

Improvement Notice

To: Redbridge London Borough Council ('the Council')
Lynton House
255 - 259 High Road
Ilford
IG1 1NY

This Improvement Notice is issued to Redbridge London Borough Council on 3 September 2025 following the Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) Area SEND Inspection, published on 30 June 2025 and in response to the areas for priority action and improvement highlighted in the report.

1. This notice is given to address the five areas for priority action and six areas for improvement identified in the report of the inspection published on 30 June 2025.
2. To comply with this notice, the following actions are required of the Council, working with North East London Integrated Care Board (ICB) and its other local partners ("partners"), as set out in section 28 (2) of the Children and Families Act 2014.

Improvement plan:

3. The Council's improvement plans working with the ICB, should deliver appropriate and sustainable improvement, taking account of the views of parents, children and young people, school and education leaders and wherever possible, putting co-production at the centre of improvement activity. The improvement plans will be set out in the Priority Action Plan and the updated Strategic Plan and must cover the areas for priority action and areas for improvement identified in the Ofsted and CQC inspection report published on 30 June 2025 and the recommendations made by the Department for Education (DfE), including:
 - a. The Council, working with the ICB and partners should urgently improve the quality of data to inform commissioning and strategic improvements to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND and their families in Redbridge. This should inform the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) strategy.
 - b. The Council, working with the ICB and partners, should urgently develop a genuine co-production strategy with children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers, in which communication is much stronger, and the voices of families are heard and used to shape the service and support these families receive. Co-production should enable

children and families to contribute their lived experiences both to strategy development and everyday practice.

- c. The Council, working with the ICB and partners, should urgently develop and embed a formal, joint strategic framework for preparation for adulthood, including a fully coordinated and accountable approach across education, health and social care services to support young people with SEND as they transition into adulthood. This should include:
 - I. strengthening strategic capacity to plan and commission sufficient, appropriate post-16 provision; and
 - II. establishing clear oversight and formalised processes to monitor outcomes and ensure that all young people with SEND are supported into sustained education, employment or training, reducing the risk of them becoming Not In Education, Employment or Training (NEET).
- d. The Council, working with the ICB and partners, should ensure that they have implemented clear communication systems and information-sharing processes to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people with SEND in Redbridge.
- e. The Council, working in co-operation with the ICB and partners should work at pace to continue to improve the quality assurance of Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plans. This includes:
 - I. ensuring new EHC plans are issued within the statutory timeframe;
 - II. ensuring that new EHC plans accurately reflect the child's or young person's needs through appropriate contributions from all relevant professionals that are quantifiable and specific across education, health and care; and
 - III. ensuring that the annual review process takes place within the required timescales and amendments to EHC plans accurately reflect children's and young people's needs and include updated views from a child's parents or young person, where appropriate.
- f. Leaders, in education, together with health and social care providers, should identify the steps that they will take to collectively monitor and measure the impact of their strategy and actions. These plans should be co-produced with and communicated clearly to children, young people and their families so that their experiences and outcomes improve.
- g. The Council should support local ICB leaders to continue their work to make clearer therapies pathways and to reduce waiting times across

speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS).

- h. Council leaders, working with the ICB and local partner leaders should develop robust and ongoing support mechanisms for staff to understand what is available across education, social care and health within the local offer to improve the experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND, including implementing recruitment processes in line with the corporate strategy recommendation to address recruitment challenges.
 - i. The Council, working with the ICB and partners, should develop effective joint commissioning strategies across the local area partnership and help ensure that these meet the needs of children and young people at the earliest opportunity.
 - j. The Council, working with the ICB, should review all children and young people with SEND who are on 'duty lists' (unallocated to workers) in the children with disabilities team and adult social care, to consider whether they should be allocated a worker and to ensure that reviews are completed effectively.
 - k. Council leaders should implement systems to identify, monitor and support children and young people with SEND who are not in school and improve timely intervention to reduce the risk of disengagement and better prepare them for their next steps. Senior leaders need to assure themselves that the needs of children and young people who attend AP, are on part-time timetables, are Elective Home Education (EHE), or not attending full-time education are being met.
- 4. The improvement plans should also include any further recommendations from the Department as a result of ongoing support and intervention.
- 5. To ensure there is clear evidence of progression:
 - a. the Council must ensure there is an Improvement Board, with an Independent Chair, which is attended by key leaders across education, health and care services, Parent/Carer Forum and appropriate Elected Members of the Council, to a timetable agreed with the Department. It is expected that the Chief Executives of the Council and the ICB, and the Children's Services and ICB Accountable Officers are held to account for the improvements required to be made through effective engagement with the Board and escalation/resolution of matters arising as the Board identifies;
 - b. the Improvement Board must have clearly assigned accountabilities for all actions agreed, along with clear and measurable targets covering the areas of priority action and areas for improvement identified in the Ofsted and CQC report and any actions recommended by DfE;

