



SNAP PARENT CARER FORUM
CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE

**OFSTED/CQC Area SEND Inspection Report
& Written Statement of Action (WSoA)**

An update – May 2020

Reasons for this report

During the OFSTED and CQC Area SEND Inspection in November 2019, SNAP PCF only had seven days to both consult our membership and to write a report for the Inspectors. Since the Written Statement of Action (WSOA) was received by Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG) on the 24th of February 2020, we have reflected on our [Inspectors Report](#), [Survey Results](#) and the anecdotal information received from our members.

We also wanted to introduce ourselves, to anyone who are not already familiar with our Forum and how as a critical friend, we work in partnership with, Central Bedfordshire Council and the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group. We are pleased to report that Sue Harrison (Director of Children's Services) and Anne Murray (Chief Nurse BMLK Commissioning Collaborative) have both expressed a desire to have SNAP PCF working closely with them and their teams on their response to the Written Statement of Action (WSOA).

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 crisis will likely reduce the opportunities for SNAP PCF to be involved in this process in a way that we had originally hoped. All of SNAP PCF Steering Group are parent carers of disabled children and young people, who have their own children to care for during this crisis.

However, once we are through the crisis period we look forward to working with Central Bedfordshire Council and the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group in a solution-focused way, whilst being a strong voice for parent carers of disabled children and young adults living within Central Bedfordshire. We are pleased that the implementation of the SEND reforms, as defined by the Children and Families Act 2014, are now firmly back on the agenda of Central Bedfordshire Council and the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, hopefully ensuring that all necessary changes and improvements are made which will lead to much improved outcomes for disabled children, young people and their families.

What is a Parent Carer Forum?

Parent Carer Forums were introduced largely because of the of The Children & Families Act 2014. A Parent Carer Forum is a group of parents and carers of disabled children and young adults aged from birth to 25 years. Their aim is to make sure that the services in their local area meet the needs of disabled children/young adults and their families. They do this by gathering views from local families and then working in partnership with local authorities, education settings, health providers and other relevant organisations to highlight where local services, processes and commissioners are working well, or to challenge when changes or improvements are needed.

Parent Carer Forums are supported by Contact who are a national charity for families with disabled children. There are currently 152 Parent Carer Forums operating across the country. As well as working with local government and health providers, SNAP PCF are members of The National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF). Together with other forums from across the country, SNAP PCF regularly provides feedback to the NNPCF about the work being done in our local area. The feedback from local forums allows the NNPCF to collate collective information and data from across the UK, which is then fed back to central government.

Code of Practice 2015

"Parent Carer Forums 1.13 Parent Carer Forums are representative local groups of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities who work alongside local authorities, education, health and other service providers to ensure the services they plan, commission, deliver and monitor meet

the needs of children and families. Parent Carer Forums have been established in most local areas and local authorities are actively encouraged to work with them. More information about Parent Carer Forums is available from the websites of Contact a Family and the National Network of 23 Parent Carer Forums.” Code of Practice 2015

Special Needs Action Panel, Parent Carer Forum for Central Bedfordshire (SNAP PCF)

SNAP PCF has been in existence for eight years and is an independently run Parent Carer Forum, governed by a Steering Group who direct its work, priorities and operations.

SNAP PCF was originally set up as part of Families United Network (F.U.N.), a local Bedfordshire based disabled children’s charity in 2012, becoming an independent organisation in 2015 and then subsequently registering as a Community Interest Company in 2017.

SNAP PCF are funded by the Department for Education, Central Bedfordshire Council and the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group. SNAP PCF employs a Manager and Finance Officer and is governed by a Steering Group of parent carers who use their own lived experiences, and those of the other Forum members, to direct the Forum’s work and priorities, to ensure that good governance structures are maintained. The Forum currently has 816 [parent carer members](#) and 84 [professional members](#). We are always working hard to increase these numbers and need Central Bedfordshire Council and the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group to support our aims in achieving this.

As parents with many years of experience of caring for disabled children and young adults, we consider our input to be of vital importance as we offer a unique understanding of how challenging life can be for families raising a child with a disability.

As we gather information from our members about what is working well and what needs to be improved for them, we are able to feed this collective information back to Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, to ensure that they have a clear understanding of how families are experiencing the services that they are accessing ‘on the ground’.

