

## How to get involved in your local area special educational needs and disability inspections (LA SEND inspections)

In May 2016, a new type of inspection started. Ofsted (who inspect schools) and the Care Quality Commission (CQC – inspectors of health and care services) agreed to carry out joint inspections of local areas. They wanted to see how well local areas were doing in supporting children with Special Education Needs or Disabilities (SEND) and their families.

### What happens in the review?

Inspectors spend five days in the local area. They visit early years settings, schools and colleges. They want to gather the views of parents, carers and young people.

Inspectors will look at how well the local area works together to make sure that children and young people with SEND are identified, assessed and supported.

### How do I know about an inspection in my local area?

Local areas get five days notice of an inspection, to give enough time to let people know. This should be announced on the local authority website along with a webinar for parents and carers. Schools, colleges or early years settings will know it is happening.

### How do I get to meet inspectors?

Inspectors will meet with parents:

- during their visits to settings, schools or colleges
- in local groups such as parent/carers forums

*The inspectors choose who they speak to, not the local authority.*

- It may be best to meet inspectors with a group. Get in touch with your local parent group. The national network of parent carer forums is a good place to look <http://www.nnpf.org.uk/>

### What can I say when I meet with them?

We want to make sure that inspectors ask schools, settings and colleges about children and young people's speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). Talk with your group about the best way to do this. Some ideas:

- Use the guidance on our website to work out how many children locally are likely to have SLCN [www.bercow10yearson.com/resources](http://www.bercow10yearson.com/resources)
- Give the inspectors a summary of the *Bercow: Ten Years On* report [www.bercow10yearson.com](http://www.bercow10yearson.com)
- Tell them your story – your experience of getting support for your child. This is a good way to bring your concerns alive. On the next page is some guidance about how to tell your story so that you include the key points. It is very easy to give too much information!
- Let them know what questions you want inspectors to ask schools and settings. *Asking these questions will show schools and settings that the inspectors are interested in SLCN and may highlight where they are gaps in the support provided. You might want them to ask.* You could ask:
  - **What data do you collect about children's SLCN?**
  - **Who is responsible for funding and providing support for children with SLCN?**
  - **How do people work together to support children with SLCN?**
- Finish by asking them when and where the results of the inspection will be published.

## More information about LA SEND inspections:

This information sheet gives you some more information about inspections

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-area-send-inspections-information-for-families>

Ipsa has prepared this briefing for parents <https://www.ipsea.org.uk/news/2016/briefing-on-local-area-send-inspections>

As part of *Bercow: Ten Years On*, we looked at 42 LA SEND inspections reports. We wanted to find what they said about support for children and young people's SLCN. We found a mixed picture. Read more here <http://www.bercow10yearson.com/evidence>

## Telling Your Story

Before you meet the inspector think about how you can briefly share your experiences with them

- In one or two sentences describe to them the way your child's SLCN impacts on their life and your family.
- Give them one example of good support and one of bad support.
- Describe what has had/would have most impact on your child and family. The parents and carers who took part in *Bercow: Ten Years On* told us that they found the following useful. Select your Top 3 from here or add in your own things:
  - Different services working well together
  - Having someone coordinating my child's support
  - Being kept informed about what is happening.
  - Not having to keep repeating myself
  - Being listened to and included in my child's care
  - Something else
- Finish with a key message "the key thing for me is...."

*It may help to write this down before you meet the inspector so that you can cover all of the things you want to say.*



# Bercow: Ten Years On

