

**Dear Parents and Carers,**

On 2 June we were notified by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) that Essex would be undergoing a full local area SEND inspection, due to start immediately. This is something we have been expecting and have been preparing for, as partners.

Currently the government is making significant changes to the way the health system is structured. In Essex, this means that the three existing Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) are being replaced by a single new organisation. This organisation will have new leadership and will run differently to the current three ICBs.

The scale and timing of these changes, mean that going ahead with the inspection would not give an accurate reflection of how the system is working locally. For this reason, Essex County Council and the three ICBs jointly requested a deferral of the inspection. This type of request is permitted under Ofsted's deferral criteria in certain circumstances.

The request was reviewed by senior leaders at both Ofsted and the CQC and was accepted. This decision was based on the fact that the ongoing changes would make it difficult for inspectors to gather the evidence they would need to undertake the inspection. It would also be difficult for them to engage with the right leaders in the health system.

It is important to note that the inspection has not been cancelled, only postponed. We fully understand the importance of being held accountable by our regulators for the services we provide to children and young people with SEND and their families. We remain committed to continuing our improvement journey.

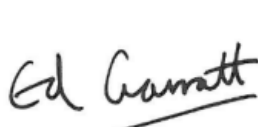
We will let you know when we have been notified of a new date for the inspection.

We hope this helps explain why the inspection has been deferred at this time.

Yours Sincerely



**Helen Lincoln**  
Director of Children's  
services  
Essex County  
Council



**Ed Garratt**  
CEO  
Suffolk & North East  
Essex ICB



**Tom Abel**  
CEO  
Mid & South Essex  
ICB



**Beverly Flowers**  
Deputy CEO  
Hertfordshire and  
West Essex ICB