OFSTED & CQC Written Statement of Action and SNAP PCF further response

- 1. “Existing EHC plans are not of sufficient quality to ensure that the needs of children are young people and identified and met. Despite very recent improvements, staffing capacity has hampered the area’s ability to undertake timely and meaningful annual reviews of EHC plans. The system to prioritise the most urgent reviews is not fit for purpose. As a result, too many EHC plans do not provide a multi-agency assessment of children’s and young people’s range of needs.”***

Annual Reviews

In our [Autumn Term 2019 newsletter](#), SNAP PCF reported on the issues that families were experiencing with delays to their child’s Annual Review. At that time, we asked Louise Bartos, Head of SEND, to provide parents with an update concerning the considerable backlog of Annual Reviews, as many parents had contacted us expressing concerns and frustration because of the delays.

The following update was provided:

‘Central Bedfordshire Council currently has a backlog of review documentation which it is processing, reflective of the position within our neighbouring authorities and at a national level. The SEND Team

dedicated considerable time and effort to processing reviews during the summer break and are currently prioritising documentation for pupil's due to transfer to a new setting in September 2020 and looked after children change of placement requests. Throughout the 2018-19 academic year, the SEND Team fully amended and finalised EHCPs for young people due to transfer to the next phase of education. This was a significant achievement and ensured that all pupils transferring to a new setting had a fully updated EHCP. The SEND Team are working hard to process the outstanding amendments in a timely manner. A two-pronged approach will be followed in regard to processing new paperwork received from September 2019 onwards. This includes a new method of processing annual review documentation and continued dedication to clearing the backlog. The team have identified 261 EHCPs for review and amendment prior to transfer to the next phase of education in September 2020- these will be amended and finalised prior to the statutory deadlines of 15th February and 31st March respectively for pre- and post-16 students. A member of the SEND Team will also be dedicated to clearing the remaining backlog. Please contact the SEND Team directly on 0300 300 8356 or at statass@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk should you wish to enquire further about annual review documentation."

SNAP PCF are pleased to see the current recruitment drive to employ additional SEND Officers into the SEND Team. We understand that the SEND Team now have two additional Senior SEND Officers and four additional SEND Officers, taking their total number of officers to 14. This increase in Officers should prevent parents from continuing to have to wait for long periods to receive any response from the SEND Team. SNAP PCF also welcomes the opportunity to provide a short presentation to the SEND Team about the Forum's work, aims and findings, once the team is fully staffed.

- 2. "Leaders do not have sufficient oversight of the quality of new EHC plans. Joint quality-assurance processes are insufficient and underdeveloped. This significant weakness is hindering the area leaders' ability to know how well they are identifying, assessing and meeting children's and young people's needs."***

Quality Assurance for Education, Health and Care Plans

During January 2019, SNAP PCF were invited to complete a piece of work to help quality assure Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP), working alongside Central Bedfordshire Council, Bedford Borough Council, the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, and also the Bedford Borough Parent Carer Forum (BBPCF). We also helped to develop a Quality Assurance Framework document with the SEND Team.

As a Forum, we want to be included as an equal partner in the process of quality assuring EHCPs. SNAP PCF acknowledges the need to maintain effective governance in this area, to ensure that confidentiality is always considered and protected. We look forward to becoming involved in this piece of work in the future to safeguard the quality of every EHCP and to give parents increased confidence with the EHCP process.

SNAP PCF has also worked with SENDIASS and the SEND Team to re-write the parent letter sent from the SEND Team regarding EHC Needs Assessments. We also added a timeframe document and ensured that SENDIASS and SNAP PCF contact details were included for parents in this letter. Although only a small piece of work, we have received positive feedback from families about the

improvements made to the letters by ensuring that it was written in a parent friendly format and language.

- 3. “Area leaders in education, health and care do not have a shared understanding of the outcomes they want for children and young people with SEND. In addition, leaders do not know enough about the outcomes, especially for those on part time timetables and those in out-of-area provision. As a result, intended outcomes are not understood, specific enough or evaluated well enough. This impacts negatively on the leaders’ ability to jointly commission services to meet children’s and young people’s needs and improve outcomes.”***

Identifying need

Some parents have serious concerns with educational providers because of substantial amounts of time that they feel their child’s special educational needs have gone unaddressed. Many of these parents have had to fight continually to be heard and for their child’s needs to be recognised. There appears to be a great deal of inconsistency between educational providers in their ability to identify SEN within their settings. Parents feel this is unfair, and that all schools should deliver the same quality of education for SEND children and young people. It is well documented that early identification and intervention is a key factor in improving outcomes for children with SEND. Some families felt that late identification of need had a detrimental effect on their child’s learning and wellbeing.

