

New visits to report on the ‘local offer’ for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)

2.4.2026 - | Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) have today published guidance for the next series of area SEND thematic visits.

Each year, as part of the area SEND inspection framework, Ofsted and CQC explore a particular aspect of the SEND system in depth. This year, inspectors will explore the ‘local offer’.

Read the guidance: [Thematic reviews of the SEND local offer](#)

Every local authority is responsible for publishing their local offer, which sets out the provision available for children and young people with SEND and their families. The local authority must work with other partner bodies, such as health services and education providers, to develop and review their offer.

Inspectors’ visits will focus on how local area partnerships are working together to identify and respond to local needs at the earliest opportunity and commission services appropriately. This will include considering how young people and their families are involved in developing and reviewing the local offer.

Ofsted and the CQC will gather evidence from key stakeholders to understand their experiences, including from children and families themselves. Inspectors will focus on 4 key themes:

- How well the local area partnership understands the needs of young people with SEND in their local area.
- The local area partnership’s strategic oversight and delivery of services outlined in the local offer.
- How young people and their families are involved in developing the local offer.
- The experiences of and outcomes for children and young people with SEND when accessing local services.

The visits will not result in inspection outcomes about individual local areas. Instead, a national report will be published highlighting inspectors’ insights. Any relevant findings will also be shared with the Department for Education (DfE) and Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) to contribute to policy development.

Lee Owston, Ofsted’s National Director for Education, said:

We know that the SEND system is not currently meeting the needs of far too many children and their families.

It’s vital that the most vulnerable children and young people receive the support they need in their local communities to enable them to thrive. With the recently announced

reforms to improve the SEND system, I hope that these visits will help us to understand how well the local offer is working for children and young people and responding to their individual needs.

Lucy Harte, CQC's Deputy Director of Multiagency Operations for Primary and Community Care, said:

These visits will help us understand the impact of the local offer, including how local area partnerships work with children and families to review and develop the local offer.

This insight helps us consider how partnerships are responding to children and young people's needs and where further improvement may be required. Importantly, these visits will allow us to consider the impact of the local offer on the experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-visits-to-report-on-the-local-offer-for-young-people-with-special-educational-needs-and-or-disabilities-send>