

Schools Forum

September 2021

SEND & Inclusion Change Programme

This report relates to all members of schools forum and is for information and comment.

Recommendations

- That schools forum comments upon the verbal update on the SEND Local Area Inspection by Ofsted/Care Quality Commission
- That schools forum comments upon progress of the SEND & Inclusion Change Programme

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The report provides an update on activity on the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) & Inclusion Change Programme since the previous report to schools forum.

2. SEND Local Area inspection

- 2.1 The Warwickshire SEND Local Area Inspection by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission took place between 12th July and 16th July. At the time of writing the outcome of the inspection is embargoed, but by the meeting date briefings will have been shared with head teachers regarding the outcome.
- 2.2 As such a verbal presentation on the outcomes of the inspection will be made at the meeting as part of this item. This includes the conclusions of Ofsted on the changes required to the local system for supporting children and young people with SEND and how the SEND & Inclusion Change Programme is addressing this.

3. SEND & Inclusion Change Programme

- 3.1 The vision for SEND in Warwickshire is that all our children and young people lead a fulfilling life and are part of their community.
- 3.2 Through the SEND & Inclusion Change Programme we will work together to:
- Improve outcomes for our children and young people with SEND
 - Take decisions in a clear, fair and transparent way
 - Ensure that systems are sustainable, so that we are working within our allocated funding
 - Secure education, employment and training for our young people with SEND (age 16-25)
- 2.3 Of the 30 projects, seven of projects have targets to close the gap between funding allocation and expenditure.

4. Summary update on Programme and Projects

- 4.1 The project approach adopted by Warwickshire County Council is:
- a) Project have initial approval of a Project Proposal Document (PPD)
 - b) A business case is then developed including mapping of the 'as-is' position and 'to-be' position, along with the plan to move from one to the other and confirmation of the benefits
 - c) Projects go live for implementation
- 4.2 Overall, fifteen projects are currently active with six projects are live, six are developing full business case and plan, three are developing Project Proposal Documents. Further to this two projects have been completed and two have been deferred.
- 4.3 The full list of projects and the timeline for phase 1 is attached at Appendix 1. Update on projects in the DSG Recovery and DSG Sustainability strands are reported in Appendix 2.

5. Overall financial impact so far

- 5.1 Quality and performance measures are reported to the SEND Partnership and the SEND & inclusion Change Programme Board. This report focuses on financial impact under the objective to achieve financial sustainability.
- 5.2 As set out in the DSG monitoring report, High Needs Block forecast is to overspend by £4.939m. This is less than forecast overspend in previous two years, but overspend nevertheless. The detail on areas of overspend against budget is set out in that report.

5.3 Being precise on cause and effect remains a barrier until all financial information is stored in the Synergy system alongside activity and profile data. This is part of the project 'Implementation of the SEND finance module in Synergy' and has been delayed due to the need to resolve details on implementation with the supplier. This is now due for delivery from October 2021.

5.4 As noted in June, there is clear direction of travel on key factors affecting spend:

- a) **The numbers and percentage of children and young people attending independent specialist provision (ISP) is reducing.** Comparatively, Warwickshire now has 5.5% of children placed in ISP compared to 5% nationally. Warwickshire was at 10.6% in 2015. In September 2021, 189 children were placed in ISP - the lowest number in since 2017 (201).
- b) **The number of children attending specialist resourced provision is increasing.** Four new resourced provisions and partnerships are opening in September/October 2021: Rokeby Resourced Provision, Henley-in-Arden Primary School, Coleshill/Woodlands Partnership, Brooke/Warwickshire College Partnership. This has now created 140 places across the County. Utilisation is up from 69 to 90. These provisions allow for specialist provision in mainstream settings delivering positive outcomes, value for money and freeing up places in specialist settings.
- c) **More children and young people with SEND are being supported in mainstream settings.** 1,430 children were supported in mainstream settings at January 2021 compared to 1,275 the year before. This is lower than the 2017 level (1,475).
- d) **More children are supported in state-funded specialist settings.** This was expected due to population growth, increased complexity of need and less use of independent specialist provision (ISP). 1,544 children are supported in state-funded specialist setting compared to 1,217 in 2017.
- e) **The growth in new EHC plans has reduced from 12.0% to 4.1%.** The number of new plans issued in the calendar year 202 was 583 compared with 560 the previous year. The growth in the total caseload in the calendar year was 6.1%.
- f) **The number of EHC plans in pre-school years remains low.** The project is working to identify the appropriate time for requesting a EHC needs assessment in early years as a form of early intervention. Most pre-school children with an EHC plan have it issued in the summer term prior to Reception year.
- g) **The unit price of residential placements has reduced but the number of placements has increased.**
- h) **New cost centres have been created to monitor spend on alternative provision.** This allows for better monitoring of spend in this area from April 2021. New

guidance is also being developed in this area. As noted in the monitoring report, spend has reduced in this area.

- i) **The number of supported internships has significantly reduced as a result of Covid-19.** This has had a significant impact on the financial forecast.
- j) **The project group for school top-up funding is progressing and considering different funding models to trial.** This is being considered in a separate report.

6. Next steps

- 6.1 Work has taken place over the summer term to update the long term financial forecast. This has taken into account latest announcements on funding allocations and trends in activity data. This still requires internal sign-off prior to sharing with schools forum.

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Appendix 1: Update on active projects & Phase 1 timeline