Parents recognise the vital importance of having a SENCO and classroom teacher with the necessary expertise and training to ensure that all children can access learning and achieve their full potential. Many parents have been told that their child does not fit the necessary criteria for an assessment and, as a result, over time their child has become increasingly vulnerable with their difficulties escalating and extending into new areas of need. For example, mental health crisis, failing GCSE’s, becoming a school refuser or school exclusion.

EHC Needs Assessment

The EHC Needs Assessment process is an area that causes great frustration within the SEND community. Parents are often concerned when they are refused an assessment for an EHCP. Sometimes the information used to make the decision not to assess is out of date and therefore of limited relevance. Some parents have already used, or are considering using, private professionals as their only way of securing the up-to-date reports that they need for their child.

Code of Practice, 9.16; ‘Local authorities may develop criteria as guidelines to help them decide when it is necessary to carry out an EHC needs assessment (and following assessment, to decide whether it is necessary to issue an EHC plan). However, local authorities must be prepared to depart from those criteria where there is a compelling reason to do so in any particular case and demonstrate their willingness to do so where individual circumstances warrant such a departure. Local authorities must not apply a ‘blanket’ policy to particular groups of children or certain types of need, as this would prevent the consideration of a child’s or young person’s needs individually and on their merits.’

There is significant frustration among some parents when CBC continues to recommend a SEN Support Plan as the appropriate option for their child despite the child having already received long periods of SEN Support without any progress being made. Parents have been left disillusioned, often saying that the school has told them that there is no money to deliver any more support.

SNAP PCF are aware of the long waiting lists that currently exist for assessment at the Edwin Lobo Centre and the Child Development Centre and recognises the knock-on detrimental effect that these delays have for a child who needs an EHC Assessment.

School Attendance

Some families have struggled to find the support they need to help their child improve their school attendance. We know that there are families in Central Bedfordshire who have 'slipped through the net' and whose children have consequently become school refusers because of lack of access to needed services.

The reoccurring message from parents is that the lack intervention from CAMHs or CHUMS to support their child when they are in crisis has directly resulted in diminishing school attendance or exclusion. More support needs to be available for children and families, with children's needs being identified much earlier within the educational setting. This would help prevent young people and families falling into a crisis situation.

Exclusions

Every child is entitled to be in full time education and to have their educational needs met.

Families have reported that there is a shortage of places at special schools within the county and that sometimes these spaces are taken by pupils who do not live in Central Bedfordshire. This causes frustration amongst families who feel that they have few educational choices for their child. They also feel that there is a significant lack of appropriate provision for children who are academically able, but who require significant support and intervention to manage their anxieties or mental health needs.

Tribunal

Appeals to the SEND Tribunal are increasing within Central Bedfordshire. Families are more aware of the legislation within The Children's and Family Act and SEND guidance and what that means they can expect from their Local Authority. When parents know that their local authority has acted unlawfully, families are within their rights to legally challenge the decisions made about their child. As new and improved processes and decision-making are embedded within CBC, the number and outcome of appeals to the SEND tribunal will be one important measure of the success of the local authority in delivering services that families feel satisfied and confident with.

Out of area and bringing children back into county when there is no new provision

When there has been no suitable provision for a child to attend which meets their needs, CBC may find a provision out of the local area. Some parents find themselves in an impossible situation as CBC state the local provision meet the need of the child and the parent does not believe the local provision suitable for their child and has evidence to support this. Previously this has left parents needing to go through the Tribunal process, this is extremely stressful and at times, financially crippling to the parents.

Until there are new specialist provisions made available locally, then SNAP PCF finds it difficult to understand why CBC finds it appropriate to put families through the stress and financial hardship of trying to bring their child back into county when they have previously lost the Tribunal case. We would like to understand CBC decision making regarding this.

Lack of school places

In our Autumn Term 2019 Newsletter we reported:

“Central Bedfordshire Council had been allocated funding in the region of £700,000 by the Department for Education (DfE), to be used to improve special provision for children and young people with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. This is in addition to £1.6million of funding given to CBC in 2018 by the Department for Education –with around £500,000 made available in each of the three years (2018-19, 2019-2020 and 2020-2021), for which CBC consulted on last year. This consultation was to help CBC decide how best to spend the full amount of allocated funding.”

SNAP PCF were invited to be part of the decision-making board to review schools’ applications for the additional funding which is now resulting in some positive projects being implemented by schools for their pupils with SEND. We have recently become a member of the Schools for the Future board and look forward to working with CBC to find a positive way forward to increase school provision for children with SEND which will improve their outcomes.

