB Board. This Board replaces the previous SEND local area partnership Boards.

There are other Boards which are connected to the work of the SIAB but are not part of the formal reporting:

- The Health & Wellbeing Board operates as a standing committee on health inequalities and will be routinely updated on the work of the SIAB.
- The GM SEND Board co-ordinates interventions that require a GM wide commissioning response and is also a mechanism for sharing good practice; our Deputy Place Based Lead is a member of both Boards and acts as conduit
- Children's Strategic Partnership Board focuses on improved outcomes for all children and young people in Bury, and as such will be updated on the work of the SIAB as needed

The SIAB will meet monthly (first meeting took place on 17th June 2024), and will be independently chaired by Deborah Glassbrook who has experience of working with other local areas who are subject to intervention in relation to SEND. The Board will include strategic leaders from across the partnership:

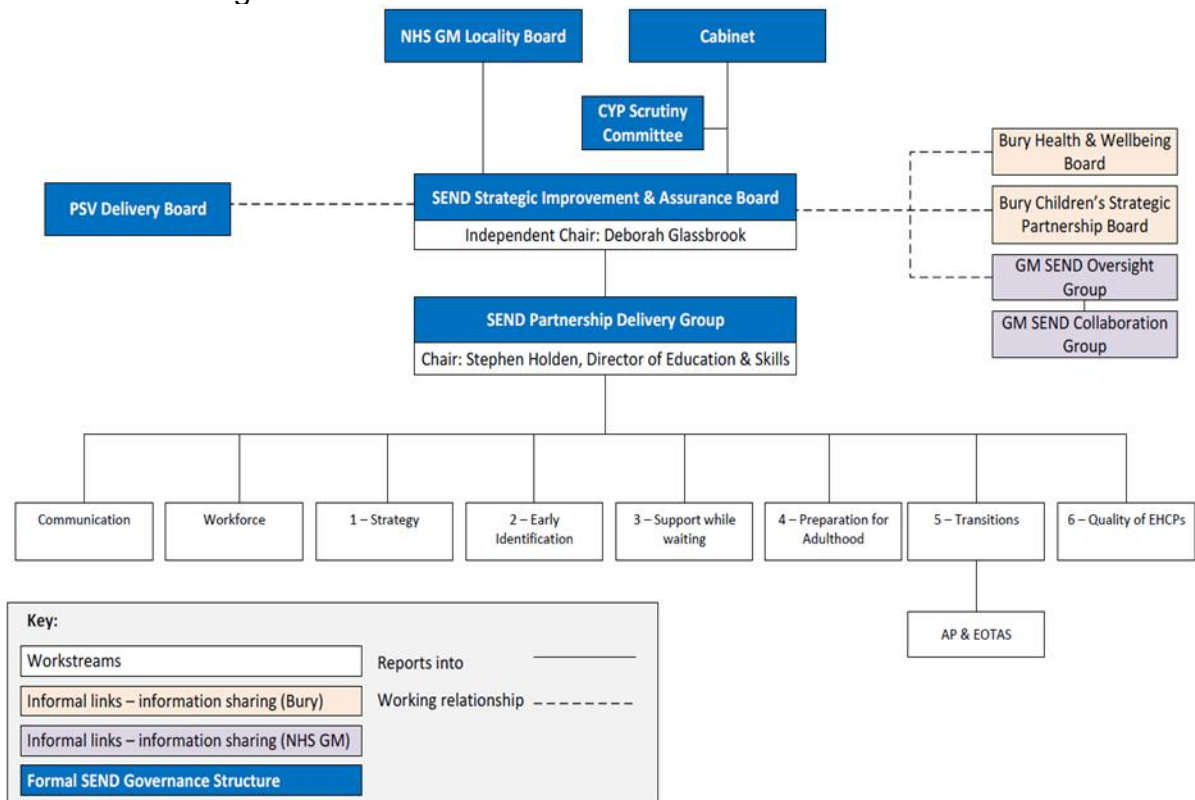
- Bury Council
- NHS GM
- Bury2Gether
- Primary School representative
- Secondary School representative
- Special School representative
- FE representative

Each Priority Action has a nominated lead officer, who will be a senior officer within their organisation. The Workstream Leads will provide monthly highlight reports to the SIAB, and ensure monthly reviews of the risk register. Reports will be expected to provide updates on activity, performance data and quality assurance findings.

The Priority Impact Plan was submitted to Ofsted & CQC for approval on 7th June 2024. On 21st June 2024, Ofsted confirmed (on behalf of Ofsted and CQC) that the plan has been reviewed and meets the criteria set out within the Area SEND

inspections framework and handbook, which also sets out the requirement for us to publish the plan within 5 working days. The plan was published on our local offer on 25th June 2024.

Governance Diagram:



6. Links with the Corporate Priorities:

Please summarise how this links to the Let's Do It Strategy.

The proposed actions outlined in this report support key ambitions of the Let's Do It strategy:

- A better outcome for the Children & Young People

Equality Impact and Considerations:

*Please provide an explanation of the outcome(s) of an initial or full EIA and make **specific reference regarding the protected characteristic of Looked After Children**. Intranet link to EIA documents is [here](#).*

7. This report is providing an update to the outcome of our local area SEND inspection and at this stage no decisions, actions or activities are being considered therefore no EIA is required.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

Please provide an explanation of the Environmental impact of this decision. Please include the impact on both **Carbon emissions** (contact climate@bury.gov.uk for advice) and **Biodiversity** (contact c.m.wilkinson@bury.gov.uk for advice)

8. N/A

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Local area does not make the needed improvements for children and young people with SEND, and their families	Priority Impact Plan (PIP) SEND Improvement Assurance Board – holding the local area to account on the PIP

A risk register is being developed under the SIAB and will be reviewed monthly by all workstream leads, ensuring that the Board has sight of any risks so issues can be addressed at the earliest opportunity.

Legal Implications:

To be completed by the Council's Monitoring Officer.

9.

Financial Implications:

To be completed by the Council's Section 151 Officer.

10.

Appendices:

Please list any appended documents.

Background papers:

Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.

Bury Local Area SEND Inspection report:
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/80443>

Priority Impact Plan: <https://theburydirectory.co.uk/news/send-improvement-plan>

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning
CQC	Care Quality Commission
FE	Further Education
ICB	Integrated Care Board
NHS GM	NHS Greater Manchester
PCF	Parent Carer Forum
PIP	Priority Impact Plan
SEND	Special Educational Needs & Disabilities
SIAB	SEND Improvement Assurance Board