

# SCRUTINY REPORT

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>Children's and Young People's Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>November 2025</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	The Local Area Response to the Published SEND inspection and monthly update
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>Jeanette Richards, Executive Director, Children's Services</b>
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Wendy Young, Head of Service – Inclusion &amp; SEND</b>

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## 1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 Following Bury's local area SEND services Inspection 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.

1.2 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 has been issued with an Improvement Notice and will be subject to monitoring visits followed by a re-inspection in approximately 18 months.

## 2.0 ISSUES

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

2.2 The PIP has been co-produced with stakeholders, including parents and carers and is the strategic plan for SEND, setting out what needs to be delivered in the next 18-24 months with key milestones and key performance indicators. The plan is published on our local offer.

2.3 Support for the delivery of the Priority Impact Plan has been supported through additional investment by the council and the ICB – this will support the programme management and governance (see below) but also address some of the critical deficits identified in the report. The level of investment secured is approximately £450,000 a year.

2.4 Bury Council has also applied for Intervention Support Fund (ISF), which is a targeted grant provided by the Department for Education (DfE) to support local authorities in England that are under formal intervention to bolster resources and further support the implementation of the Priority Impact Plan (PIP). A response to the grant application is currently awaited and further information, should this be granted at the next Scrutiny Committee.

## Governance arrangements

2.5 The 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 and replaces the previous SEND local area partnership Boards.

2.6 The SIAB meet monthly (first meeting took place on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2024), and benefits from an independent chair, Deborah Glassbrook who has experience of working with other local areas who are subject to intervention in relation to SEND. The Board include strategic leaders from across the partnership and a Delivery Group has been mobilised with Terms of Reference agreed, with active participation in both groups from across the partnership.

Project Management support is embedded to support the programme.

Minutes and papers from each SIAB are provided through the Local Offer Website to ensure visibility.

2.7 Each Priority Action has a nominated lead officer, who will be a senior officer within their organisation. The Workstream Leads 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 Local Area Priority Impact Plan (PIP) outlines the high-level strategic plan for SEND improvement, with the performance monitoring, future activity and risk/risk register. In accordance with the reporting requirements of this board and as part of this standing agenda item, Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee will be reported to in the same format.

## 2.8 Monitoring arrangements

Following an Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) SEND inspection, local areas are required to implement monitoring, support, and challenge arrangements to improve their SEND service delivery. This process involves several key steps:

**Monitoring:** Continuous oversight of the local area's SEND arrangements to ensure they meet the required standards.

**Support:** Providing guidance and resources to help local areas address any identified weaknesses.

**Challenge:** Holding local areas accountable for making necessary improvements.

Bury Local Area Partnership remains to be subject to such scrutiny. These arrangements, to date, have taken place in the form of 'deep dive' activities and 'stocktake' visits facilitated by the Department for Education and NHS England Colleagues.

The comprehensive reviews conducted by the Department for Education (DfE) and NHS England, as previously reported, was undertaken in December 2024 and more recently in July 2025. The purpose of these visits was to assess progress made by the local area in addressing the issues identified in the improvement notice, progress on the delivery of the Priority Impact Plan (PIP) and the impact to date.

## 2.9 SEND Service Launch, embedding 'Deep Dive@ Activities

In March 2025, the Local Area Partnership undertook a focused deep dive into Priority Area 2: Early Identification, with particular emphasis on the Graduated Approach, as previously reported. This initiative aimed to evaluate progress, interrogate current practices, identify root causes of persistent challenges, and explore opportunities for sustainable improvement. A robust evidence base was developed through comprehensive data collection and trend analysis, which continues to inform targeted actions across the system.

Building on this foundation, the Partnership has advanced the development of a locally tailored Ordinarily Available Provision, aligned with the Greater Manchester agreed framework. This integrated model embeds the Graduated Approach and is underpinned by a Communities of Practice structure to strengthen school-level support and peer learning. The model was formally launched alongside our updated SEND Strategy on 29 September 2025 at the Red Hall Hotel. The launch event was a significant success, with **95%** of local schools in attendance, reflecting strong sector engagement and commitment. Since the launch, further engagement activity has taken place to ensure broad understanding and uptake, including presentations at headteacher engagement meetings and dedicated sessions with Parent Carer Forum groups.

Implementation and embedding of these new models are now underway, with a clear focus on evaluating impact over time. This includes monitoring how the Ordinarily Available Provision is being applied in practice, how schools are engaging with the Communities of Practice, and how these developments are improving early identification and support for children and young people with SEND.

This work is particularly timely as the local area prepares for monitoring inspections under the SEND Inspection Framework, anticipated from Spring Term 2026 onwards. The evidence generated through these activities will be instrumental in demonstrating progress, evidencing impact, and ensuring inspection readiness across the partnership.

## 3.0 CONCLUSION

The Local Area SEND Partnership is continuing in its committed to improving services for children and young people with SEND and their families.

The SIAB has received assurance that we are progressing, in accordance with the commitments set out in the Local Area SEND Priority Impact Plan. There is still a considerable amount of work to be done, and it is essential that we maintain a consistent pace and ensure that we capture the impact for our children, young people and their families and that this is sustained throughout.

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### List of Background Papers:-

### Contact Details:-

*Wendy Young, Head of Service, SEND & Inclusion*

Executive Director sign off Date:\_\_\_\_\_

JET Meeting Date:\_\_\_\_\_