

Ofsted and CQC's report, following a joint inspection of local implementation of SEND reforms

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission's report, published on 14th July follows a joint inspection of local implementation of the special educational needs and disability (SEND) reforms brought in from September 2014. The report services delivered by Brighton & Hove City Council, the local NHS and other partners (including Amaze and the PaCC), noting that the local area puts the child or young person with SEN or disability and their family, at the centre of its vision to improve services.

The inspectors visited the City Council, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and a few of the city's schools and children's centres over four days in May, spoke to some children and young people who have disabilities and special educational needs and their parents and carers, as well as parent carer reps from the PaCC, staff from Amaze and other services across the city.

Unlike a school's Ofsted report it doesn't give a 'satisfactory/good/outstanding' rating, rather it has to highlight strengths and areas of development for an area to work on. When reading the report it is important to remember that it is a snapshot of where the city has got to on its journey to implement the changes to SEND. It cannot reflect the views and experiences of all families of children and young people with SEND. We have fed back that the online webinar that the inspection trialled to gather wider parent carer views didn't work well.

The inspectors found a number of strengths including:

- Many children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve strong outcomes and their families are very well supported.
- The effective working relationships between services are productive, so they ensure that identified needs in the local area are appropriately prioritised. Furthermore, strong working relationships ensure that safeguarding arrangements for children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are effective.
- The local advocacy and support organisations, known as Amaze, and the Parents and Carers Council (PaCC), provide a particularly valued service to support families. They have strongly influenced the local area to improve services for families, for example in the development of a disability register by Amaze and commissioned by the local authority that is used by services to improve provision.
- The co-production of new EHCPs is very effective. Parents report that their views are taken seriously and that they contribute fully.

The report identifies several areas for further development including:

- Leaders know there is more to do for families who do not meet thresholds for formal (EHC) plans, particularly for those who have children and young people in mainstream education who present with mental health difficulties. This is reflected in the views of a minority of parents who report variability in the support offered. Leaders are already taking action to strengthen the role of primary care within the special educational needs and disabilities population, to address this need.
- Leaders in the local area have rightly recognised that some children on the autistic spectrum are not always identified during their primary education, because of successful inclusive practice. Some of these children struggle to make a successful transition into secondary education. Assessment and diagnosis through CAMHS for these children is then too slow.
- Parents and practitioners have rightly identified the difficulties in sharing information and coordinating care when a child or young person is receiving support from tertiary specialist hospitals.

You can find the full report with all the strengths and areas for development here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/537477/oint_local_area_SEND_inspection_in_Brighton_and_Hove.pdf

We welcome the positive aspects of this Ofsted report. However PaCC has fed back to Regan Delf (Assistant Director with responsibility for SEND) that the Ofsted report does not reflect the experiences of all families in the city, with a reminder that the City Council and CCG need to see the report as a snapshot of views of some in the SEND community. PaCC feel it is essential to reflect on the broader views of the SEND community that have been expressed through many channels over time and very actively since the SEND reforms, for example at the SEND Partnership Board meetings, the SEND Review consultations, PaCConnects , Compass consultations and via Amaze. This forms a broader reflection of positive and negative experiences of SEND provision in the city and puts the inspection report in context.

The PaCC and Amaze will continue to work with senior officers at both the Council and CCG to follow up on this inspection and seek to ensure that action plans are put in place where developments are needed