

Annex A

SEND Call for Evidence

Completed by Milton Keynes City Council SEND Team

Introduction:

Below outlines suggested recommendations that could be considered in relation to improving the outcomes for children and young people (CYP) with SEND. Under each of the key headings, ideas have been shared following reflection of local process and pressures faced daily by both schools and settings, families and Local Authority Officers. To support these considerations we have provided an overview of some of the things we have as a service have found to be most impactful and have introduced at a local level.

| Key area of Reform | What we are doing in MK | What needs to happen nationally |
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| <p>Support for children and young people with SEND</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Within Milton Keynes we have worked as a partnership to create an Identification of Need and Ordinarily Available Provision document that outlines what all schools and settings should be delivering for consistency across the city. This has just recently been launched and schools are expected to use this document to support meeting the needs of the majority of children and young people without the need for an EHCP. - Milton Keynes has created a SEND Support plan (SSP) that sets out clearly the needs of the child and through an APDR cycle outlines what provision and support is needed for the CYP. This supports consideration whether a CYP should progress to assessment for an EHCP. - Milton Keynes has a universal training offer that supports schools in meeting needs of their CYP, this is reviewed regularly and links to priorities on our SEND Action Plan. Success is dependent on schools accessing the training. - Milton Keynes has a Specialist Teaching Team that supports early identification of need and meeting need within schools as well as transitioning CYP back into education. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusion should be central and at the forefront of how schools deliver their provision. SEND Support should be key and consistent for all mainstream schools. This would stop families feeling they need to move to receive a better quality of education either within the same LA or wider. Clear expectations should be set out for all schools in how they support children and young people with SEND using a graduated response. - Consideration should be given to a standardised SEND Support plan (SSP) that sets out clearly the needs of the child and through a APDR cycle and outlines what provision and support is needed for the CYP, this could be a levelled approach depending on the need of the child and what support is required. It should be co-produced by the family, school and wider professionals supporting the CYP, including health and social care. Milton Keynes have devised a SSP and when used effectively supports CYP in making progress. This is reliant on schools and settings all using the template consistently. - Outcomes for CYP at SEND Support should be reported by schools to show progress, not just academic data with assessments used to support collection against outcomes. - All schools should access training to support CYP with SEND with schools needing to evidence how they have developed their workforces understanding of SEND needs and also their role in ensuring needs are being appropriately met. Local Authorities could be given more power to hold schools to account for staff develop whether they are |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Milton Keynes has a specific 'place planning for SEND places' working group that use data to advise where projected places are needed. | <p>maintained or academy. There could be national online courses outlining the SEND Law to ensure everyone receives consistent messages and shares the same understanding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher training and support staff qualifications should have compulsory SEND training that has to be completed including practical experience of working across the different types of provisions. - Schools should be trained to deliver standardised assessments for CYP attending their schools and have the ability to analyse those assessments and transfer the findings into the SEND Support Plan. - Create an Identification of Need and Ordinarily Available Provision document that outlines what all schools and settings should be delivering for consistency, could be a nationally agreed document - Specialist Teaching teams could be used to enable high quality inclusive education focusing on CYP remaining at their local mainstream schools. The teams should empower schools to ensure CYP want to attend and feel supported when they are there. - Gathering the voice of the CYP to share what makes a school inclusive and what more schools can do to ensure CYP want to attend school. Most LA's have a SEND Youth Councils, could they be used to support? - Consideration of sharing expertise across the system, more partnership working between specialist settings and |
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| | | <p>mainstream, special schools should cater for most complex with clear entry criteria, LA's should have final decision making on those who need the spaces based on information shared via the schools and professionals working with the CYP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progressive moving towards specialist units attached to mainstream provisions will mean schools have expertise on site, Units should have specialisms and different pathways to support the varying needs. |
| <p>Education, Health and Care Plans</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whilst CYP are waiting for an EHC needs assessment, top up funding and advice from Specialist Teaching Team can be provided to ensure needs are met | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remove the 20-week timeframe, in current climate this is unachievable and builds false hope for families when EP assessments take too long to be completed. <p>If there is to be a specific timeframe, consideration should be given to using teacher led assessments and wider professional reports, could EPs be used to quality check reports and also form part of the final decision making? If an EP assessment is essential this could be completed ahead of the request for an EHC assessment with evidence of how the strategies have been implemented (Schools could use some of their funding to commission EP's at SEND Support level). This would help with parental expectations as all reports are completed ahead of the request and evidence would form a basis of decision to issue or not. This would speed up decision making as it would be agreement to issue a plan or not.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CYP should have more say in whether they need an EHCP and what benefit it would bring to them, especially with the older young person (YP), if a YP can give a view they should, specifically linked to this. |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consideration to the age of the YP when the EHCP ceases, what are the benefits of going to 25 vs statutory school age, what impact/ value added is there in having an EHCP outside statutory school age, it delays some YP getting support from adult services or progressing into employment. Some of our older YP no longer want an EHCP however parental choice dominates decisions. - If a LA makes a decision an EHCP is not required and needs can be supported at SEND support this decision should be final, if it is a no LA's should provide clear reasons and what actions should be implemented. Consider a change in language from 'may' have a SEND need to 'must', and this SEND need should be supported by wider professionals, not just based on parental opinion. - Consideration if a CYP has a specific health need that is not impacting their ability to learn introducing health plans instead of EHCPs. There are some examples (where a child has diabetes for example) that a health plan would be sufficient to meet needs. - Have one template for all EHCPs that must be used across the country. At Year 9 consider changing the format so it is based on preparation for adulthood with all outcomes and provision supporting ability and aspiration of the yp. |
| <p>Current and future SEND need</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New consistent level of need documentation could be designed to focus more on support at SEND support level for needs such as anxiety and CYP who struggle to attend school. |

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| | | <p>Sec 19 guidance reinforces the fact that some CYP do not need to attend school and puts pressure on LAs to deliver educational packages. The emphasis and support should be within the schools to ensure the CYP attends their local school, this needs consideration for change. Funding could be better spent supporting at SEND support level rather than expensive packages which do not enable the CYP back into education going against inclusion.</p> |
| <p>Current and future model of SEND provision</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Milton Keynes is now opening more specialist Units attached to mainstream schools as opposed to opening special schools. This is to develop staff expertise but to also ensure CYP will start to attend local provision and be part of their local communities, this in turn reduces the costs of transporting CYP to schools on Home To School Transport. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide guidance and expectations on constant types of provision from mainstream, specialist units and specialist placements to ensure consistency across the country. A levelled approach could reduce need for high cost placements within the independent sector. - The majority of CYP should attend a mainstream school. If specialist is required, they would attend their most local specialist Unit attached to a mainstream school and then the most complex attend special schools. - Although the LA can name provision on an EHCP, the parent has the right to appeal, greater trust should be placed on the LA to name appropriate settings following a clear change of placement process. That setting should then be the final placement. - For place planning and demand on places consideration should be given to place funding being consistent across the country. Schools and LA's would then be able to plan effectively for both staffing and provision with a fair and funding formula. |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- For partnership working all local authorities should have a partnership model with a clear strategic plan that all services are held to account for. We are starting to see the impact of operating with this model. All services include schools and settings as they deliver the educational element of a CYP education. As part of inspections, schools should be measured individually on the quality of SEND support plans and EHCPs and report progress that is not only based on educational outcomes.- For independent settings introduce capped funding as suggested across all types of settings. If provision is right across the local areas there would be no need for independent provisions operating at high costs.- Within secondary schools' consideration should be given to having different pathways so CYP can achieve a variety of qualifications, some schools are opposed to delivering any qualifications other than GCSEs as it impacts their data.- The SEND Code of Practice and EHCP system operate a within a child deficit model. There is no national definition of inclusion, leading to varied interpretations. Systemic change is needed to address these issues.- Address the high exclusion rates by ensuring schools remain financially responsible for CYP until age 16. Focus on creating a supportive and inclusive school environment with a curriculum that supports their needs giving them a sense of belonging. Have a robust system wide agreement that schools will not permanently exclude CYP, working in partnership to access alt education and then reintegrate |
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| | | <p>effectively back into mainstream education through a FAP process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve access to transport - this could be means tested, not just having access to an EHCP. |
| Finance, funding and capacity of SEND provision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Milton Keynes offers top up funding for SEND support with clear eligibility criteria which schools have to meet. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish short-term early intervention funding which is a national set amount so schools can appropriately support CYP at SEND Support level. - Agree on costs for different types of provision to avoid market-driven top-up funding demands and uplifts. This will enable LA's to ensure robust place planning. - Review funding levels across early years, educational settings, specialist settings, and independent non-maintained settings. |
| Accountability and inspection of SEND provision | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consideration to OFSTED focusing more on inclusivity and how needs are being met at SEND support. - Schools to be held more to account for placement breakdowns. - Offer training on writing Ombudsman responses to colleagues. - Implement a consistent and capped approach to financial remedies as remedies are adding to financial pressures. - Consider whether a financial remedy most appropriate as it does not benefit the CYP. |