

Report to Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board

13 November 2023

Subject:	ASEND Inspection Outcome and Next Steps
Director:	Director of Children and Education Michael Jarrett
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1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Board considers and comments upon the ASEND Inspection outcome and next steps.
- 1.2 That the Children and Education Scrutiny Board note the information provided in this report.
- 1.3 That the Children and Education Scrutiny Board provide support and governance for the improvements made by the Local Area Partnership in driving the necessary improvements leading up to the next successful inspection in Summer 2026.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 To provide an update on the ASEND Inspection conducted by Ofsted/CQC between 19th June and 7th July 2023.



3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people</p> <p>The local area partnership's response to the ASEND inspection links with the Directorate Business plan commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ensure that children and young people with SEND can access high quality local services when they need them, by working with partners to ensure there is a comprehensive local offer available to children and families• work with partners to make sure that vulnerable children in our community receive the right support to enable them to thrive and have successful adult lives• work with schools and other learning providers to improve educational outcomes for children and young people <p>Through the delivery of the local area plan, local area partners will work collaboratively together to develop provision across the borough. This will help children and young people to be well-prepared for adulthood and employment and enhance their life chances and choices.</p>
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4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Following the last inspection of the Sandwell local area partnership for SEND in 2019, the Sandwell local area partnership for SEND was inspected over a period of 3 weeks by Ofsted / CQC between 19th June and 7th July 2023, evaluated against a new Ofsted / CQC inspection framework which was launched in January 2023
- 4.2 The revised framework 'evaluated' the effectiveness and impact of local area partners and the extent to which children and young people with SEND, including those who attend Alternative Provision (AP) settings, were receiving consistently good experiences leading to consistently good outcomes.



- 4.3 The inspection team found that children and young people with SEND, including those who attend AP settings, received inconsistent experiences leading to them achieving inconsistent outcomes in Sandwell. This is commonly referred to as a 'category 2' outcome for the local area partnership. A 'category 1' outcome is available to local area partnerships which can demonstrate consistent experiences leading to consistent outcomes for children and young people with SEND, including those attending AP settings. A 'category 3' outcome is given to a local area partnership where there are endemic weaknesses found in the partnership which leads to poor experiences and poor outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- 4.4 A category 2 outcomes means that the local area partnership will be submit to routine monitoring by Ofsted / CQC and supported by the DfE in making the necessary improvements and within agreed timeframes as published in the **local area inclusion plan** (action plan). Following inspection, all local areas are required to publish a local area inclusion plan by 2024. Sandwell will be publishing theirs ahead of the deadline set by the DfE.
- 4.5 The inspectors were highly complementary about the renewed energy and vision shared across the partnership for children and young people with SEND, and the new SEND eco-system transformation programme launched by the local area partnership in June 2023. This gave the inspectors a very clear understanding that the local area partners, through the self-evaluation, are accurate in their judgements and the actions they are taking to improve the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.
- 4.6 The inspection report is due to be published in early September 2023, after which the local area partnership is required to submit a **local area inclusion plan** (action plan) for improvement within 30 days of publication, and to make this publicly available to all partners, parents and carers of children and young people with SEND in Sandwell.
- Area leaders should **strengthen multi-agency working across the partnership between education, health and social care**, so that children and young people's needs are identified and assessed in a more efficient and timely manner.
 - Area leaders should **develop co-production with children and young people with SEND at a strategic level**, so that children and



young people play a key role in developing improvement strategies and plans.

- Area leaders **should increase the number and range of short-break opportunities** to support the needs of all children and young people with SEND, including those with complex needs and post-16 young people.

4.7 The senior leaders of the Sandwell local area partnership for SEND were pleased the inspection was both developmental and helpful and confirmed the accurate self-evaluation of the partnership.

4.8 Since the last inspection in 2019, when the previously issued written statement of action (2017) was lifted, using a different inspection framework, the local area partnership has been working through the SEND Strategic Board and the SEND Operations Board to oversee the necessary improvements required of the local area partnership. These improvements continue to be driven and will be included in the revised action plan to be submitted to Ofsted / CQC and for publishing to partners, parents and carers.

4.9 This is because we are not complacent in our determination to ensure all children and young people with SEND, including those who attend AP settings, in Sandwell, only receive the very best experiences leading to them securing the very best outcomes and successful transition into adulthood.

4.10 Sandwell local area partnership for inclusion (SEND and AP) will monitor the impact and effectiveness of the local area inclusion plan, via the 8 inclusion workstream groups of the Sandwell Inclusion Eco-System Transformation Programme. Each group reports monthly to the Sandwell Inclusion Board (Operations) and provides a half termly 'highlights report' to the Sandwell Inclusion Board (Strategic).

4.11 Both boards are attended by senior officers from across the local area partnership, including representatives from Sandwell Parents Voices United (SPVU), our parent carer forum, and children and young people. All reports are available to the Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board which has governance oversight of SEND at a system level across Sandwell.



5 Implications

Resources:	Assets implication for expansion of SEND provision to meet increasing needs of our 0-25 population Implications for workforce development costings to improve SEMH and SEND provision.
Legal and Governance:	Requirement for local area partners to take joint ownership and responsibility for co-producing and delivering the local area plan in order to achieve the expected improvements.
Risk:	Close monitoring of progress on key priorities will need to take place to ensure that the expected impact is achieved and can be evidenced, and that any necessary adjustments are made to the local area inclusion plan to support this.
Equality:	Meeting needs and ensuring reasonable adjustments of the 0-25 population with SEND needs and adhering to the Equality Act (2010)
Health and Wellbeing:	Improved educational outcomes, gained through the best quality provision, contribute to the improved emotional wellbeing, attendance and resilience of CYP.
Social Value:	Improving outcomes for vulnerable CYP at transition points between 0-25 will enhance community connection, and increase potential of successful education, training and employment experiences.
Climate Change:	N/A
Corporate Parenting:	Improving provision and outcomes for LAC to reduce vulnerability.

6. Appendices

Area SEND inspection Ofsted Report

7. Background Papers

N/A