The Ofsted report states:

“The area’s SEND strategy is not clear. Too many local partners, professionals and officers do not understand the area’s strategy for children and young people with SEND. Staff turnover and weak communication has meant that the urgent drive since 2018 has not been understood by all. This is leading to poor communication with professionals and families about what is on offer.”

SNAP PCF would like to see a strategy that is ambitious and puts families at the heart of everything they do. Although we understand CBC desires to get out of their Written Statement of Action (WSOA) if the focus is to improve the services and decision making that affects parents and a child centred approach is used, parents should see an improved offer and therefore OFSTED and the CQC should be satisfied and remove the WSoA. There also needs to be a better understanding of what a Parent Carer Forum is and how we work; we will never allow ourselves to be used as a tick box exercise. We value meaningful engagement, where we coproduce from the beginning of an idea until the end and our views are respected.

- 4. “Co-production is not well informed by the views of children, young people and their families. Too often, professionals rely on the voice of families through the SNAP PCF only, without finding out what other people think. The views and needs of some children and young people are not well represented, such as the families from minority ethnic groups.”***

“The views of parents and carers are presented through Central Bedfordshire’s Parent Carer Forum - SNAP (the Special Needs Action Panel). This is the parent carer forum comprising a representative group of parent service users.

SNAP bring a valuable independent perspective and constructive challenge to the future planning of services. We recognise the high value of the information derived from the informal networks SNAP has developed with other parents.” CBC SEND Vision 2016

In 2016 SNAP PCF worked with CBC to produce a [SEND Vision](#) we agreed on a definition on what co-production is and also, what it is not. The vision set out the principles of the vision and the outcomes we wanted to achieve. It is disappointing that the SEND Vision is not well publicised, it is also frustrating that although SNAP PCF has been working to increase our membership that we are not

promoted by CBC therefore, reducing parents' opportunity to get involved with the Forum and participate in effecting positive changes in local services. We have also recently worked with CBC to develop a Co-production Charter. Now that CBC have a Vision and a Charter, our hope is that this along with a change in the culture will improve outcomes for families. We need CBC to become familiar with the values of true coproduction, to apply any relevant legislation in a fair way and to improve their communication with families and with the wider audience to ensure the principles and outcomes of the SEND Vision are achieved. We value the new SEND e-learning that is being developed alongside the Bedford Borough Council, Luton Council, Milton Keynes Council and the CCG. Once this e-learning has been launched and then embedded, Officers will have a clear understanding of the values and the legislation for families who have children with SEND. We would like to see annual appraisals, ask questions about coproduction and the SEND Vision to ensure meaningful culture change happens.

5. ***“The local offer is not effective. Although there has been significant work to improve the local offer, it does not take account of the current aspirations and anxieties of children, young people and their families. This weakness is especially the case for young people as they move into adulthood. Local partners are not proactive in promoting the co-production of the local offer. Too many families do not know that the local offer exists, and do not know where to get help when they need it.”***

The Local Offer

SNAP recognises the urgent need to ensure that the information contained on the CBC Local Offer is accessible to parents, children and young people. The Local Offer should be presented and navigated in a way that enables families to easily find and understand the information available. SNAP PCF have previously held Parent Panels to review and provide feedback about the education and social care sections of the Local Offer. We have also attended meetings to review the health section, and again provided feedback.

We are pleased that after many years of asking, CBC is about to launch a Local Offer Facebook page. This is something our forum has been asking for a long time. It should be noted that during the first three weeks of the COVID-19 crisis CBC main Face Book page had no SEND specific advice for parents, yet Bedford Borough Council Local Offer's Facebook page had over 100 posts to engage their parents. SNAP PCF informed CBC of our frustration that Central Bedfordshire families do not have a designated social media platform like other departments in CBC, we look forward to working with CBC on this dedicated Facebook page.

As a Forum we have worked in partnership with CBC and the BCCG to try to develop and improve the content of the Local Offer website. Despite feedback being offered since 2014, we remain frustrated at how corporate and inaccessible the Local Offer website still is. The Local Offer should be easily accessible for children and young people with SEND and their parents. We feel that CBC have not valued or utilised the feedback from the forum over the last six years to ensure that the website is fit for purpose.

Hertfordshire County Council have recently redesigned their website. We would ask you to please compare Hertfordshire Local Offer found here: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/Local-Offer/The-Hertfordshire-Local-Offer.aspx> with Central Bedfordshire Council Local Offer found here: https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/15/special_educational_needs_and_disability_-_local_offer and review the differences for yourselves.

