

Guidance about Local Area SEND Inspection - Public Health

The Local Area SEND Inspection is undertaken by Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) and evaluates how effectively education, health and care partners work together to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND aged 0-25 years. The inspection is not of one team or service, but of the whole local area SEND system. Public Health services may be sampled as part of inspectors' evidence gathering because of their role in improving outcomes, reducing inequalities, supporting commissioning decisions and strengthening the local area partnership.

The focus is always on:

- Experiences of children, young people and families
- Impact of support and services
- Outcomes for children and young people with SEND
- Partnership working across the system

Public Health teams should be ready to:

- Explain their role within the SEND system
- Demonstrate how Public Health intelligence informs planning and commissioning
- Show how inequalities are identified and addressed
- Describe how children, young people and families influence service development
- Evidence impact on outcomes

The Hampshire Local Area Partnership draws together organisations that work with children and young people with SEND in Hampshire. This includes Education, Health, and Social Care, as well as voluntary sector organisations and those representing children, young people and families. These organisations are represented on Hampshire's Local Area Partnership Board. The Board ensures all those organisations work together to deliver high quality, joined up care, education and health services across the Local Area in order that children and young people with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes

1. What the Inspection is About

Inspectors will focus on:

- Children and young people's lived experiences
- Identification of need and access to support
- Outcomes and reducing inequalities
- How effectively partners work together

Public Health services should be able to explain how their work contributes to improved outcomes for children and young people with SEND, even where they are not directly

delivering services, or directly working with children and young people with SEND and their families.

2. Your Role as a Public Health Professional

This includes any Public Health role working directly with children and young people such as:

- Public Health Practitioners
- Public Health Nurses
- Health Visiting Services
- School Nursing Services
- Children's Public Health Leads
- Healthy Child Programme Leads
- SEND and Inclusion Leads within Public Health

And roles that are working indirectly to influence health outcomes, in prevention and to tackle health inequalities, including:

- Consultants in Public Health
- Public Health Intelligence Teams
- Public Health Analysts
- Health Improvement Teams
- Commissioning and Transformation Leads
- Health Protection Teams
- Strategic Partnership Leads
- Prevention and Early Help Leads

During inspection you may be asked to:

- Explain Public Health's contribution to the SEND Local Area Partnership, and the work going on to strengthen multi-agency working.
- Describe how intelligence and evidence inform commissioning decisions
- Explain how health inequalities affecting children and young people with SEND are identified and addressed
- Direct teams may be asked to contribute in a timely way to case sampling for selected tracked learners they are working with, and;
- Attend meeting or case discussion about tracked learners that have been selected by inspectors.

3. What You Must Be Ready to Demonstrate

A. Understanding Need

Inspectors may ask you to evidence how the local area understands the needs, experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND. Be prepared to evidence:

- How you know the current and emerging needs of children and young people with SEND in Hampshire and the data, intelligence and evidence used to understand need, including:
 - Population Needs Assessments
 - Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) contributions.
 - SEND-related health and outcomes data.
 - Health inequalities analysis.
 - Service activity, demand and waiting list data.
- How unmet need is identified, analysed and acted upon.
- How the experiences, views and feedback of children, young people and families are gathered and used to shape services.
- How this intelligence informs strategic planning, commissioning and service improvement.

B. Reducing Health Inequalities

Inspectors will ask you to evidence how the local area identifies, addresses and monitors health inequalities for children and young people with SEND. Be prepared to evidence:

- Differences in outcomes between groups of children and young people with SEND, including variation by geography, deprivation, ethnicity, age and need.
- Barriers that prevent children, young people and families from accessing support, assessment, treatment and services.
- How equity of provision is ensured so that children and young people receive the support they need regardless of where they live or their background.
- Actions taken to reduce identified inequalities, including targeted interventions and service improvements.
- The impact of these actions on outcomes, experiences and access to services.
- How progress is monitored, evaluated and reported, including the use of performance data and quality assurance.
- Evidence of improvements in access to services (ND and diagnostics, vaccination uptake among SEND young people, MH outcomes, healthy weight outcomes, access to health during transitions)

C. Early Identification and Prevention

Inspectors may ask you to evidence how Public Health contributes to the early identification of SEND and promotes prevention and early intervention. Be prepared to demonstrate:

- How Public Health supports the early identification of developmental, health and SEND-related needs.
- Contributions to the Healthy Child Programme, including health visiting, school nursing and developmental reviews.

