

TITLE OF REPORT: Joint local area SEND Inspection in Gateshead

REPORT OF: Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing and Learning

Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide information to the Families OSC on the outcome of the joint local area SEND inspection in Gateshead.

Background

Between 6 February and 10 February 2017, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission conducted a joint inspection of the local area of Gateshead to judge its effectiveness in implementing the special educational needs and disability reforms as set out in the Children Act 2014. This is a new inspection framework which came into force in April 2016 will inspect all local areas over a five year period.

The inspection programme began in June 2016 and focusses on 3 key questions:

- a) How well does the local area identify children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities?
- b) How well does the local area assess and meet needs of children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities?
- c) How well does the local area improve outcomes for children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities?

The inspection leads to a published outcome letter that:

1. provides children and young people, parents, elected council members, local providers and those who lead and manage the delivery of services at local level with an assessment of how well the local area is meeting the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and how well service providers work together to deliver positive outcomes
2. provides information for the Secretary of State for Education about how well the local area is performing its role in line with its statutory responsibilities and the Code of Practice

3. promotes improvement in the local area, its education, health and social care provision where relevant, requires the local area to consider the actions that it should take in light of the report and prepare a written statement that sets out those actions and the timetable for them. There have been 30 SEND Inspection outcome letters published, 8 of which have required areas to produce a written statement.

Conclusion

The findings of Inspectors from both Ofsted and the CQC were published on 16 June 2017. Inspectors from both Ofsted and the CQC spoke to children and young people and parents and carers as well as professionals in education, health and social care. They found that there is a strong commitment in Gateshead to making sure children and young people with and special educational needs and disabilities are safe; that all agencies worked well together to meet the needs of children with SEND; that Gateshead's multi agency early years work meant that babies and children with complex needs and disabilities were identified early and received support quickly and that parents and carers were positive about the support their children received.

Inspectors also identified a number of other strengths in the local area's work with children and young people including; good support for children with visual and hearing impairments; services offering support being clear, easy to follow and successfully signposting families to other sources of help and information and that concerns about children's delays in development and progress were quickly identified.

It was also noted that children's special educational needs and disabilities were not seen as a barrier to achievement in Gateshead and that leaders took prompt action when they were concerned about children's lack of progress.

Some areas for further development were suggested by the CQC and Ofsted, but Gateshead is not required to submit a written 'statement of action' because the inspection did not raise any significant concerns.

However, key areas for future development that Gateshead ' local area is already working on include; a stronger focus on early help so that children and young people receive the support they need to prevent the need for more specialist help, such as support with mental health and emotional and behavioural issues; working with health services to improve processes, so that children receive the kind of support they need as quickly as possible and more travel training for young people with SEND, to help develop their independence and life chances.

Recommendations

Members of Families OSC are asked to note and discuss the content of the report.