


Report to:	EDUCATION ATTAINMENT IMPROVEMENT BOARD
Date:	26 March 2019
Reporting Officer:	Tim Bowman, Assistant Director, Education
Subject:	SEND UPDATE
Report Summary:	This report and its two appendices provides an update to the Board on SEND issues, covering the implementation of the SEND reforms, current performance and readiness for SEND Local Area Inspection.
Recommendations:	Board members are asked to discuss the content of the report and endorse the summary of strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-evaluation executive summary (Appendix A).
Corporate Plan:	Early identification of high quality support for children and young people with special education needs and / or disabilities is a vital part of our living well and starting well objectives.
Policy Implications:	None identified.
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer & Chief Finance Officer)	<p>The SEND reforms and increasing demands for supporting the SEND in Education and Schools, places significant pressures on the High Needs Budget provided by Department for Education to fund this.</p> <p>The overspend in this area is insufficient and overspending by in excess of £1m in 2018/19, expecting to rise significantly further in 2019/20 due to continuing demand to deliver this statutory provision.</p>
Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)	The report sets out a clear self assessment of the issues that need to be addressed. It is important that the necessary resources are deployed expediently to ensure that we are delivering better outcomes and to reduce risk of failure.
Risk Management:	The risks highlighted above need to be carefully managed and monitored against the budgetary pressures highlighted by the Chief Finance Officer
Background Information:	<p>The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Tim Bowman</p> <p> Telephone: 0161 342 2050</p> <p> e-mail: tim.bowman@tameside.gov.uk</p>

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Part Three of The Children and Families Act 2014 introduced significant changes to the responsibilities of Local Authorities, Schools and Clinical Commissioning Groups for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. These reforms came into effect on 1 September 2014 supported by a refreshed SEND Code of Practice. At the time the government described this as the biggest educational reform for a generation.
- 1.2 Implementing these reforms was in itself a challenge, however, this challenge has been compounded by turbulence and pressure in all parts of the education system. Pressures on budgets, wide ranging changes to policy (for example curriculum and assessment), and the impact of austerity on the public sector and families, mean that implementation has been inconsistent across the country and in Tameside.
- 1.3 To provide oversight and accountability to these reforms the Minister of State for Children and Families tasked Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) with inspecting local areas on their effectiveness in fulfilling the new duties. This new inspection, "The framework for the inspection of local areas' effectiveness in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities" came into effect in May 2016. All Local Areas will be inspected over a five year period.
- 1.4 The inspection will consider how effectively the local area identifies, meets the needs of and improves the outcomes of the wide range of different groups¹ of children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Its focus is on the contribution of education, social care and health services to children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as set out in the Act, the Regulations and the Code of Practice.
- 1.5 The outcomes of the inspection is reported in a letter and the judgements are in narrative form. The letter outlines areas of strength and key priorities for improvement. Where inspectors find significant issues the framework allows inspectors to require the local area to prepare a written statement of action that sets out those actions and the timetable for them.
- 1.6 So far 7 out of 10 Local Areas in Greater Manchester have been inspected. Across the North West more than half of all Local Areas inspected have been asked to prepare a written statement of action.

2. SELF-EVALUATION

- 2.1 Our self-evaluation (Executive Summary, **Appendix A** to this report) highlights a number of areas of strength. Most notably proactive work in the early years. However, there are significant challenges to our performance (**Appendices B** to this report). Most notably our compliance with statutory timescales for the completion of education health and care plans, the consistency of our identification of needs and the strength of joint commissioning.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 Tameside like many local areas has found implementing SEND Reforms challenging. Our implementation has not been consistent and capacity challenges and changes in leadership

¹ These groups of children and young people are detailed in Part 2 of the 'Handbook for the inspection of local areas' effectiveness in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities'.

have negatively impacted upon this. Recent joint work means that we have a robust self-evaluation in place, tested via peer challenge and discussed with Ofsted at recent annual conversation.

- 3.2 A thorough and well considered improvement plan is place and it is targeted to the areas requiring the swiftest improvement. Oversight to the implementation of this plan will be provided by the SEND Strategic Group, through the Starting Well Board and the Educational Attainment and Improvement Board.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 As set out at the front of the report.