

Slough Borough Council

Report To: Slough Health & Wellbeing Board

Date: March 17th 2026

Subject: SEND Priority Action and Impact Plan

Chief Officer: Joe Tynan, Interim Director of Children Services

Contact Officer: Neil Hoskinson, Director of Education

Ward(s): All

Exempt: YES/NO - [if Part 2 cite reason based on Access to Information Rules]

Appendices: Slough Local Area Priority Action and Impact Plan is available on the Slough Local Offer.

1. Summary, Recommendations

1.1 This report sets out [*summarise in no more than 3 lines*]

Please indicate which priority in the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy, [Slough Wellbeing Strategy 2020 – 2025](#), your report links to:

Priority 1 – Starting Well	Priority 2 - Integration	Priority 3 – Strong, Health and Attractive Neighbourhoods	Priority 4 – Workplace Health
X	X		

1.2 Consideration:

- ✓ Information
- ✓ Discussion
- Decision
- ✓ Endorsement

Recommendations:

1.3 The Health & Wellbeing Board is recommended to:

- Endorse the Local Area Special Educational Needs [SEND] Priority Action and Impact Plan to address the weaknesses identified in the recent inspection by Ofsted and the CQC.
- Consider their role in delivering and monitoring the actions and governance process.

2. Report

Introductory paragraph

- 2.1 Following the Local Area inspection by Ofsted and the CQC in July 2025, a Priority Action and Impact Plan has been agreed to address the 5 Priority Action Areas and 3 Areas for Improvement identified by the inspection team. The plan will be supported by a clear governance structure to ensure the vision that children and young people with SEND, together with their families receive the support they require at the right time is achieved.

Options considered

No decisions required.

Background

- 2.2 In the 2024/25 academic year 5.3% of pupils in England had an EHC plan with a further 14.2% receiving SEND support from their school without a plan. This means in total, around one in five young people of school age had SEND. The most common type of need for those with an EHC plan is autistic spectrum disorder but a rapidly increasing number have social, emotional, mental health issues. The continuing rise in the number of EHCP (an 11.1% annual increase) reflects both growing complexity of need and increased demand for statutory support. These pressures disproportionately affect families already facing social disadvantage, with higher rates of SEND identification among pupils eligible for free school meals and among boys, who make up the majority of both EHCP and SEN Support cohort.

Earlier identification and meeting their additional needs will have a positive impact on their educational outcomes and wider life chances. The work to address the priority actions and areas for improvement will support this approach.

Slough Local Area Inspection into SEND Services

- 2.3 Between 7th and 11th July 2025 Ofsted and the CQC carried out an inspection into local area SEND services in Slough. The report was published on 6th November 2025 and found 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”. There were 5 priority action areas and 3 areas for improvement.

Inspectors acknowledged areas of progress and recognised the commitment and dedication of frontline professionals across the local area. They judged “partnership leaders are ambitious and determined. There is a clear commitment among leaders and practitioners across the partnership to make improvements to services for children and young people with SEND”.

Other strengths identified related to early years practitioners, early help SEND outreach, the Children with Disabilities Team, panel processes and placement

decisions, emotional and mental health support, neurodevelopmental assessments and the multidisciplinary approach for young people with SEND known to the Youth Justice Service.

However, the partnership accepts the pace, consistency and impact of improvement have not been strong enough. All leaders are ambitious and committed to ensuring children, young people and their families receive the support they require at the right time. To achieve this, there needs to be a cultural shift towards a system that is inclusive, collaborative, transparent and relentlessly focused on.

Priority Action and Impact Plan

2.4 As a result of the inspection findings, the Slough local area was required to develop a Priority Action and Impact Plan [PAIP] structured around seven themed areas, representing the 5 Priority Actions and the 3 Areas for Improvement:

1. Data, Systems & Governance (Priority Action)
2. Commissioning & Alternative Provision (Priority Action & Area for Improvement)
3. Parent, Carer, Children and Young People Engagement & Co-Production (Priority Action)
4. EHC Plans & Annual Reviews (Priority Action)
5. Preparation for Adulthood & Transitions (Priority Action)
6. Graduated Approach & Inclusion (Area for Improvement)
7. Health Pathways & Multi-Agency Integration (Area for Improvement)

Our ambition within 12–18 months, services and experiences in Slough will be recognisably improved, restoring confidence among families and professionals. However, some areas of transformation — such as sufficiency planning, data system redesign, workforce development and SEND culture change — will require sustained work up to 2027 and beyond.