OFSTED/CQC reported:

“The SNAP PCF (Special Needs Action Panel Parent Carer Forum) are proactive in championing the voice of families and in challenging area leaders. They are valued by the families that access them. However, they do not represent the views of most families within the area and, too often, families do not know of their existence.”

SNAP PCF are disappointed that we received these negative comments by OFSTED and the CQC. We feel that this is unfair given that we were not being inspected and we have raised this issue with OFSTED via the NNPCF.

However, we fully recognise that our total membership represents a relatively small proportion of the total SEND families within the county, particularly if you include the majority of families whose children have a SEN Support plan rather than an EHCP. However, our membership does represent a significant proportion of families who have children with an EHCP, as these families are generally easier to reach via special schools and other specialist providers. We continue to work to encourage mainstream schools to engage with us more readily and consistently, so that we can reach more parents of children with SEND at these schools, and we hope that CBC and the BCCG will do what they can to support us in this effort. We recognise that those families who feel that their child’s needs are being well supported by their school and SENCo, may view the need to be involved with their Parent Carer Forum as less necessary.

SNAP PCF welcomes membership from parents who have a child or young person with any type of additional need or disability; a formal diagnosis is not required.

Training provided for our membership during 2019/20

- Preparing for Adulthood Advocacy with Belinda Blank
- Preparing for Adulthood with SEN Legal and Central Bedfordshire Council
- IPSEA – SEN Law Training
- Sensory Needs Training
- Conference in March 2019 ‘to inform and empower our members’
- Training with the SEND Team:
 - SEN Support
 - EHC Needs assessment
 - Annual Review
 - Making my child’s EHCP work

Working in partnership with CBC – parent events provided

- Multi-Disciplinary Assessments (MDA) Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard
- SEND Offer within Leisure Centres
- SNAP PCF Parent Panel CBC 30-year vision
- SNAP PCF Parent Panel Therapy Services
- Meet the Directors – Ofsted CQC – start of the big conversation (now cancelled)

SNAP PCF is currently represented at the following groups, boards and meetings:

- Personal Health Budgets
- Neuro-Developmental Pathways
- Local Offer Health information
- Complex Health Personalised Care
- Mental Health & Well-being Board
- Sensory Needs Training
- Community Paediatric Co production

- Short Breaks
- School Transport
- Alternative Education Provision
- Joint Commissioning Preparing for Adulthood
- SEND Delivery Board
- SALT Tool Kits for early years settings and schools
- The Local Offer
- Preparing for Adulthood
- Schools for The Future (11.3.2020)

Culture Change

We feel that a culture change is needed within existing processes and provision, that enables services to wrap around the child and family in a supportive way; where families feel informed and empowered; and parents understand the decisions that are made by their local authority for their child, and they feel confident about those decisions.

Parents need to receive up-to-date information, advice and guidance to support them to better understand the needs of their child or young person. CBC and the BCCG need to ensure that the information being given to parents by officers and professionals is accurate, of good quality and is not contradictory.

When a case at the SEND Tribunal or Local Government Ombudsman is lost by CBC, there needs to be a formal, open and transparent review of what has been learnt from the case, and what changes will then be made to ensure that another family has a better experience and is saved from the inevitable stress and trauma of the appeal process. What examples are there to date of such reviews taking place, and what processes or practices have been changed as a result?

Coproduction and processes must start working together and not in isolation. There must be clearer accountability of who is responsible for ensuring that coproduction happens at every stage, and a clear pathway for a complaints process when needed, so that lessons can be learned, and improvements made, all along the way.

SEND Satisfaction Questionnaire 2019 – a second look.

Ethnic Mix

Across the UK, in state funded primary/secondary schools, the proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups with an EHCP/SEND Support Plan, is broadly similar to that for white British students. Because the SNAP PCF survey parents are overwhelmingly white British, at first glance it therefore appears that minority groups are under-represented in the survey.

However, according to 2011 census data, the particular postcode areas of the parents do not mirror the overall UK average for ethnic demographic but are instead a largely white-British population. Therefore, the ethnic groupings of the survey parents do reasonably reflect our local area.

Parents Level of Need

60% of the surveyed parents have a young person with an EHCP and 27% have SEND Support Plans. This is not representative of the SEND population across Central Bedfordshire, where primary/secondary schools have 2% of pupils with EHCPs and 12% on SEND Support Plans. For the same reasons given above regarding our membership demographic, this is likely to be because parents with children with EHCPs are more 'engaged' and likely to be aware of the survey; whereas

parents with children on SEND Support Plans are much less likely to know about the Forum or the survey and are therefore under-represented.

