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17 May 2019

Dear Clive,

Ofsted and Care Quality Commission evaluation of LA SEND inspections.

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) are conducting a joint evaluation of the arrangements to inspect local area SEND provision and we would like to thank you for agreeing to contribute to this important work.

We are conducting research to evaluate our own inspection policy and practice. We want to make sure that the methods of inspection are as valid and reliable as they can be. This project will gather information on how well our methods of inspection are working, so that we can monitor and evaluate them. It is part of our commitment to be an intelligent, responsible and focused inspectorate to conduct evaluation on our work and seek to continually improve.

As part of this review, we are conducting a series of visits to different local areas to identify strengths with the current framework, identify areas for improvement and practical ideas for change and to support Ofsted and the CQC with developing a new framework. We very much welcome your involvement in these visits.

Visits will comprise of one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one CQC inspector and will be carried out on **4 and 5 June 2019, by Simon Mosley and Sue Talbot**. Visits are expected to last for 2 days and will involve discussions with staff who were involved with the last LA SEND inspection as well as talking with parents and carers. Local areas **will not** be expected to prepare any materials, presentations or documents for the visit. As part of these on-site research visits, inspectors will hope to speak to the LANO, CCG nominated officer and DCO and gather information about the experience of inspection and the impact it may have had on services. It is important to note that this visit is part of a wider programme of research and evaluation.

Inspectors will be open and flexible in their approach. I have attached a proposed list of activities for you to arrange to suit the availability of your staff and a blank timetable which we will agree nearer to the time of the visit along with any other final arrangements.

The visit is outside our usual inspection activity and so we will not be evaluating your local area or passing information on internally about the quality of your area. Rather,

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we are seeking to understand your views on our inspection framework. Clearly, although inspectors are not taking a view about any aspect of your work, they will take account of anything which they regard as a safeguarding concern. In this event, inspectors will notify regional colleagues for guidance. Otherwise, there will be no outcome or consequence from the visit for the local area. Any of the other information gathered will be used solely for the purposes of this evaluation and research projects and will not be retained or used to inform any decision making about LA SEND inspections or re-inspections.

We will be publishing summary findings of our evaluation. Your staff and local area will not be identifiable by name or implication. The detailed evidence collected from the visit will remain confidential. In the event that we would like to feature part of the evidence from your local area in a case study or similar, we would only do so with your explicit permission.

We should be very grateful if a room could be set aside for inspectors to work in, as the visit will involve the scrutiny of documents and meetings with staff and parents.

If you have any further questions about the arrangements of the visit, please contact me at simon.mosley@ofsted.gov.uk. I look forward to meeting you and your staff.

Yours sincerely

Simon Mosley
Her Majesty's Inspector