



Stockton-on-Tees

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Written Statement of Action

August 2019

Our approach and commitment

Partners in Stockton-on-Tees are committed to supporting all children and young people to reach their full potential.

This is especially important for those children with additional needs, who need more help to support them in developing the skills, confidence, resilience and independence they need to live fulfilling lives.

The strategic governance and drive for our combined efforts comes from the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Children and Young People's Strategy. The focus on giving children and young people the best start in life, and the emphasis on resilience, relationships, respect and response demonstrate a single minded and collaborative determination to improve the life chances and outcomes for all children, providing support to those who need it.

To this end, we will work in partnership as professionals from a variety of organisations and with children, young people and their families to ensure that services and support arrangements for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities are of the highest quality and have the maximum impact.

We have already developed a needs assessment and a joint commissioning strategy to drive forward our collaboration, and we have many examples of effective joint working – from the development of Enhanced Mainstream Schools to the new neurodevelopmental pathway. However, the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Local Area inspection in February 2019 highlighted a number of areas of weakness which we are addressing through this Written Statement of Action.

1. The lack of a clear commitment to and emphasis on co-production
2. A strategic focus on joint commissioning
3. Too much variability in the quality of Education, Health and Care Plans, and
4. The lack of a clear outcomes framework

We have taken stock of our approach to these issues, working together to understand the outcomes of inspection, and the inter-related nature of the issues, so that we avoid the temptation of defining actions in isolation, which will not result in the systemic change we believe is needed. Although there are many strengths in our system, as recognised in the inspection, we have much more work to do to be joined up in our approach.

Crucially, we want to develop a focus on an outcomes led system, which is the key driver for our actions. All other actions flow from this priority. We believe this will drive co-production, joint working, the redesign of services, better plans, and greater integration of education, health and care services and professionals to support children and families. One of our actions is therefore to have a new EHC Plan process in place by August 2020. This provides a focus for an outcomes led system, and a means of driving up quality.

This Written Statement of Action describes the actions we will focus on to address the weakness in the inspection; however, we remain equally committed to actions in a number of other areas which we also believe are important, and which form the basis of our SEND Strategic Improvement Priorities. We continue to believe that a focus solely on the WSOA will not, in itself, deliver the outcomes and ambitions we have identified. We will continue to develop and enhance the Local Offer, work with schools to reduce exclusions, review our arrangements for enhanced mainstream schools and the availability of specialists support for schools, for example.

Partners and the Parent Carer Forum have co-produced this WSOA through a series of workshops. That in itself signals a different approach to the way we work together. We have a very flat accountability structure, with key leads for each of these action areas, through the SEND Strategic Group, co- chaired by the Local Authority Director of Children's Services and the Head of Children's Commissioning at the Clinical Commissioning Group.

Governance and accountability is then directly in to the Health and Wellbeing Board, and to respective executive arrangements in the CCG and Council. We believe these arrangements are effective, but recognise there is more to do to communicate these and to ensure that parents feel involved at every step.

Weakness to be addressed: The quality of EHC assessments and plans is too variable																		
How will we know when this has been achieved: We will have a multi-agency agreement of what good EHCPs look like for Stockton on Tees, children/young people and their families. We will have systems and processes in place that can meet the statutory guidelines and ensure all EHCPs are of a high standard. We have a robust and effective method for monitoring quality and methods to implement positive changes where necessary.																		
Objective	Responsible Person(s)/ Post	Actions	Milestones												Evidence & Impact			
			Aug-19	RAG		Feb-20	RAG		Aug-20	RAG		Feb-21	RAG			Aug-21	RAG	
				Q1	Q2		Q3	Q4		Q5	Q6		Q7	Q8			Q9	Q10
2.1 To have a clear and agreed understanding of what a good Education Health Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA), Plan and Annual Review looks like and an agreed analysis of the current quality of Education Health Care Needs Assessments, Plans and Annual Reviews.	SEN & Engagement Service Manager Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) AD Children's Social Care CCG SPCF	2.1.1: Undertake a multi-agency review of Current EHCNA and Annual Review process including the quality assurance (QA) of evidence, PCP Meetings and drafting of EHCP's	Complete QA sample of annual reviews.			Complete multi agency assessment and map what a good EHCNA/Annual Review process looks like.			Share learning								Evidence: Clear and agreed understanding of what a good EHCNA, Plan and Annual Review process from start to finish looks like. Agreed analysis tests hypothesis - quality of EHCP's drop year on year as a result of lack of engagement from agencies Engagement events with parents/carers, children and young people Impact: Test the hypothesis and the current QA tool Builds engagement with parents on quality issues and identifies areas for improvement. Children and young people's views and experiences are being used to develop services ensuring that they are central to this process.	
		2.1.2: Engage with parents/carers regarding quality of EHCP's and annual reviews.			Engagement events completed as per the identified methods (Ref Action 1.1.4). Identify concerns for parents and share plans for improvement					Ongoing engagement to ensure open lines of communication regarding the quality of EHCP's and Annual Reviews.								
		2.1.3: Engage with children and young people regarding their EHCP's and annual reviews			Methods determined and experiences obtained regarding the children and young people's views													
		2.1.4: Undertake a multi-agency QA sample review of EHCP's.			QA sample completed and analysis of areas of strength and weakness to commence						Annual process fully implemented							
		2.1.5: Identify and prioritise areas to focus on for improvement based on clear analysis across the system.						Full review of EHCP's and annual reviews are completed, and priorities identified.										
2.2 To improve the systems and processes (as per outcomes of Action 2.1) to ensure all Education Health Care Needs	SEN & Engagement Service Manager DCO	2.2.1: Develop and initiate action plan focusing on areas for improvement.						Full review of EHCP's and annual reviews are completed, and action plan developed.								Evidence: We will have a clear plan for improvement		

Assessments, Plans and Annual Reviews are of a high standard.	AD Children's Social Care	2.2.2: Co-Produce a multi-agency audit process to review and success quality			Multi Agency Assessment process developed and tested				Annual process implemented					We will have a renewed focus on person centred planning at the heart	
	CCG	2.2.3: Develop and implement a co-produced Education Health Care Needs Assessment, Plan and Annual Review process and improve EHCP document format.			Current process and format tested as per Action 2.1			Improved EHCNA, Plan and Annual Review process and format developed, inclusive of outcomes framework. Endorsed by the SEND Strategic Group	Co-Produce a multi-agency user guide. Providing comprehensive guidance on the EHCP process. Endorsed by SEND Strategic Group					We will have undertaken a review of the EHC assessment and plan process	
	SPCF											SEN Framework Guidance endorsed by SEND Strategic group and published.			We will have an effective means of undertaking assessment through a system
			2.2.4: Refresh focus on person centred planning as part of the new process					Schools and settings attend training on running Person Centred Planning meetings		PCP meetings are held at the first drafting of every new EHCP.					Multi-Agency involvement in EHCP drafts
			2.2.5: Improve and embed the SEN portal to support effective and efficient processes	Identify methods to successfully engage re SEN portal across all agencies		Full engagement with the SEN portal across all agencies.			There is an evidenced increase in multi-agency involvement.	75% of Statutory advice is submitted on time	90% of parents/carers are signed up and using the portal.	100% Statutory advice is submitted on time via the portal			Impact:
		Identify key personnel to be involved in the SEN portal development work		Deliver training for all Education, Health and Care professionals developed and publish training on the local offer.		There is an evidenced increase of statutory advice being submitted on time via portal.									Outcomes forms and processes updated.
			2.2.6: Review capacity based on volume and new process to include possible restructure and roles/remit	Review current demand against capacity		Initial restructure and realignment completed									More efficient process
		2.2.7: Develop training for partners on the process, what good looks like, and quality standards – to include sessions, online in induction	Joint training with DCO & Local Authority for Health professionals		Training programme developed that will include but not limited to:			Outcomes framework training embedded into ongoing programme.	All contributory agencies include SEND training in their induction and annual training programme to ensure all staff are kept up to date on					Clear lines of accountability	
		Multi-Agency training on statutory requirements in Annual Reviews		What good looks like & quality standards, Statutory guidelines and timescales, SEN portal, PCP Meetings											

We will have a renewed focus on person centred planning at the heart

We will have undertaken a review of the EHC assessment and plan process

We will have an effective means of undertaking assessment through a system

Multi-Agency involvement in EHCP drafts

Impact:

Greater transparency in the process

More efficient process

Clear lines of accountability

Capacity aligned to the new process

EHCP's will be person centred

Complaints have been reduced

Parents do not feel they have to tell their story multiple times

					and developing outcomes framework.					current systems and processes.						
		2.2.8: Agree approach to rewrite/review of identified EHCP's.			Consultations with parents/carers.			SENDIASS section of the Local Offer developed to provide up to date information and support available.		First new plans developed through new system in place. Ongoing engagement with Parents/Carers to monitor quality.						
2.3 To have a well-developed, multi-agency process to measure quality that is understood and transparent.	SEN & Engagement Service Manager DCO AD Children's Social Care CCG SPCF	2.3.1: Deliver multi agency audit process and use the results of this to monitor and maintain a good quality in EHCP's and Annual reviews.			MAA Process designed			Reviews undertaken and outcomes fed into EHC plan process review								<p>Evidence:</p> <p>We have an understood affective and engaging mechanism to review quality</p> <p>We have an independent assurance check from another LA in place</p> <p>We have reported openly on progress and where we are</p> <p>Impact:</p> <p>We will have a system wide agreement on what good looks like to enable us to hold each other to account</p> <p>MAA and assurance systems will enable a focus on quality</p> <p>There will be increased confidence in the system from parents and carers linked to better feedback</p> <p>Complaints will reduce</p> <p>Parents/Carers, children and young people's feedback is instrumental in the monitoring of quality.</p>
		2.3.2: Develop and implement peer assurance process with another local authority			Approach tested											
		2.3.3: Develop a clear reporting and communication process to feedback on quality			Co-designed process in place - feedback from initial events											
		2.3.4: Develop parent carer communication strategy alongside co-production workstream.			Consultation with parents/carers to include continuing methods of feedback.			New EHCP process includes parent/carer feedback process as per identified methods.								
		2.3.5: Develop a method to capture child/young person's experience of process.						New EHCP process includes a children/young people's feedback process								

Weakness to be addressed: Strategic Joint Commissioning, in a way that demonstrably improves Education, Health and Care provision and outcomes for children, young people and families, is not fully embedded																		
We will know this is working well when: The detailed and comprehensive understanding of the needs of children and young people with SEND, and the needs of their families, is utilised to inform strategic planning. The Local Area will maximise all opportunities to jointly commission services and pathways which are able to demonstrate their contribution to improved outcomes for children, young people and families.																		
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			Aug-19	RAG		Feb-20	RAG		Aug-20	RAG		Feb-21	RAG			Aug-21	RAG	
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3.1 To understand current and projected needs of children and young people with SEND to inform the joint commissioning of services	Strategic Development Manager SBC	3.1.1: Detail an evidenced based, robust analysis of the needs of the Local Area's SEND population to develop a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)	Multi-agency Needs Assessment Working Group established			Accurate local information collated, analysed and shared with Needs Assessment Working Group											Evidence: JSNA is published on Stockton-On-Tees JSNA website Gap analysis is published Impact: Provides local leaders with an understanding of population need and gaps in service provision. Identified gaps in specific service area can be reviewed, re-commissioned and/or decommissioned This allows for the effective joint planning and commissioning of services and pathways.	
	Head of Commissioning & Strategy, CCG	3.1.2: Prepare a gap analysis based on refreshed JSNA to identify gaps in provision and pathways. Identify areas where services need to be developed, thorough a joint commissioning approach.			Draft gap analysis based on the refreshed JSNA drafted and published. Shared with SEND Strategic Group and the Health & Wellbeing Board													
3.2 To Jointly commission co-produced services and pathways which are able to demonstrate their contribution to improved outcomes for children, young people and families	Strategic Development Manager SBC	3.2.1: Joint Commissioning Workstream to review the Joint Commissioning Strategy and develop a refreshed action plan which identifies agreed priorities between Education, Health, Social Care, parents/carers, children and young people	Revised Terms of Reference and membership for joint commissioning workstream in place.														Evidence: SEND Joint Commissioning Strategy reviewed and presented to SEND strategic group SEND Joint Commissioning action plan endorsed and published SEND Co-production strategy developed, endorsed and published Balanced scorecard report to SEND strategic group which includes indicators for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Service access •Service user experience •Outcomes Evidenced by: Action logs of	
	Head of Commissioning & Strategy, CCG	3.2.2: Develop and implement system wide reviews of service provision across Education, Health and Care in line with priority areas identified.	Meetings are in place and an indicative timeline for implementation of action plan has been developed			System wide review of service provision has commenced			System wide service reviews completed, and recommendations endorsed by SEND Strategic Group									
						Undertake rapid needs assessment for			Priority needs assessments			Service specifications and						

<p>3.3 Improve processes to use strategic information about achievement of outcomes to influence commissioning</p>	<p>Service Area Leads</p>	<p>3.3.1: Align workstreams to ensure that ongoing work is coherent and congruent</p>											<p>Evidence: As per Action 4.4</p> <p>Impact: Joint commissioning is providing provision that provides better outcomes for children, young people and their families.</p>
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Weakness to be addressed: Local leaders have not developed an effective approach to measuring and evaluating EHC outcomes for children and young people.

We will know this is working well when:

Local area leaders have developed and implemented an effective approach to identifying, measuring and evaluating EHC outcomes for children and young people

Practitioners have a clear understanding of outcomes and the differences between actions, provision resources and outcomes and participate effectively with children and young people, their families and professionals in the development, review and evaluation of personal outcomes.

Objective	Responsible Person(s)/ Post	Actions	Milestones												Evidence & Impact			
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4.1 To develop and embed an outcome focused approach	Service area leads	4.1.1: To review, evaluate and understand the developing local area SEN process to develop better outcomes – our readiness and where we need to focus	Revisit outcomes group deep dive work and baseline developed in 2018			Continued and ongoing engagement with stakeholders to sense check what and how services should be evaluated against- what does good look like. Audit tool to be reviewed and developed.			Ensure outcomes are embedded into new EHC Plan process			Re-engage on effectiveness of outcomes approach in new EHCPs					<p>Evidence:</p> <p>Audit Tool measure progress and development</p> <p>Impact:</p> <p>Increased understanding and awareness of current practice enabling issues to be identified, addressed and good practice shared</p> <p>Mapping of processes alongside one another enables the development of congruent processes</p> <p>The logged baseline of current practice will provide a mechanism to measure change over time and improve quality. This will inform other workstreams (quality of EHCP and joint commissioning)</p>	
		4.1.2: Embed a collective understanding and definition of outcomes and impacts for children/ young people with SEND and their families	Definitions developed by working group in December 2018. CDC Outcomes Training June 2019. Development of training and awareness sessions for multi-agency workforce			Develop staff understanding of outcomes and how to write and evaluate effective outcomes and steps towards outcomes as part of EHCP process Session planned for October 2019			Develop and embed processes to reflect agreed definitions and newly developed frameworks as part of EHC new approach			Develop and publish SEN Framework Guidance (Fact Sheet) Work alongside SENDIASS, in line with the Co-Production workstream to make information available through the Local Offer					<p>Evidence:</p> <p>Definitions published with stakeholders for continued oversight</p> <p>Multi-agency, multi-area awareness raising session - Feb 2019</p> <p>CDC Development Day - June 2019</p>	
		4.1.3: Develop and implement a multi-agency workforce development programme to ensure a collective	Continued development of understanding within wider workforce of Education, Health and Care			Outcomes fact sheet developed and endorsed by SEND Strategic Group. Multi-agency and public distribution of fact sheet			Dynamic and responsive training programme to be implemented formally			Review impact of training on quality of outcomes being generated in EHCPs						<p>CDC Outcomes & NDti PFA Awareness session - July 2018</p> <p>EHCP Writer training for wider workforce in Education, Health and Care</p>

		developed and embedded into the new EHC process.			exemplar framework and template to feed into ongoing EHCP review			processes internally to accommodate revisions to outcomes measurement processes. SEN Portal updated to capture revised forms and processes.			framework and data capture using thematic analysis of outcomes and measurable impact alongside annual quality audit				services are meeting the needs of young people; by SEND need, age etc. and identify potential gaps in services or provision to inform commissioning intentions and work force development Documentation will be fit for purpose and in line with expectations of partners / users.
4.3 Improve processes to measure achievement of outcomes at a strategic level	Service Area Leads	4.3.1: Propose a framework for outcome development within EHCP's	Co-Produce outcomes model in line with PFA themes.				Reviewed and develop EHCP process (including documentation, data flow and pathways).			First review of progress					
	SEN & Engagement Service Manager Support from Service Area Leads	4.3.2: Develop systems and mechanisms to measure performance management and review process in outcomes of individuals and agencies.								Review of first evidence across the system, and agencies about outcomes approach and ability to report across the system			Continued development of defined framework of how outcomes will be developed, identified and achievement monitored.		
4.4 Improve processes to use strategic information regarding outcomes to contribute to joint commissioning	Service Area Leads	4.4.1: Explore options/potential issues in relation to reporting of data and information sharing across agencies.			Agreement of PFA outcomes and service level milestones and measures established. Performance management framework to be agreed. Identifying activity information and qualitative outcomes information. Agree minimum data set to be collected and reported for SEND Strategic Group Develop contracts and monitoring arrangements		Appropriate contacts across agencies identified to enable an agreed information sharing process to be established Limitations of current systems to be identified								Evidence: Data sets reported to SEND Strategic Group Up to date service level information Impact: Ongoing and improved understanding and awareness of current and developing practice. Issues are identified and on an ongoing basis. Themes can be identified and improved services can be designed and delivered to children and young people with SEND and their families
		4.4.2: Develop process for ongoing transfer of service level information to be set up across agencies as Business as Usual Reporting to inform future commissioning					Functionality of IT and Case Management Systems investigated in relation to reporting. Key Areas to be identified. Appropriate contacts identified within each agency and agreed information								

