

Cabinet

11 June 2024

SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Inspection Outcome and Plan

For Decision

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:

Cllr. C Sutton, Children's Services, Education & Skills

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director:

T Leavy, Executive Director of People - Children

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Report Status: Public

Brief Summary: This report provides an overview of the Local Area SEND Inspection findings and our action plan to ensure the partnership responds to the recommendations made.

Recommendation: That Cabinet notes and welcomes the findings of Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and approve the action plan for publication.

Reason for Recommendation: We wholeheartedly welcome sharing the findings from the inspection, not least with our children, young people and families who are at the front and centre of our continuous improvement. We are required to publish an action plan following inspection to ensure appropriate accountability.

1. **Report**

- 1.1 The local Area SEND inspection was carried out over a three-week period at the end of February and beginning of March. The lead inspector, with a professional heritage in education, was joined by a further inspector for education, a lead for social care, and two leads for health, with 3 additional observers.
- 1.2 The framework for this inspection (see Background Papers) is extensive and rightly focuses on the lived experiences of children and families within our local area. This means that every area of our work in children's services and many health and education services, as well as the way in which we work together to achieve outcomes for children, was subject to scrutiny during the inspection.
- 1.3 Over the course of the three-week inspection, inspectors explored 16 children in detail, selected by them from a much larger cohort of children, to understand their lived experiences and that of their families. Surveys were issued to children and young people, practitioners across agencies, parents, and carers. We had an impressive response to these. 325 documents were shared with inspectors. The information from the surveys and the documents, as well as our Self Evaluation enabled the inspection team to develop key lines of enquiry and to test these through on-site activity.
- 1.4 Inspectors conducted a range of activities involving families, council & multi-agency partners. This included 79 interviews with: families, the Dorset Parent Carer Council (DPCC), The SEN (Special Education Needs) and Disability Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS), a broad range of leaders and practitioners from across services and disciplines and the voluntary sector, as well as onsite visits to a range of education settings, including alternative provision. Visits were also undertaken to health settings, the Harbour team at College House in Weymouth, and some of our residential provision.
- 1.5 There are three outcomes that could have been achieved through the inspection. In Dorset, we achieved the best of these three outcomes (see 1 below). We are the first unitary authority to achieve this and the first in our region.
- 1.6 The 3 possible outcomes are:

- 1) that children and families have typically positive experiences and outcomes;
 - 2) that children and families have inconsistent experiences and outcomes;
 - 3) that there are widespread and/or systemic failings
- 1.7 Inspectors commended the partnership for placing children, young people, and their families at the centre of decision-making, leading to “typically positive experiences and outcomes.”
- 1.8 The Inspection highlighted the collaborative efforts of strategic partners, including Dorset Council, NHS Dorset Integrated Care Board, and the Dorset Parent Carer Council, to support children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).
- 1.9 The report noted the effective co-production across the partnership and the development of creative ways to listen to young people, such as through 'Dorset Youth Voice'.
- 1.10 The local area partnership was advised to continue its improvement efforts and update its strategic plan based on the two recommendations provided. These are:
- Leaders across education, health and social care should strengthen their use of the robust qualitative and quantitative information they hold. This will enable them to continually analyse and evaluate the impact of their, often innovative, work to improve the outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
 - Leaders across the partnership should ensure that their quality assurance and annual review processes, particularly in relation to preparation for adulthood, are as robust, precise and of the same high-quality as seen in the more recent education, health and care plans.
- Our SEND Inspection Delivery Plan details how we will approach these recommendations and also includes the other areas highlighted within the inspection report, for continuous improvement.
- As a partnership we are in agreement with the recommendations and had highlighted these areas in our self-evaluation.
- 1.11 The next full area SEND inspection is scheduled for approximately five years' time.

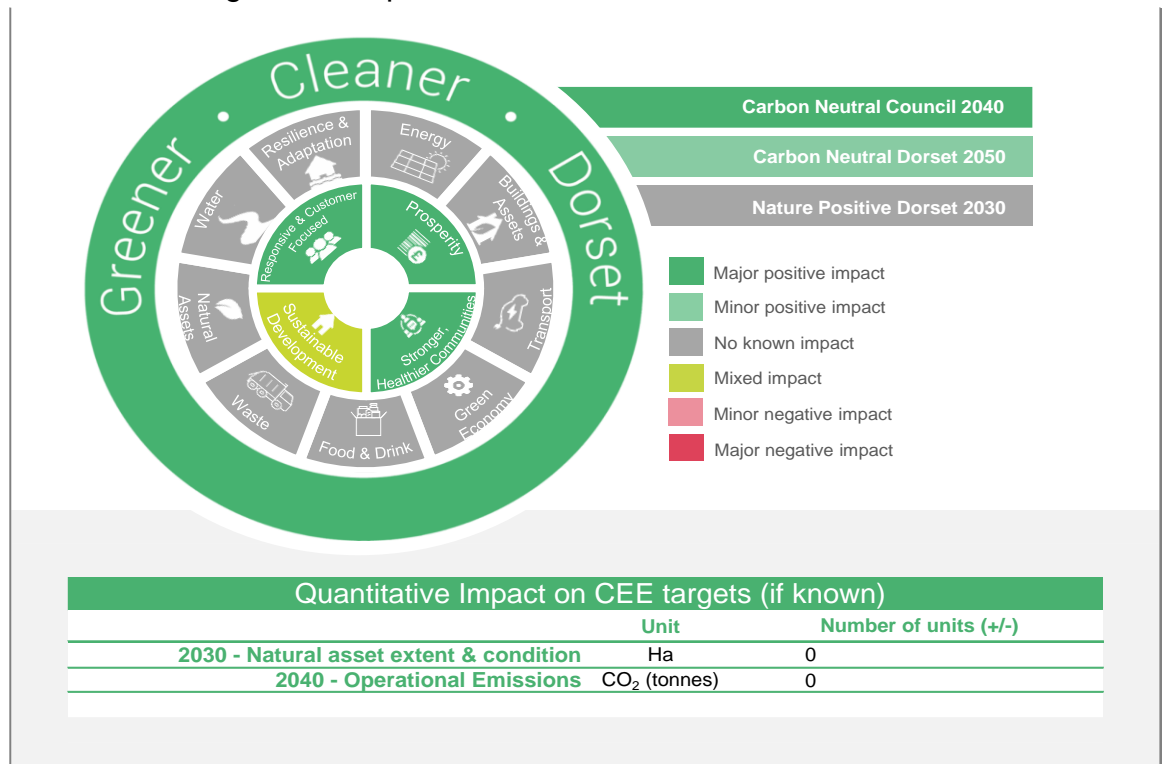
1.12 We welcome these findings and the recommendations and remain extremely ambitious for all our children. We are naturally delighted that typically; children and families have positive experiences and continue in our endeavour to ensure this is the case for all children and young people with SEND and their families.

2. Financial Implications

There are no significant financial implications as the actions we have proposed can be met through existing budgets.

3. Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications

There are no significant implications.



4. Well-being and Health Implications

The outcome of the inspection and the plan we have agreed to meet the recommendations are explicitly designed to have a positive impact on wellbeing and health, particularly for children, young people, and families with SEND.

None Risk Assessment

- 5.1 HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

The recommendations and actions seek to support and enhance equality and equity for children and young people with SEND and their families.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Dorset Local Area SEND Inspection Report

Appendix 2 – SEND Inspection Delivery Plan May 2024

Appendix 3 – SEND SEF

Background Papers

[Local Area SEND Inspection Framework](#)

9. Report Sign Off

- 11.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)