- Prevention and early intervention initiatives that improve outcomes for children and young people with emerging or identified needs.
- How Public Health works with health, education, early years and community partners to identify needs earlier and provide timely support.
- How families are informed, supported and signposted to appropriate services at the earliest opportunity.
- The effectiveness and impact of early identification and preventative approaches for individual children and young people.

D. Strategic Influence and Commissioning

Inspectors may ask you to evidence how Public Health influences strategic planning, commissioning and service improvement for children and young people with SEND. Be prepared to demonstrate:

- How Public Health influences commissioning decisions through the use of population health intelligence, needs assessments and evidence-based recommendations.
- Contributions to the design, redesign and evaluation of services to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- Joint working with Integrated Care Board (ICB), local authority, education, social care and provider partners to develop and deliver integrated approaches.
- Public Health's contribution to SEND strategic planning, governance, action plans and transformation programmes.
- How Public Health supports partners to understand current and future demand and plan services accordingly.
- The impact of Public Health involvement on service access, quality, outcomes and experiences for children, young people and families.
- How the effectiveness of commissioned services and strategic initiatives is monitored and reviewed.

4. Tracker Learners (Multi-Agency Audits)

Although Public Health staff may have less direct working involvement with children and young people, those working directly (e.g. Health Visitors, School Nurses) may be asked to contribute to a deep dive into individual cases, including practitioners' meetings with inspectors about individual children and young people.

Tracked learner cases are led by a named professional who will coordinate evidence, they will request information about individuals with a very short turn to coordinate a multi-agency review.

Be prepared to:

- Attend in-person and online meetings with inspectors about your practice and individual children and young people known to you

- Share a chronology of your services involvement, describing pathways and support offered
- Contribute clinical insight
- Explain decisions made, outcomes and next steps.

5. Surveys and Engagement

During week 1 staff, parents, and young people receive surveys to directly share experiences with Ofsted and CQC inspectors.

You should:

- Encourage participation by children, young people and families by including information on noticeboards and in public spaces
- Directly email links to the surveys to children and young people with SEND and their families that workers are engaged with.
- Support families to understand the process, there are a range of tools you can signpost them too on the [Local Offer](#)
- Complete professional surveys honestly and share with colleagues

6. Practical Expectations During Inspection

You must:

- Respond promptly to information requests
- Make key documents and data accessible
- Be available for meetings if requested by inspectors or leads
- Understand your contribution to SEND outcomes

You should:

- Use examples of impact and lived experience
- Explain data in a clear way
- Focus on outcomes rather than activity
- Be confident describing both strengths and areas for improvement
- Be confident in re-directing a question to someone better placed to respond if required / saying you don't know but are happy to find the information being requested

7. Likely Questions for Public Health Staff

Inspectors will ask a range of questions, mostly focusing on the experiences of children and young people with SEND, and how well Hampshire works together to meet needs, they may also ask about:

- How you understand the needs of children and young people with SEND now, and in the future?
- Have you identified which groups of children and young people with SEND experience poorer outcomes or reduced access?
- What actions have been taken to address individual and group inequalities?
- What preventative and early intervention support and activity is in place?
- How do you know these approaches are improving outcomes and reducing the need for more intensive support later?
- How does Public Health work with education, social care, and health partners to provide support for children and young people with SEND?
- How have children, young people and families influenced your work and examples of service changes resulting from feedback?

8. Top Tips for Public Health Staff

- Keep it simple and focus on children and young people's experiences
- Explain how intelligence informs action
- Demonstrate impact, not just activity
- Be clear about your role in the wider SEND system
- Use examples that show partnership working, not jargon
- Be honest about challenges and improvement work
- Highlight how Public Health supports reducing inequalities

9. Key Messages

- Public Health is an integral partner within the SEND Local Area Partnership, we work together across education, health, and social care to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- We use evidence, intelligence and engagement to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- Our focus is on improving experiences, outcomes and life chances for children and young people with SEND.
- Continuous improvement is everyone's responsibility
- The voices of children, young people and families are central to effective service development.
- Your voice, and the voice of children and young people, is critical evidence
- Every interaction contributes to the overall judgment
- Be clear, be honest, and keep the child at the centre of every answer.