

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEND) PEER REVIEW NOVEMBER 2016

To: Cambridgeshire Schools Forum

Date: 14 October 2016

From: Meredith Teasdale, Service Director, Strategy and Commissioning

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform Schools Forum of the Council's participation in a pilot Peer Review based on a new Special Educational Needs (SEND) Framework developed with regional colleagues. The Peer Review will focus on outcomes for children and young people with SEND and this paper outlines the format of the Peer Review and the involvement of schools and partners.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 All local authorities in the Eastern region were involved in developing a model for peer review focusing on SEND. The SEND Peer Review is part of the Eastern Region's work on improving outcomes for all pupils. It focuses on the provision and outcomes for pupils with SEN and disabilities as well as the implementation of the Children and Families Act 2014. The pilot Peer Review will target children and young people aged 5-16 (Reception to Year 11) who are at the 'SEN support' level i.e. those with additional special educational needs to their peers who do not necessarily require an Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment or plan. The proposed key theme is 'improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND'. The four subsidiary questions will be:

1. Are children identified at the right time?
2. What has the greatest impact for improving outcomes for pupils receiving pupil premium and SEN support?
3. What are the barriers for schools in adopting best practice?
4. What is the role of other agencies in supporting and challenging schools to improve?

- 2.2 The target group has been chosen as the primary area of the review because we know that outcomes for this group in Cambridgeshire are poor compared to other areas, whereas outcomes for children and young people with an EHC plan are often better than other areas. The lead SEND Ofsted/CQC inspector, Mary Raynor, has also indicated in briefing and preparation sessions that she will be particularly focusing on this area in inspections. The age range has been limited from the 0-25 age range that is the subject of the SEND reforms to 5-16 to allow the peer reviewers to look at services and outcomes for the target group in depth.

3.0 OVERVIEW OF PEER REVIEW PROCESS

- 3.1 Prior to the peer review, Council officers from SEND Specialist Services will be making contact with a small group of schools to conduct an in depth survey regarding their arrangements for pupils receiving SEN support. The information from this survey will be collated, anonymised and shared with the peer review team.

SEND Specialist Services will also organise 3 groups for children/young people across the age range to gather their views and experiences. As with the survey, this information will be collated, anonymised and shared with the peer review team.

The third piece of work prior to the Peer Review is a selection of case file audits. SEND Specialist Services will be auditing 10 case files, some of which will have multi-agency involvement. Individual schools may be contacted as part of this process.

- 3.2 The Review will take place on Tuesday 15 and Wednesday 16 November. The team will be based at council offices, and will conduct interviews, focus groups and review evidence on both days. There will be several focus groups including schools, the full list of focus groups is below:
- Headteachers of schools where outcomes for pupils with SEN support are good (mixed primary and secondary)
 - Headteachers of schools where outcomes for pupils with SEN support is a concern (primary)
 - Headteachers of schools where outcomes for pupils with SEN support is a concern (secondary)
 - Parents and Carers of SEN supported pupils (to include SEN/FSM if possible)
 - SENCos (mixed primary and secondary)
 - Local Area Officers/Practitioners
 - Health Commissioning Officers

Invitations to focus groups will be sent out to schools over the next few weeks.

- 3.3 The peer review team will aim to identify the barriers that other schools have faced when attempting to deliver good outcomes for pupils with SEN support and determine how the local authority and other local area partners can support and challenge schools to find ways around those barriers.
- 3.4 The Peer team will base their findings on:
- Documentation provided including from case audits, surveys and children and young people's groups
 - Interviews with officers and leaders from relevant teams
 - Interviews with other officers as necessary, e.g. from Finance
 - Interviews with Members
 - Focus groups with children and young people and parents/carers

- Focus groups with Headteachers and SEN Coordinators from a variety of schools
- The results of a survey conducted with some schools to inform the review

3.5 After the end of the review, the Education Consultant will send a written feedback report within a week. The structure of the report will cover:

- Current outcomes context
- The focus of the review, key questions, review methodology
- Strategies for SEN support identified by successful schools
- Findings against the key questions including areas of strength and areas for development
- Recommendations
- Offers of support from other Local Areas

As this peer review is a pilot for the framework, feedback on the process and results will also be taken to the regional SEND network meeting and the Assistant Director regional network. Update reports will also be provided for the sector led improvement newsletter and for the termly DCS meeting. This report will be shared with partners, particularly those who were involved in the review.

3.6 The Coordinator for the review is Emily Sanderson, Quality Assurance Manager. If there is any further information needed, please do not hesitate to contact her at emily.sanderson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

4.1 The Forum is requested to note the information regarding the upcoming SEND Peer Review.