This is also reflected by the fact that 1% of Central Bedfordshire pupils attend special schools, whereas a total of 19% of survey children attend specialist settings.

Survey Turnout

Central Bedfordshire has approximately 7000 pupils with either EHCPs or SEND Support Plans, but the survey only received 169 responses. What more can be done to engage with the remaining parents? Although the ethnic and age of responses reflects the local area demographic, parents with children on SEN Support Plans or other support are clearly less aware of the SNAP Forum and its survey. Connecting with, and gathering the views of, this group of parents is clearly a priority. Over the next few pages, we look at some of the questions raised in the survey, with resulting data broken down between mainstream and special provision. For mainstream schools, the data is further analysed by type of need i.e. EHCP, Send Support Plan, still being assessed, and other (none of the above). For special provision, all children have an EHCP.

Headline Trends from our survey

There are two recurring themes.

- 1) Regarding educational issues, in mainstream schools those with SEND Support Plans or other support have larger numbers of unsatisfied parents than those with EHCPs in mainstream schools. This is even though parents of children on SEND Support Plans are very underrepresented. This could be the tip of an “iceberg of discontent”, but equally possible that those parents whose child has a SEND Support Plan did not respond to the survey are content with the provision their child receives. Further research is needed here to accurately ascertain what has caused this result. However, we believe that seeing such a small number of parents of children on SEND Support Plans raising such a disproportionately large voice in the survey suggests that the former is likely to be true.
- 2) Regarding Health Issues, parents of children in special school are showing a significant gap between those feeling very unsatisfied and those who are generally satisfied. This would suggest that when things go wrong, they go very wrong. Speculation: is this because their health needs are likely to be more complicated?

Looking at the analysis of questions measuring levels of satisfaction:

The blue boxes highlight the notable figures.

Q7a “Please tell us how well you think your child/young person’s needs have been identified by: Education”

In Mainstream schools, for pupils with EHCPs, most parents feel that their child’s needs have been identified ‘Quite Well’ or ‘Very Well’. However, for children with SEND Support Plans (in the next row down), the results shift to ‘Not very well’ or ‘Poor’. Special provision shows a good level of parent satisfaction at ‘Quite Well’ or ‘Very Well’.

Educational Setting:	Not applicable	Not very well	Poorly	Quite well	Very well (blank)	Grand Total
mainstream	2	25	32	38	14	111
Being Assessed		3	8	5	1	17
EHCP	2	6	6	20	7	41
Other		4	7	3		14
SEND Support		12	11	10	6	39
special	1	6	4	21	17	50
EHCP	1	6	4	21	17	50
Grand Total	3	31	36	59	31	161

Q7b “Please tell us how well you think your child/young person’s needs have been identified by: Health”

There is a broad spread of how well parents feel that health needs are being identified by health practitioners. It is a nearly 50:50 split between those who are happy vs those who answered, “not very well” and “poorly”.

Row Labels	Not applicable	Not very well	Poorly	Quite well	Very well	Grand Total
mainstream	6	25	22	46	12	111
Being Assessed	1	3	6	6	1	17
EHCP	3	10	6	15	7	41
Other	1	3	4	6		14
SEND Support	1	9	6	19	4	39
special	2	17	10	13	8	50
EHCP	2	17	10	13	8	50
Grand Total	8	42	32	59	20	161

Q7c “Please tell us how well you think your child/young person's needs have been identified by: Social Care

In the social care category most, parents replied “n/a”. With these removed, the results show that parents with children in mainstream schools tend to be unhappy with how social care identified need, whereas special school parents show a broad spread of satisfaction.

Row Labels	Not very well	Poorly	Quite well	Very well	Grand Total
mainstream	4	17	1	1	23
Being Assessed		2	1		3
EHCP	1	7		1	9
Other	2	3			5
SEND Support	1	5			6
Other settings (e.g. home/out of school)	1	2	1		4
EHCP	1	1	1		3
Other		1			1
special	11	9	9	9	38
EHCP	11	9	9	9	38
Grand Total	16	28	11	10	65

Q8a Please tell us how well your views were considered when your child/young person's needs were identified by: Education

In mainstream schools, parents with children on SEN Support Plans or other support are less happy than those with EHCPs. There are still significant numbers of EHCP parents who are unhappy in this area in both special and mainstream schools.

