

LA Stakeholders meeting 28/3/19 – Local Area Inspections

Figures to date:-

92 inspections

82 published

41 asked for written statement of action

On track to complete all 152 by the end of March 2021

Inspections are showing that the gap between those being asked for WSOA and those not is widening and there are patterns of geographical difference appearing
London and the East Midlands are doing better.

Messages emerging from LAs which are asked for written statements:-

- There are issues of inequality of provision – number of SEN caseworkers very varied
- Lack of strategic leadership and joint working is major issue
- Significant changes in leadership and interims – workforce issues
- Quality of plans is poor
- SEN support – this was expected to be an issue
- Understanding of co-production – it's not consultation
- Issue of good strategic leadership is crucial
- Andre gave example of Cabinet member on feedback being surprised as had not been following SEND agenda in local area but will now

Working with parents:-

- Parents experience of co-production is getting better
- Inspectors are looking to see whether there is a culture which allows parent carer forums to succeed
- When they look at local offer there is no specific audit tool, ask the question "if I were a parent new to area can I find what I want"
- Do check statutory requirements on local offer

Getting child and young person view:-

- Recognise that a lot more work is needed in this area
- One example of good practice where a local area had a young person responsible for checking on local offer
- Should young people be given the questions in advance – standard set used so no reason why not – discussed possible coaching of answers
- Inspectors to do more training on communication with ICan around AAC and other support. Recognise communication is more than just talking
- Do the young people understand what the inspection is about?
- Possible use of neutral setting

Re-visits:-

- 6 re-visits so far, 3 published
- Only 1 is making sufficient progress
- On revisits, need to make sufficient progress in all areas
- If only one area has not made progress this is still considered a significant weakness and will make outcome deemed not be making sufficient progress
- Methodology on re-visits working well
- Keep focus only on areas identified for action
- Areas identified for action in WSOA have been varied
- Parental engagement much stronger on revisits (expect to hear from 200 – 250 parents on first inspection, revisits 800 -1900)
- Parents much higher profile on re-visits
- ?Do parents see process of requiring revisit as a catalyst for change
- On re-visit, parent forums decide the questions for webinar – generic on first visit
- 2 week notice period for re-visit – does this help engagement?
- Not expecting perfection in all areas on revisit but should demonstrate systematic progress against a clear action plan and if targets not being reached, be able to clearly articulate why
- Have the weaknesses in strategic leadership across health, education and social care been tackled?
- Has the experience of families changed?

After re-visits

- Revised framework due out 1st April will show this more clearly in a flow chart
- All reports are analysed
- Look at what the barriers have been
- As a minimum, local areas will be asked to submit a further action plan
- Would expect to have meeting to review within 6 weeks
- DfE may need to have conversations with senior accountable officers.
- Will look at capacity and capability
- No proposed revisit of a revisit
- Will look at linking with areas that have improved
- Is some informal buddying up happening – involvement of RSCs

Other points

- Acknowledgement of challenging times for Las
- Some Las much more effective on SEND than others
- Parental question on SEND funding and high needs issue – should inspection include this? – response was that looking at financial issues is beyond Ofsted's remit and expertise
- New handbook on 1st April, main change is methodology for re-inspections
- Ofsted clear that open meeting for parents must be open to all and not size limited
- In new handbook, emphasis on local area leaders refers to schools and providers as much as LA and CCG officers
- Need to review accessibility and language of letter sent to parents

- Need to be clear that inspection cannot do anything with individual concerns or complaints – felt that parents do not fully understand routes of redress available and how they work.
- Current research project on current and future framework, formulating questions at present

New framework beyond 2020/2021

- ? will it happen, depends on outcome of spending review
- Initial thoughts are that the landscape of SEN not yet mature enough to say this is not needed
- Will need to move on from language of implementation
- Needs to have different nature and focus
- ?Will SEND become more integrated into other inspection frameworks – again referred to not yet mature enough and needs strengthening first
- How much does SEND feature in annual conversation with Ofsted?
- All future plans on inspection are conditional
- More information once spending review done and more data from re-visits