- c. those accountable for the actions in the improvement plans must keep the content up to date, with a risk register and mitigation plan updated in line with the meeting cycle and provided to the Improvement Board in advance;
 - d. reports to the Improvement Board should include data, analysis and evidence of the impact of improvements on the lived experience of children and families;
 - e. the Improvement Board should maintain an action and impact log which is updated at each meeting, highlighting objectives which are slow to progress and where contributions need to be strengthened.
6. Invitations to Improvement Board meetings must be sent on each occasion to the DfE appointed SEND Advisor, NHS England Advisor, and to the Department's SEND Case Lead as external attendees, rather than members of the board.

Improvement against the above measures will be assessed as follows:

7. The DfE appointed SEND Advisor and NHS England Advisors will provide regular updates to the Department of progress or concern against the areas set out in this notice; improvement against the Ofsted and CQC requirements; and any other such information relevant to the improvement journey.

Department for Education Stocktake Reviews:

8. Officials from the Department will undertake reviews of progress against the improvement plans at least every six months and more regularly where appropriate.
9. Reviews, including areas of priority action deep dives, may cover but are not exclusive to leadership; governance; co-production; quality of workforce training and support; multi-agency arrangements including joint commissioning, Education, Health, and Social Care provision; the timeliness and quality of EHC plans; and engagement with children, young people, families and carers.
10. Prior to any reviews, the Council should provide to the Department its own assessment of improvement. This may include, but is not limited to:
- a. progress against improvement plan objectives;
 - b. feedback from parents, carers, children and young people;
 - c. clear information about local accountability and governance structures;
 - d. the documentary evidence used to plan, track and evaluate the impact of actions. This may include:
 - i. A progress update against each area of priority action, each area for improvement and DfE recommendations;

- ii. A dashboard of performance measures showing whether targets and milestones are being met in a timely manner; any slippage; evidence of impact and whether the local area is on track to meet the next set of milestones.
 - iii. Evidence that key partners, including children and young people, families and schools are playing an active role in improving services.
- 11. From time to time, the Department may require that a diagnostic review or assessment is undertaken by a party agreed with the Department.
- 12. For any review or assessment, the Council must provide the person(s) conducting it with:
 - a. access to, and time with, staff and leadership;
 - b. accurate and up to date data on performance and quality;
 - c. facilities to carry out the reviews; and
 - d. access to minutes of meetings or any other relevant information.

Timescales:

- 13. The Council should aim for the impact measures set out in the Improvement Plan to be evidenced by the agreed target dates. The Council should also aim for actions included in the improvement plans to be delivered by the end of December 2026 or sooner. However, the Improvement Notice will not be stepped down until sufficient progress has been evidenced, and the Minister agrees.

Failure to comply with this Improvement Notice by the assessment dates or poor progress:

- 14. Should the Council be unwilling or unable to comply with this Improvement Notice or should the Secretary of State not be satisfied with the Council's progress at any stage, she may choose to invoke her statutory powers of intervention (s497A Education Act 1996) to direct the Council to take any further actions deemed necessary to secure the improvements required in SEND services.

Signed:

Date: 3 September 2025

Alan Parnum

Senior Civil Servant in Department for Education