

Dr Catherine Driscoll
Director of Children's Services
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WR5 2YA

Simon Trickett, Accountable Officer, NHS Wyre Forest and South
Worcestershire CCG
Richard Davis, NHS Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG
Lyndon Thomas, Local Area Nominated Officer

17 May 2018

Findings from Ofsted / CQC local area SEND inspection report

Dear Dr Driscoll, Mr Davis, Mr Trickett and Mr Thomas

As you will be aware, Ofsted and CQC now require Worcestershire to submit a Written Statement of Action within 70 working days of receiving the local area SEND inspection report. This is because of the significant concerns set out in the report, published on 16 May 2018.

I have asked Anne Porter, one of DfE's SEND Professional Advisers, working closely with NHS England colleagues, to support you with producing the written statement, which must explain how the local area will tackle the areas of significant weakness identified by inspectors.

I was very concerned to read about the wide ranging areas of significant weakness, including a lack of strategic planning, limited and fragile engagement with parents and professionals, a poor local offer and too few Education Health and Care plans having been issued.

I was, however, encouraged that inspectors identified a new drive and commitment in Worcestershire to improve the quality of support provided to children and young people with SEND, which I very much hope will act as an impetus for the local area to move forward.

I would like to ask you to join me and NHS England colleagues to discuss how you intend to address the concerns raised by inspectors and make the necessary improvement in services. Please be aware that Fern Oxley-

Browning (Fern.OXLEY-BROWNING@education.gov.uk) will be contacting you shortly with a proposed time and date for this meeting. Finally, I have attached further information on the roles and responsibilities of key partners in supporting the improvement of SEND services in your area and a timeframe for the first 12 months after the publication of the inspection report. I hope that this information will help you in understanding individual roles and expectations. Should you have any further questions please contact Anne Porter in the first instance.

Yours sincerely,



Stuart Miller

Deputy Director
SEND, Alternative Provision and Attendance Unit
Department for Education (DfE)

Copy to:

Helen English, NHS England

Simon Geraghty, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance

Fran Oborski, Chairman Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Andy Roberts, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families

John Smith, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Health and Wellbeing;

Sajid Javid, MP for Bromsgrove

Nigel Huddleston, MP for Mid Worcestershire

Rachel Maclean, MP for Redditch

Harriett Baldwin, MP for West Worcestershire

Robin Walker, MP for Worcester

Mark Garnier, MP for Wyre Forest



Department
for Education

Annex A: Roles and responsibilities information sheet

This information sheet sets out the role and responsibilities of key organisations in a joint working approach to improve services in your area, following your Local Area SEND Inspection, where it has been determined that a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) is required.

Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Group

The Local Authority (LA) and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are jointly responsible for submitting a WSOA to Ofsted and CQC within 70 working days (approx. 14 weeks) from the date of receiving the inspection report.

The WSOA must state clear details for each action, who is responsible for taking each action forward and time period for completion.

The published inspection report will state the principal authority responsible for producing the WSOA. This will usually be the 'local area', which means the LA and CCG are jointly responsible for delivering the WSOA.

Ofsted and CQC

The Ofsted regional team will write to the local area confirming the latest date by which the WSOA must be submitted. It can be submitted before this date.

Ofsted and CQC are responsible for evaluating the WSOA within 10 working days of receiving it. If it is not fit for purpose, the LA and CCG must resubmit another WSOA within 20 working days.

Department of Education and NHS England

The DfE SEND adviser and NHS England SEND Local Office lead (referred to as Advisers) will support the local area to produce the WSOA. This will include a face to face meeting following the publication of the inspection report to discuss findings and next steps. Attendees will reflect the significant concerns and would include a senior LA officer (at least AD), senior officers with responsibility for the areas to be addressed, the officer who will be coordinating the Written Statement, Parent Carer Forum representative, and senior representation from the CCG.

Adviser meetings may be supplemented by requests from senior officials at the DfE and NHS England – and potentially Ministers – for meetings with senior leaders from the local area to discuss the findings and progress with delivering the necessary improvements to services.

Whilst Advisers may offer comments on the WSOA, they do not approve or sign off the statement submitted by the local area – only Ofsted and CQC do this.

Advisers will hold quarterly joint monitoring visits to discuss progress with developing and delivering the WSOA. Mott MacDonald, a DfE delivery partner, will contact the local area to arrange the dates for these visits, which must include a senior LA officer (of at least AD level) and senior representation from the CCG. If practical, this can coincide with an existing meeting that the local area has already in place to support its delivery of the WSOA, such as an Improvement Board.

The inspection handbook states that “the local authority (where it is not the principal authority) and every other person or body who has cooperated with the principal authority” must publish the WSOA on its website.

In line with the SEND Inspection Framework, DfE and NHSE officials will submit advice to the Minister of State for Children and Families on the progress made by the local area within 1 year of the publication of the report. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-area-send-inspection-guidance-for-inspectors>).

We encourage local areas to make contact with the designated Regional Schools Commissioner, whose role is to work with school leaders to take action in underperforming schools. They may be able to contribute to the WSOA by addressing any issues raised about SEN provision in schools. The area RSC lead can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/schools-commissioners-group>.

We also encourage local areas to work with local Transforming Care Partnerships and Sustainable Transformation Partnerships, with a particular focus on embedding children and young people within your planning and delivery of services in relation to CYP with SEND and Transforming Care.

Annex B: Timeframes on responding to findings (taken from Annex A of the Inspection [Handbook](#))

