

7 April 2022

Melanie John-Ross
Executive Director of Children's Services
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
1 Westgate
Western Street
Barnsley
S70 2DR

Jamie Wike, Chief Operating Officer, Barnsley Clinical Commissioning Group
Lisa Loach, Local Area Nominated Officer, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Dear Ms John-Ross and Mr Wike

This letter is written in accordance with The Children Act 2004 (Joint Area Reviews) Regulations 2015¹ to inform Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council and NHS Barnsley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), as principal authorities, that Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission have jointly evaluated the written statement of action submitted to us on 28 February 2022.

The statement of action is deemed to be fit for purpose in setting out how the local area will tackle the significant areas of weakness identified in the published report letter.

You clearly address the two significant areas of weakness identified by inspectors from Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission in September 2021. The statement of action is organised into two over-arching priorities that are split up into discrete focus areas. You have allocated specific and appropriate actions to these focus areas. You show who is responsible for these actions and the timeline for completion. The success criteria for each action are clear. You explain how you will review progress on a regular basis. It is clear what governance structures are currently in place and how you will scrutinize the implementation and impact of the plan over time.

¹ The Children Act 2004 (Joint Area Reviews) Regulations 2015
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/1972/regulation/4/made.

The section covering priority two is particularly strong because of the level of detail in the action points. There is some potential confusion in the third focus area of priority one. There are two different action points here that are both titled 'b'. The second of these refers to how parents and carers will 'feed into strategic discussions and decisions'. There is a risk that any lack of clarity around this action point 'b' could leave parents and carers feeling frustrated.

You explain in your written statement of action how you have formalised the relationship between the Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, the Barnsley CCG and the Barnsley SEND parents and carers' alliance (BSPCA) through a signed memorandum of understanding. Your written statement of action would be strengthened by more detail about what role the BSPCA, or any future parent and carer forum, will have in the oversight of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) provision and in your governance structures. This is important if the strategic influence of parents and carers is to be developed and sustained over time.

The written statement of action must be published on local websites², so that parents, carers, children and young people can understand the actions you are taking to improve the effectiveness of the local area in identifying and meeting needs, and improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

Yours sincerely

Helen Lane HMI
Assistant Regional Director

² Regulation 4 (5); www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/1792/regulation/4/made