Row Labels	Not applicable	Not very well	Poorly	Quite well	Very well	Grand Total
mainstream	2	32	30	28	19	111
Being Assessed	1	3	7	5	1	17
EHCP		9	9	12	11	41
Other	1	6	5	2		14
SEND Support		14	9	9	7	39
Other settings (e.g. home/out of school)		2	2	2		6
EHCP		2		2		4
Other			2			2
special		6	11	23	10	50
EHCP		6	11	23	10	50
Grand Total	2	40	43	53	29	167

Q8b Please tell us how well your views were considered when your child/young person's needs were identified by: Health

It seems that parents of children in mainstream school slightly outperform those with children at special schools regarding having their views considered by health. There is a notable gap between “Not very well” and “Quite Well” for special school parents.

Row Labels	Not applicable	Not very well	Poorly	Quite well	Very well	(blank)	Grand Total
mainstream	10	21	20	40	19	1	111
Being Assessed	3	4	2	5	3		17
EHCP	3	7	8	15	8		41
Other	1	4	4	5			14
SEND Support	3	6	6	15	8	1	39
Other (E.g. home/out of school)		1	3	1	1		6
EHCP		1	1	1	1		4
Other			2				2
special	1	15	8	16	10		50
EHCP	1	15	8	16	10		50
Grand Total	11	37	31	57	30	1	167

Q8c Please tell us how well your views were considered when your child/young person's needs were identified by: Social Care

Children in mainstream schools fared badly regarding their parent’s views being considered by social care. Children in special schools fare a little better, but many parents are still unhappy.

For many parents, this question was not applicable.

Row Labels	Not very well	Poorly	Quite well	Very well	Grand Total
mainstream	12	9	7	4	32
Being Assessed	2	1	1		4
EHCP	4	4	3	4	15
Other	3	1	1		5
SEND Support	3	3	2		8
Other (e.g. at home/not at school)	1	4			5
EHCP	1	2			3
Other		2			2
special	10	7	12	9	38
EHCP	10	7	12	9	38
Grand Total	23	20	19	13	75

Q9 How well do YOU understand your child/young person's needs?

This question needs no further examination – nearly all parents understood their child’s needs ‘well’ or ‘very well’. The comments from parents reveal that many of them have attended training courses provided by SNAP PCF and seem to value them greatly.

Q10a Overall, how well do you think Health, Education and Social Care understand your child/young person's needs? Education

Regarding the understanding of need within education, parents whose children have a SEN Support Plan or other support within mainstream school are notably more unhappy than those with EHCPs. There appears to be some frustration for those parents who have children who are still being assessed, or where the support for their child does not include either an EHCP or a SEND Support Plan.

Row Labels	Not applicable	Not very well	Poorly	Quite well	Very well	(blank)	Grand Total
mainstream	3	30	31	38	9		111
Being Assessed	1	4	9	3			17
EHCP		7	8	20	6		41
Other		5	6	3			14
Send Support	2	14	8	12	3		39
other		3	2	1			6
EHCP		3		1			4
Other			2				2
special		5	6	29	9	1	50
EHCP		5	6	29	9	1	50
Grand Total	3	38	39	68	18	1	167

Q10b Overall, how well do you think Health, Education and Social Care understand your child/young person's needs? Health

In terms of understanding health needs, it appears that results are better for children in mainstream schools than for special schools. Parents of children in special schools show a large proportion of parents who are very unhappy.

Satisfaction with the understanding of Health needs for children in special schools show an interesting gap between “not very well” and “quite well”. When it goes wrong, it seems to go badly wrong.

Row Labels	Not very well	Poorly	Quite well	Very well	Grand Total
mainstream	21	21	50	7	99
Being Assessed	3	4	5	1	13
EHCP	8	7	18	5	38
Other	2	5	6		13
SEND Support	8	5	21	1	35
Other (e.g. home/not at school)		3	3		6
EHCP		1	3		4
Other		2			2
special	15	7	22	4	48
EHCP	15	7	22	4	48
Grand Total	36	31	75	11	153

Q10c Overall, how well do you think Health, Education and Social Care understand your child/young person's needs? Social Care

There is an interesting gap between “not very well” and “quite well” for those parents whose children attend special schools. Again, when it goes wrong, it goes badly wrong.

