



West
Northamptonshire
Council

Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) update

September 2022

- The Children and Families Act 2014 includes the statutory requirements for the Council and partners to implement reforms for children with SEND.
- All councils have statutory duties in relation to;
 - assessment of children and young people with SEND.
 - determining whether they require an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP);
 - the co-ordination of advice towards an EHCP,
 - production of an EHCP within specified timescales.
 - making decisions about type of provision and resources required to meet assessed needs.
 - ensuring needs are reviewed at least annually and taking action, as required, in response to review recommendations.
 - Embed co-production at all levels of decision making
- The statutory SEND Code of Practice outlines the legal requirements that all partners must adhere to in line with the Children and Families Act 2014.

National picture

The 2014 reforms have led to increase in requests for support, an increase in identification of needs and an increase in EHCPs being agreed.

- Increase in requests for EHCP's nationally from 76,000 in 2020 to 93,000 in 2021
- Increase in school aged children with an EHCP from 3.1% in 2018/19 to 3.7% in 2020/21 (including 40,000 new EHCPs issued last year – an annual increase of 10%)
- Increase in responsibility for Councils to include all children and young people with SEND from 0-25 years of age
- Only 14% of Councils are currently meeting the demand for SEND services within their allocated High Needs Funding [Local Government Ombudsman report](#)
- Shortfall of specialist educational and care provision
- Ongoing impact of lockdowns – increase in requests for support and increasing complexity of needs

National picture

In March 2022, the DfE launched the SEND Green Paper consultation ‘SEND review; right support, right place, right time’

The Green Paper focussed on 3 key challenges;

- *Navigating the SEND system and alternative provision is not a positive experience for too many children, young people and their families.*
- *Outcomes for children and young people with SEND or in alternative provision are consistently worse than their peers across every measure.*
- *Despite the continuing and unprecedented investment, the system is not financially sustainable.*

The consultation has now closed. It is expected that the DfE will publish a national SEND delivery plan in the autumn 2022

National picture

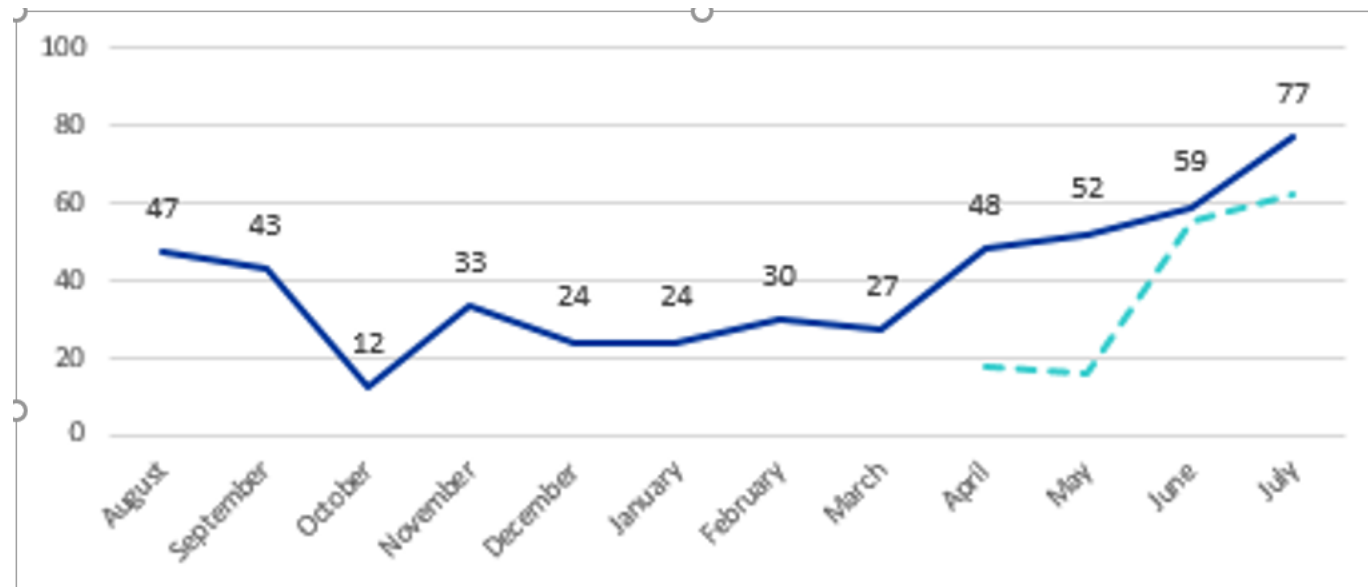
In June 2022, OFSTED and the Care Quality Commission launched a consultation about the way local areas are inspected. The main proposed areas of change are

- focusing on the experiences and outcomes of children and young people
- strengthening accountability and driving continuous improvement through an ongoing cycle of inspections
- introducing 3 inspection outcomes,
- an expectation that all areas produce and publish a strategic plan for SEND, which is updated following inspection
- gathering more evidence directly from children and families
- looking more closely at arrangements for children and young people in alternative provision

The outcome of the consultation is expected in autumn 2022 with the new inspection framework being implemented from early 2023

Local picture

- In WNC there are 3,046 children with an EHCP - an increase from 2,587 in 2021
- The table below shows the monthly increase in new EHCPs being issued



Key

————— 2022
- - - - - 2021

Significant increase in demand across all services;

- Requests for assessments have increased by 25% from last year.
 - 967 requests for assessments for the last academic year (compared to 1,092 for the whole of Northamptonshire in the academic year 2019/20)
- 22.8% EHC Needs Assessments completed within 20 week timescale this calendar year compared to 59.9% nationally
- 50.4% of annual reviews held were completed within the 12 month deadline this year (there is no national comparable data at present)
- WNC are currently within their High Needs budget

Recent Improvements

- Additional staffing within the EHC team – this has meant that the backlog of plans waiting to be written has been cleared
- Improved process to manage the backlog of annual reviews to be completed - these will be completed by the end of September
- Introduction of a dedicated Post 16 team who specialise in supporting children transferring into 16-25 provision
- Commissioning an additional 500 specialist placements, including expanding current special school, SEND provisions in mainstream schools and the commissioning of a new 250 placed Special School
- EHCP Quality Assurance process developed
- Consistent funding process to schools developed with national and local SEND leaders
- Co-producing our 'Graduated approach' with all partners

Areas of focus

- Increase 20 week EHC needs assessment compliance.
- Increased compliance with annual review timescales
- Educational Psychology recruitment – not enough staff to complete the advice within timescales
- Agreeing and embedding co-production with all partners
- Improving access to Speech and language provision
- Improving the variety and quality of alternative provision
- Improving inclusive practice in all schools and services
- Increasing awareness of SEND in all partners

Next steps

- It is proposed that the local area partnership produces a self-assessment against the published SEND delivery plan and new inspection framework
- It is proposed that the self-assessment and local delivery plan is presented the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee