
One Minute Guide to data and the SEND inspection process

Background

As part of our local area inspection we need to provide evidence that all key staff in the local area know the strengths and weaknesses, together with the actions to address these and to improve. A key part of this evidence is our data. We need to show that we are effectively recording and using data at individual, operational and strategic levels to inform our service provision and commissioning. We need to demonstrate how the work we are doing is meeting the needs of our children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and leading to improved outcomes. Everyone across the system plays a vital part in this from administrative and front line staff inputting data, to senior leaders using evidence to make strategic decisions.

Individual level data

We need to ensure that we are accurately recording key information to support children and young people and their families effectively; this includes data needed to allow reporting of performance at operational and strategic levels. We must be able to show the impact of our work on individual children and young people, not just the services we provide.

As part of this we need to ensure all personal information is fully completed including details of SEND as well as specific

circumstances, such as whether they are looked after or a service child. Without this we cannot demonstrate that we are effectively identifying those in need of additional support. This must be captured through the use of set fields and flags in our databases and not just through free text in notes; this not only makes it easier to find the information for anyone viewing the file but also ensures we can report on this information. This is especially critical at the time of the inspection as we will be asked to provide lists of children and young people with SEND whose specific circumstances require additional consideration.

We must be able to show that there has been a holistic assessment of the support required to meet the identified needs, which includes the views and aspirations of both the child or young person and their parent or carer. In addition, we need to record what support was provided as a result of the assessment both directly or indirectly and what the outcomes were. This includes capturing information about which other services are working with these children and young people.

Operational level data

We need to demonstrate that the services we deliver or commission are appropriate and sufficient to meet local need, and that they are working effectively to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people.

Both the council and the CCG do this through outcome based accountability approaches.

Children and young people in specific circumstances that the inspectors are specifically interested in include:

- children looked after
- care leavers
- children and young people with SEND and care needs, including those who have a child in need or a child protection plan
- children and young people educated out of area
- children and young people with SEND who are educated at home
- children and young people in alternative provision
- children and young people with SEND who are in hospital
- children of service personnel
- children and young people in youth custody or secure accommodation

This involves regularly reviewing management information on how much we are doing, such as looking at the volumes of referrals and caseloads, as well as how well we are doing it, such as the timeliness of assessments and the number of appeals. We also need to show that alongside looking at data from our case management systems we are also seeking feedback from children and young people and their families, and learning from complaints or issues to help us improve our services.

We need to show how we are scrutinising key areas of the system through our performance management framework, monitoring key performance indicators and taking appropriate action to get things back on track when we see the first signs of something going wrong. This includes having a key focus on the outcomes for children and young people that services are delivering, such as the proportion of service

users supported to live independently or the proportion in education, employment or training.

We need to show that we are working together as part of a joined-up system and so need to be able to demonstrate that we are actively monitoring interfaces between services and key transition points to ensure that children and young people receive seamless support. We also must demonstrate that we are sharing data appropriately between services.

Overall the inspectors need to be assured that we fully understand our services' strengths and weaknesses and have a clear deliverable plan to make improvements that is supported by our data. Inspectors will have already reviewed published data on our services and outcomes for our children and young people, and will use this to test our understanding of how well we are doing.

We will acknowledge that there are some issues experienced across services relating to our Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) infrastructure and applications. It is important that we are clear that we have plans in place to improve our systems, the quality of recording particularly for outcomes, and our reporting.

Strategic level data

The inspectors will be looking to see how we collate our data to build a comprehensive overview of the needs of our children and young people, including how we assess how well services are working together to meet these needs. They will expect to see that we actively look for any inequalities in access to services or outcomes and take action as required.

They will do this by looking at our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and our strategic performance information.

They will expect staff to be aware of the key issues for Tower Hamlets and how their role contributes to delivering outcomes at a strategic level, as well as how they make a difference to individual children and young people and their families.

We are able to demonstrate that we have a very good overview of educational outcomes but we know that we need to strengthen this across the other domains. We are looking for ways to improve our use of feedback from children and young people and their parents/carers at a strategic level.

