

Outcomes of the SEND Re-visit, May 2021



Cheshire East
SEND Partnership





‘Throughout the visit, inspectors heard from parents, children and young people and professionals about the positive impact that plans have on children and young people’s lives’.

Purpose of the Re-visit

To determine whether Cheshire East has made sufficient progress in addressing the areas of significant weakness from the SEND inspection in March 2018, ie:

- **Area 1** - the **timeliness, process and quality** of education, health and care (EHC) plans
- **Area 2** - the **lack of an effective autism spectrum disorder (ASD) pathway** and **unreasonable waiting times**



Inspection Team

- Pippa Jackson Maitland (Lead HMI Inspector)
- Andrea Crosby-Josephs (CQC Inspector)
- Ian Hardman (Quality Assurance Inspector, Ofsted)
- Lee Carey (Quality Assurance Inspector, CQC)
- Dee Angwin (Shadow Inspector who did not take part in the inspection)



Inspection Activity

- Remote and in person over 3 weeks ('onsite' in week 3)
- Met with **SEND children, young people and their families**
- Spoke to **leaders, managers and staff** who work in education, health and social care.
- Looked at a range of information about the performance of the local area, including our **self-evaluation of progress against the WSOA.**
- **Reviewed performance data and evidence** about education, health and care plans (EHC plans) and autism spectrum disorder (ASD) pathways
- Assessed quality of **51 children and young people's cases**
- Analysed **parental survey responses** (720 returned)



We were well prepared

- Documents were ready to load in week one
 - Overview Document
 - One document on each area of weakness
 - Our Parent survey results (We do annually)
 - Covid response document
 - Compliments/Complaints and LGO document
(we added compliments – this was not asked for)
 - PCF were asked to provide an document with their view of progress

Inspectors liked our documents

- enough but not too much.
- impact focused
- Requested list of all children with a plan



Week 2 – Very Busy

They selected 30 cases and we were asked to load EHCP and any other documents we thought were appropriate by Wednesday.

Then On Thursday asked for a further 20 cases by the Friday.

Inspectors identified 18 cases from the 30 to either be in focus groups or individual meeting



The approach in week 3 - on site

- Focus on cases and meeting families and frontline practitioners.
- Mixture of face to face and virtual worked well
- Meet with Senior Leaders re strategy, then middle leaders to check they understood and translated into practice for their teams.
- Meetings with child/YP and the linked professionals to check the above was evident in practice
- Plus range of meeting – PCF, CEIAS, DCO,schools, providers, parent focus groups



Week 3 – Day 3

A number of key lines of enquiry considered in detail

1. How do we evidence co-production.
2. What was our recovery plan for Annual Reviews.
3. How does funding enable the plan to be delivered.
4. How is ASD pathway better than it was in 2018 and what is the lived experience of families.
5. Is there sufficient provision of pre and post autism support.



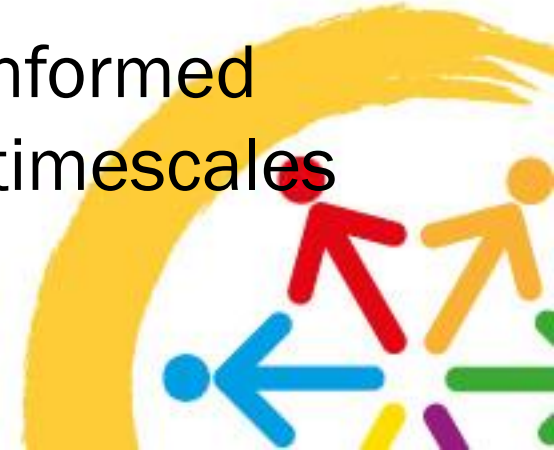
Area 1 - Findings

- **Timeliness, process and quality of EHC plans have been transformed.**
- **Robust review systems in place** at every stage.
- Plans accurately **reflect children and young peoples' needs** and how best these can be met.
- Leaders have incrementally **raised the quality standards for EHC plans.**
- **Not all parents have felt the impact** of the changes due to pandemic and communication.
- The **significant improvements** to EHC planning that have been made since the inspection, **cannot be underestimated.**



Area 2 - Findings

- The local area launched an **effective diagnostic pathway for the youngest children.**
- **Families value** the pre- and post-diagnosis **support and training offered** (need to sustain).
- **Single autism integrated service** specification now ensures a more **consistent approach.**
- **Significant reduction** to the numbers on the **ASD diagnostic pathway waiting list** (pre-pandemic)
- **Helpful leaflets for families** - better informed about the assessment process and timescales



Inspectors also said...

- **The area has made sufficient progress** in addressing all of the significant weaknesses identified at the initial inspection.
- **The timeliness, process and quality of EHC plans** have been transformed.
- **Co-production** is at the heart of every EHC needs assessment.
- **The local area is not resting on its laurels.**



Next Steps

Implement our new SEND Strategy (2021-24) including:

- Improving **communication and coproduction** with families
- **Access to provision and support**
- Improving the timeliness and quality of the **Annual Reviews** of EHC Plans ensuring ongoing capacity.



...and Celebrate our Achievements!



‘children are starting nursery and school with their needs being understood and met’

‘timeliness, process and quality of EHCs...transformed’

‘co-production at the heart of every EHC needs assessment’

‘significant improvements....cannot be underestimated’

Questions?

