

**Department of Children's Services**  
**Aiming High for Children**

**Education, Employment and Skills**

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To:  
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Dear Colleague

**Inspections of local areas' effectiveness in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)**

I am writing to provide you with important information about the Government's programme of inspections in relation to the local implementation of SEND reforms. This letter provides an outline of what the inspection is about and I have also attached the recently published handbook for the inspection.

**Who is this information for?**

This information is for organisations across all sectors who deliver services for children and young people aged 0-25 with SEND.

It is important to emphasise that this is not an inspection of the Local Authority but an inspection of the Local Area's SEND provision. The handbook for the inspection identifies the Local Area as the Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), Public Health, NHS England for Specialist Services, Early Years settings, Schools and further Education Providers. If your organisation delivers services, you may be contacted by the inspectors when an inspection is announced.

**What is the inspection about?**

The reforms that will be inspected arise from the Children and Families Act 2014 and the 0-25 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice. All local areas across the country will be inspected in relation to the implementation of these changes.

The inspection will focus on three questions:

1. How effectively does the local area identify children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities?
2. How effectively does the local area assess and meet the needs of children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities?
3. How effectively does the local area improve outcomes for children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities?

In March 2015 the Department for Education (DfE) published its document *Special Educational Needs and Disability: Supporting Local and National Accountability*. This guidance set out plans to develop a set of success measures and use feedback from children, young people and their families to improve services. It will use this data and intelligence to measure progress and success so that Local Areas improve.

The framework for SEND is structured in three parts: local roles and responsibilities; national roles and responsibilities; and independent assessment. All three need to work together to improve outcomes and experiences for children, young people and families.

### **How do we know what the inspection process will be?**

The attached handbook provides guidance on how the inspections will be undertaken, the types of data that will be used and the range of information that will be gathered from the Local Area during the inspection. It is also a useful tool for self-evaluation and on-going improvement.

### **When will the inspection happen?**

A rolling programme of inspections will begin from May 2016. Local Areas across the country will be inspected over a five year period. Nationally this equates to 30 area inspections a year. We anticipate that eight inspections will be undertaken nationally between May and July 2016.

We don't know when Bradford will be subject to an inspection, but it may be that we will be subject to an early inspection. This is because of other recent inspection outcomes for the District and outcomes for children and young people in national assessments.

### **What format will the inspections take?**

Inspections will be undertaken jointly by a three person inspection team. The team will be made up of HMI Inspectors (Ofsted) and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Inspections will follow a five-day on-site format. It is anticipated that three days will be managed from a central point and approximately two days will be used to undertake visits to various stakeholder groups and settings.

The views of parents, carers, children and young people will be strongly reflected in the inspection outcomes. The inspection will focus not only on children and young people with education, health and care plans but also those children and young people who have provision made for them through school support.

Inspectors will pre-select groups of parents and carers to speak with, including Early Years settings, Schools, Colleges and Health Service Commissioners and Providers. This will include Maintained and Independent Provision.

### **What will the findings look like?**

The Local Area will not have a graded judgement but the inspection will identify key strengths and areas requiring further development. The findings will be shared through an inspection report which will include recommendations and priority areas for action.

## How are we preparing for the inspection?

As part of our preparations for inspection a performance management review group has been set up. The group, called Improving Outcomes, is facilitated by the Local Authority and brings together key partners from Education, Health and Social Care across the 0-25 age range who provide support and services to families with SEND. The group have completed a self-assessment exercise to identify areas that require development and are developing an action plan, linked to the inspection framework and Code of Practice.

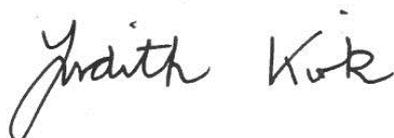
The Improving Outcomes group reports to the District's SEND Strategic Partnership on a regular basis to identify emerging issues and how we should respond to these. The SEND Strategic Partnership has a role to monitor the action plan as part of the overall SEND Strategic Plan 2016-18 and the local reporting and accountability structure. The partnership reports to a number of groups including the Health and Well Being Board and the Children's Trust Board.

## What can you do?

We want organisations that deliver services and support to children, young people and families with SEND to be aware of the inspection process so that staff and service users can be informed. We will contact you when we have a confirmed date for the inspection.

If you have any questions about the inspection, please contact me by calling on 01274 431078 or emailing me at [judith.kirk@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:judith.kirk@bradford.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely



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