Row Labels	Not very well	Poorly	Quite well	Very well	Grand Total
mainstream	13	12	7	3	35
Being Assessed	2	3	1		6
EHCP	3	5	3	3	14
Other	3	2	1		6
SEND Support	5	2	2		9
Other (e.g. home/out of school)	1	3	1		5
EHCP	1	1	1		3
Other		2			2
special	11	5	14	8	38
EHCP	11	5	14	8	38
Grand Total	25	20	22	11	78

Q12a How well do you think your child/young person's needs are met by the following service areas? (Education)

It appears that results for children with SEND Support Plans in mainstream settings come out worst here, along with those with other needs not falling under SEND Support or an EHCP.

Row Labels	Not very well	Poorly	Fairly well	Very well	Grand Total
mainstream	28	32	36	12	108
Being Assessed	5	7	3		15
EHCP	5	7	21	8	41
Other need	7	5	1		13
SEND Support	11	13	11	4	39
Other e.g. home/not at school	2	3		1	6
EHCP	2	1		1	4
Other		2			2
special	9	8	17	15	49
EHCP	9	8	17	15	49
Grand Total	39	43	53	28	163

Q12b How well do you think your child/young person's needs are met by the following service areas? (Health)

Again, the meeting of Health needs shows a gap, with many parents stating that their child's needs are 'not very well' met, especially for those attending special schools.

Row Labels	Not very well	Poorly	Fairly well	Very well	Grand Total
mainstream	23	24	43	10	100
Being Assessed	5	5	4		14
EHCP	6	10	17	4	37
Other	3	5	3	2	13
SEND Support	9	4	19	4	36
Other e.g. at home/out of school	1	1	4		6
EHCP			4		4
Other	1	1			2
special	16	9	18	5	48
EHCP	16	9	18	5	48
Grand Total	40	34	65	15	154

Covid-19 crisis

Due to the Covid-19 crisis most of the projects we are members of have paused. We continue to work with CBC and the BCCG making preparations to the workstream for the Written Statement of Action. We have been in close contact with our members to ensure we understand their experiences in the current climate. Where we have seen gaps in services or families who are close to experiencing a crisis situation, due to our close working relationship with CBC Children's Services and the BCCG we have been able to work in partnership with them to raise our concerns and work together to support parents at this unprecedented time.

Once we are through this pandemic there will be many families who have experienced trauma as they have been left isolated, dealing with their child's violent breakdowns and challenging behaviour. There will be other parents whose child has previously experienced difficulty with attending school whose parents will now find it even more challenging to keep their child in a school. We will be ensuring our members experiences are gathered and presented to CBC as it is vitally important that parents are supported with the new and unique challenges they may face. It has been reassuring to see how positively CBC the BCCG and SNAP PCF have worked together gathering information to families and the positive manner they have received the concerns we have raised. We will also be asking CBC about September 2020 school transitions for children, ensuring SEND children settle into their new school.

Conclusion

We now have approximately two years before OFSTED and the CCG return to Central Bedfordshire to decide if CBC and the BCCG still require a Written Statement of Action (WSOA). If a holistic child and family centred focus is taken and maintained throughout this process and if all of the issues in the report are addressed, rather than taking a narrow focus on just removing the WSoA, then parents should be able to see improved services in Central Bedfordshire. As an established Parent Carer Forum who have proved to CBC the BCCG and our members over the past eight years that we are a valued and strong voice in the local SEND community. We work in a solution focused way whilst robustly challenging CBC and the BCCG when needed. SNAP PCF will continue to develop and coproduce new ways of working to ensure education, health and social care have a more joined up approach to their work with families.

Further information:

- **Satisfaction of SEND Services Survey 2019** <http://www.snappcf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Ofsted-CQC-survey-data.pdf>
- **Report for the Inspectors November 2019** <http://www.snappcf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/1.-SNAP-PCF-SEND-Survey-Report.pdf>
- **SNAP PCF Spring Term 2020 Newsletter** <http://www.snappcf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Spring-Term-2020-SNAP-PCF-Newsletter.pdf>
- **SNAP PCF Autumn Term 2019 Newsletter** <http://www.snappcf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/SNAP-PCF-Autumn-Term-2019.pdf>
- **June 2018 Survey and report** <http://www.snappcf.org.uk/strategy-meeting-25th-june-2018-update/>
- **Code of Practice 2015** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- **National Network Parent Carer Forums** <http://www.nnpccf.org.uk/?LMCL=LWosv7>
- **Contact** <https://contact.org.uk/>
- **Parent carer membership form to join SNAP PCF**
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MembershipformtojoinSNAP>
- **Professional membership form to join SNAP PCF**
https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SNAP_Professionals



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