

# SEND

## Weekly Newsletter

20 September 2019



*Special Edition*

## Self assessment of our SEND arrangements

It's a new academic year and we're continuing to prepare for our Somerset SEND Ofsted inspection, which we know will take place before March 2020.

In this newsletter we wanted to update you on our preparation.

In an innovative step between 10 and 14 June 2019, Somerset County Council and Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group conducted a week-long deep dive self-assessment using the joint CQC and Ofsted inspection framework to review the local area's progress.

A Team of Senior Managers led the process, and all agencies were given one week's notice, as they would during an inspection to prepare for the key lines of enquiry (KLOEs) that were identified. The assessment week mirrored that of an actual inspection with a Day One presentation, position statement presentation given to the SEND Intervention Board; daily keeping in touch (KIT) meetings at the beginning and end of each day, with the KLOE group challenge conversations scheduled across the week.



### So what did we find out?

The week identified that in Somerset there have been significant improvements over the past year, however there are some areas which we need to focus on improving and we have a good understanding of the work that is required to do this.

As a result of this exercise Somerset has identified seven areas where we need to get better at what we do and these will be our focus for improvement in the next year.

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## Where we need to work better

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1. We need more effective governance arrangements to make sure leaders are properly held to account to ensure outcomes for children and young people with SEND are improved.
2. There needs to be better working between education, health and care partners to jointly buy and deliver services.
3. We need to get better at applying Somerset's strategy for identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people at the SEN support stage.
4. We need to strengthen the



Local Offer from providers to address the inconsistency of experience reported by families.

5. The time it takes to issue EHC plans and the variable quality of these plans needs to be improved, as well as the fact these plans do not consistently capture a child or young person's needs and aspirations. That means in some cases EHC Plans are not able to be used

as a valuable tool to support the planning and implementation of education, health and care provision to lead to improved lives for the child and their families.

6. We need to improve our approach to supporting the mental health and emotional well-being of children and young people with SEND who face challenges in relation to their social, emotional, and mental health.
7. We need to improve the identification, assessment, diagnosis and support of those children and young people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

## What next now we've identified areas for improvement?

Having identified the areas for improvement, Somerset has produced a report, which is underwritten by both the CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group) and Local Authority, and a Local Area Improvement Plan has been produced.

Successfully delivering this will be down to not just the Local Area Improvement Network (LAIN), but all partners and agencies. The progress of the

Improvement Plan will be monitored through the LAIN, which meets on a monthly basis, and reports wider to the multi-agency SEND Intervention Board on a quarterly basis.

Somerset will also be sharing this plan with the Department for Education (DfE) Regional Advisors and the NHS England Improvement Advisor and will

update the advisors at the regular improvement meetings. These identified governance arrangements will hold Somerset leaders to account to ensure that timely progress is being made and Somerset is delivering against the plan.

We will provide regular updates on our progress against the plan in future editions of the SEND Weekly Newsletter, so watch this space.

