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Dear Headteacher / Principal

Local Area inspection of the effectiveness of SEND in Darlington Borough Council.

The below announcement and information is for education, health and social care providers who provide services to children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in Darlington Borough Council.

This letter is for the attention of providers who have not been selected for an inspection visit as part of the LA SEND inspection of Darlington Borough Council.

When will the Ofsted and CQC LA SEND inspection of my local area take place?

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) will carry out a joint inspection of your local area from 24 January 2022 to 28 January 2022.

This inspection will evaluate Darlington Borough Council's effectiveness in:

- identifying the needs of children and young people with SEND
- meeting the needs of these children and young people so that their outcomes and chances of participating fully in society improve.

During this inspection, the inspectors will collect information about children and young people in the area. They will be looking at local area records, speaking to area officers and leaders at educational settings, and speaking to children, young people and parents or carers. No names will be recorded, but some of the information collected may be capable of identifying a particular child, young person or adult. Ofsted and CQC will use this information to prepare their report, and for the purposes set out in their privacy notices. No information will be published that identifies any individual in the inspection report.

More information is available in the Ofsted and CQC privacy notices which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-privacy-notices/social-care-ofsted-privacy-notice#local-area-send-inspections>

<http://www.cqc.org.uk/about-us/our-policies/privacy-statement>

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While the Ofsted and CQC inspection team will not visit your institution/provision as part of the LA SEND inspection, gathering the views of children and young people with SEND, and the views of their parents and carers is an important part of our evidence.

How can local children, young people, parents and carers contribute their views during this local area inspection?

There are several ways in which children, young people, parents and carers from your provision can engage with the inspection process and contribute their views:

1. The inspection will include a survey of Darlington Borough Council parents and carers of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The survey will be open from 12 noon on 17 January 2022 until 11:59pm on 26 January 2022.

Parents and carers who would like to take part and share their experiences with the inspectors can follow this link to complete the survey:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/DarlingtonBoroughCouncilLASENDInspection/>

We strongly recommend that, before completing the survey, parents and carers watch the short video at the start of the survey which gives information about the inspection and what inspectors will focus on.

2. Parents and carers can email their contributions to Lasend.support@ofsted.gov.uk.

3. Details about the local area SEND inspection will be available on your local authority's website and distributed through the local area's Clinical Commissioning Group/s (CCGs). Information about how children and young people with SEND can share their views about the local area's effectiveness should be included in the local offer.

Important information for parent and carers

While we understand that many parents and carers may have views on their experiences that extend back several years, the focus of the inspection is on the effectiveness of the local area since the introduction of reforms in September 2014. It is important that the views that are shared with inspectors relate to experiences from this date onwards.



We would also like parents and carers to understand that we will not be able to follow up or comment upon individual cases. The inspection team will consider all communication from parents as part of the evidence when evaluating the effectiveness of the local area.

Information on local area duties toward children and young people with SEND can be found on the Department for Education's website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-parents-and-carers>.

Please circulate the information contained in this letter to all of the parents and carers of children and young people with SEND who attend your provision. I have provided a template called 'Letter to Area parents' for this purpose.

Yours sincerely

Lee Elliott
Her Majesty's Inspector