

Risk 3 – SEND Local Area Inspection

Minimal changes to the risk narrative. Written Statement of Action agreed with DfE and on-going discussion with department about Dedicated Schools Grant funding. Plan in place to reduce deficit subject to government support. Recruitment to key posts actively taking place. Expected re-inspection in late 2023. SEND Board monitoring taking place.

Corporate Risk Register

Risk 3: Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Local Area Inspection

Risk Owner: Executive Director People (Children)

Direction of Travel: ⇄

Description:

If we fail to provide a fit for purpose SEND service then it puts service users at risk and provides poor value for money.

Context

- The SEND Local Area Inspection took place in September/October 2021. The report highlighted significant areas of weakness.
- The local area includes the local authority SEND services, Children's Social Care and Health partners.
- The area was required to produce a Written Statement of Action (WSOA), which highlights how we will address the areas of concern. This was produced and sent to Ofsted/CQC on 18th February. It was approved by Ofsted and CQC as fit for purpose but with a letter of recommendations to add to the WSOA.
- There is an approximate timeline of 12-18 months for improvements to be demonstrated in which Ofsted are likely to be back for inspection again.
- Staff turnover and absence is impacting significantly on delivery of SEND services
- Current SEND service is not fit for purpose and additional resources are required.
- The High Needs Block is significantly overspent with a deficit of approximately £26 million.
- The LA is required to have a DSG (Dedicated School Grant) management programme to address this and reduce in-year spend to 0 within 4-5 years.

Consequence:

- Reputational risk
- Failure to carry out statutory duties
- Vulnerable children not getting the full support they are entitled.
- Failure to reduce High Needs Block overspend
- Potential DfE intervention
- Negative Ofsted re-inspection outcome
- Deterioration of relationship with stakeholders/resident and partners
- Financial risk

Current Controls:

- Extra funding has been agreed to expand the SEND service by 6FTE and recruitment is taking place. Expected start dates if recruitment successful will be End of January/Beginning of February 2023.
- Monthly SEND strategic board meetings
- DSG recovery plan is in place to reduce costs over 4-5 years.
- Bi-weekly meetings with DfE regarding Safety Valve Programme. LA is forecasting a balanced budget within 4 years.
- LA looking to submit papers to join safety valve programme by February 2023.
- Monthly SEND strategic board meetings
- Monthly DSG management plan meetings
- Slough Children First and the Clinical Commissioning Group have put in additional resources to address the areas highlighted in the Ofsted inspection
- Regular meetings are being held with the DfE – there are Slough specific advisors – monitoring and challenge the implementation of the WSOA
- A SEND LGA review was commissioned by the DCS and took place on 20-23rd September 2022

Strategic Objectives:

- A borough for children and young people to thrive

Actions Required:

- Exploring specific resources to implement the WSOA. Additional SEND staffing resources are needed to improve functioning of the team and secure improvement. Update: The new roles have been graded and will be going out to advert to recruit in September 2022
 - Actionee: Johnny Kyriacou
 - Target date: January and February 2023
 - Latest update: Interviews have taken place over October and the following have been recruited to: 4 Assistant SEND Officers, 1 SEND Officer. 4 candidate have start dates throughout December and January with one candidate to be negotiated still. Recruitment to a Compliance and Partnerships Manager was unsuccessful and will go back out to advert in January so as to maximise interest.
- Implement the WSOA with all relevant partners, the WSOA
 - Actionee: Johnny Kyriacou
 - Target date: January 2023
 - Latest Update: Monthly board meetings continue to take place with all relevant partners. A project manager has been secured via the council PMO team who will be supporting delivery of the WSOA. Note this action is led by JK in the council but is a joint delivery between education, social care and health services.

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- Implement SEND LGA review recommendations with all relevant partners.
 - Actionee: Johnny Kyriacou
 - Target date: January 2023
 - Latest Update: The draft report has been reviewed and the LA will develop an action plan for implementation. A cabinet report is being prepared for January 2023.
- Implement Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) recovery plan in partnership with the Department for Education (DfE). This is also known as the Safety Valve programme. Meetings are taking place with the DfE with two workshops in August 2022
 - Actionee: Johnny Kyriacou
 - Target date: February 2023
 - Latest Update: The LA is preparing a submission to the DfE in January and is currently working on its presentation documents. The DfE have commented on positive progress in working with the LA to date.

	Inherent Risk	Current Risk	Target Risk
Likelihood	5	4	3
Impact	4	4	3
Score	20	16	9

Date last updated: **30th November 2022**