

HEADLINE REPORT ON S.E.N.D ISSUES FOR POLICY, DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20th MARCH 2018

Please find below, a short summary of the key issues that relate to the current work of the SEND service;

- **Demand for Places;** This continues to be high. BaNES currently has 1062 (January 2018) young people with an Education and Health- Care Plan (EHCP), this has risen from figure of 748 September 2015. Because of this the High Needs element of the DSG (Direct Schools Grant) continues to experience considerable strain. The Council continues to manage these demands through the co-operation of the local Schools Forum. These trends and pressures are broadly in line with the majority of other Local Authorities in England. Following a regional (South-West) LA meeting in December 2017, all 13 South West LA's highlighted the rising demand for SEND places and associated costs as a priority for action.
- In response to these pressures BaNES is currently developing a strategy to fund up to 107 additional SEND places across some main-stream schools and Bath College. We are in the process of discussing with two local MAT's the option of locating some of these places within these schools. The funding for these additional places will be through a combination of money from the DfE and a matched amount from the Council. The intention is that through the funding of additional local places we can not only increase capacity but also begin to reduce the reliance on "out of county" places. This should prove beneficial to young people who no longer have to travel excessive distances, as well as enabling the Council to reduce transport costs and target resources more positively on activity that can add value to these young people. We hope to identify the first number of new places in time for September 2018.
- **Preparation for Inspection;** Ofsted and the CQC are now roughly half-way through a three year programme of inspecting all Local Authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups in relation to their joint provision for young people with SEND. There are now only four LA's in the South West area that have not received this inspection. Therefore it is likely that this inspection will take place within this calendar year. The inspection will last for one week and will focus on the strength of services jointly provided by schools, health partners and the Council. The inspection will focus on the views of parents and young people in relation to the impact and difference that local services make.
- The local SEND Strategic Board has been actively preparing for the inspection for the past 12 months. This has involved developing and updating the "local offer" to parents as well as focusing on improving the quality and timeliness of plans for young people. Strategically we have also undertaken work to improve outcomes for SEND pupils at risk of NEET, transition pathways into adulthood, and increasing the range of alternative provision across BaNES in order to provide greater choice for families where mainstream education is not necessarily suitable.