This PAIP has been developed collaboratively with partners across education, health, social care, early years, post-16 providers, the voluntary and community sector, and, crucially, parent carers and children and young people themselves. Their lived experiences and aspirations have therefore shaped the priorities and actions.

Post Inspection Monitoring

2.5 As a result of the findings, Slough will receive a monitoring inspection within approximately 18 months and a full reinspection within three years.

There will be regular DfE “stocktakes” and “deep dives” at 6 monthly intervals focusing on the 5 areas in rotation ensuring all of them are covered.

A highly experienced SEND Commissioner, Deborah Glassbrook, has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Education, Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP. She will chair the new Strategic Improvement and Assurance Board which will be supported by an Operation Delivery Group.

There are 7 Transformation Improvement Groups focusing on each of the seven themes in the PAIP as well as SIAB sub-groups covering Data and Performance, Communications and Finance; with the finance group chaired by the MHCLG Best Value Commissioner.

Local Area Partnership Child Centred Audits started in January and will continue monthly using pupils from a different school each time. This is an opportunity to consider the support provided for individual pupils, the effectiveness of the statutory SEND process and lessons for improving future decision making.

SEND data in Slough has become increasingly precise in recent months and should be fully accurate and aligned by June 2026. This will support partnership working and local area planning.

- 2.6 The Health and Wellbeing Board has a critical leadership and oversight role in ensuring strategic decisions recognise SEND as a significant consideration. Proposed actions should support early intervention, reduce system delays, promote inclusive practice, and improve multi-agency pathways so children and young people with SEND can achieve equitable outcomes.

For the priority action and impact plan this means:

- Strategic Oversight and System Leadership by promoting joint working across health, education and social care. Ensuring the SEND PAIP aligns to local Health and Wellbeing Strategies
- Developing a SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) as part of Priority Action 1 relating to data.
- Providing a forum for discussing SEND improvement work and the progress of the PAIP to address systematic weaknesses.
- Championing SEND improvement work across health partners, including ICBs and NHS providers. Monitoring outcomes particularly through listening to the lived experiences of children, young people and their families.
- Promoting joint commissioning across education, health and social care by influencing resource decisions aligned to accurate forecasting and planning.

3. Implications of the Recommendation

- 3.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board has a statutory strategic leadership role in the local area including local health, education and social care systems. As set out in this report, for the SEND Priority Action and Impact Plan this role includes:

- Ensuring alignment with the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Developing a SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and using the existing JSNA to inform the PAIP.
- Prioritising the PAIP work in future meetings to monitor outcomes, discuss progress and champion potential support that could be offered
- Ensuring accurate forecasting and planning informs joint commissioning across education, health and social care.

3.2 Equality implications

Children and young people with SEND represent a growing proportion of the population and face unequal health, education, and wellbeing outcomes compared with their peers. Children with SEND are more likely to experience barriers to inclusion, including reduced access to universal services, specialist support pressures, and delays in assessment. From an equality perspective, failure to meet SEND demand risks widening inequalities in educational attainment, emotional wellbeing, and later-life outcomes. Health services, education providers, and social care teams must work jointly to ensure timely identification, fair access to assessment, and the provision of support aligned to assessed needs. There is also a need to address inequities in access to inclusive provision, particularly given the continuing rise in autistic spectrum disorder and speech, language and communication needs as the most common primary needs.

3.3 Legal implications

The Council and partner agencies have a number of key statutory responsibilities to Early Years Education and for children and young people with SEND. These include duties set out in the Children and Families Act 2014, the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004, the Care Act 2014 and the Childcare Act 2006. Partner agencies include health agencies, Slough Children's First and early years providers, schools and colleges.

3.4 Risk management implications

The risks associated with failure to provide effective SEND support are covered by a Corporate Risk Management process - overseen by the Risk Management Board. The Board receive quarterly updates around risk judgements, mitigations and controls.

4 Background Papers

The Slough Local Area Priority Action and Impact Plan is available on the Slough Local Offer.