



Baroness Barran

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the School System
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Lord Hunt
House of Lords
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17 June 2022

Dear Philip,

Thank you for your contributions during the first day of the Committee on the Schools Bill. Baroness Penn committed to write to you (Hansard, column 1216, 08 June 2022) in response to the questions you raised regarding Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs) and Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and how the education sector can be involved in these new structures (Hansard, column 1211, 08 June 2022).

We are committed to ensuring that children and young people are prioritised in Integrated Care Systems (ICSs), and that the reforms in the Health and Care Act to improve child health and wellbeing outcomes are delivered on the ground.

We recognise that the provision of services to support children, young people and families is shared by many partners. This includes educational institutions, NHS services, public health services, children's social care services, early years services, early help services, and Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise sector. This means partnership working through ICSs is even more important.

I would like to reassure you that, following the transfer of duties relating to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) from Clinical Commissioning Groups to ICBs, ICBs must continue to have regard to the SEND Code of Practice statutory guidance.

To ensure child safeguarding and SEND duties receive sufficient focus in the ICB, NHS England statutory guidance will contain provision for the delegation of responsibility for these duties to an ICB executive lead. Local partners across education, health and social care must continue to work together to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.

The recently published Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Alternative Provision Green Paper sets out proposals for new statutory local

SEND partnerships. These would bring together health, social care and education, as well as other relevant partners, to develop a co-produced inclusion plan. Local inclusion plans will set out the provision and services necessary to meet the needs of children and young people in the area with SEND and/or the needs of those who require alternative provision. We want to establish these whilst mindful of existing structures, such as Integrated Care Partnerships, and develop the links between them. This Green Paper is a joint endeavour between the Department for Health and Social Care and the Department for Education; there is an ongoing public consultation until 22nd July 2022.

In addition, the Schools White Paper sets out a clearer role for every part of the school system, with Local Authorities empowered to champion children's interests and committed to consulting on a new collaborative standard requiring trusts to work constructively with other partners. Local authorities will remain at the heart of the system, championing and promoting the interests and wellbeing of all children in their area. They are uniquely placed to promote the best possible outcomes for all children, drawing together education, children's services and other vital local services.

You raised the importance of mental health services supporting young people and the role of education in supporting good mental health. We know that education settings have a critical role to play – alongside specialist services - in providing a safe, calm, and supportive environment, with access to good pastoral and other targeted, early support.

The Department for Health and Social Care has recently published a public discussion paper to inform the development of a new cross-government and long-term plan for mental health and wellbeing, spanning from children and young people to older adults. As you can see, we remain committed to working across government and with the education sector to support and improve children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

I hope this letter reassures you that the education sector is a key partner in local health structures, but do please let me know if it would be helpful to discuss further. I intend to place a copy of this letter in the library of the House.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Donna Barran', written in dark ink.

BARONESS BARRAN

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE