



---

## AGENDA FOR THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

---

Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee are summoned to a meeting, which will be held in Committee Room 4, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on **10 January 2019 at 7.00 pm.**

**Lesley Seary**  
**Chief Executive**

Enquiries to : Jonathan Moore  
Tel : 0207 527 3308  
E-mail : [democracy@islington.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@islington.gov.uk)  
Despatched : 2 January 2019

Membership

Substitute Members

**Councillors:**

Councillor Theresa Debono (Chair)  
Councillor Vivien Cutler (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Santiago Bell-Bradford  
Councillor Phil Graham  
Councillor Rakhia Ismail  
Councillor Michelline Safi Ngongo  
Councillor Marian Spall  
Councillor John Woolf

**Substitutes:**

Councillor Satnam Gill OBE  
Councillor Mouna Hamitouche MBE  
Councillor Angela Picknell  
Councillor Nick Wayne

**Co-opted Member:**

Mary Clement, Roman Catholic Diocese

**Quorum is 3 Councillors**

## A. Formal Matters

Page

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declaration of Substitute Members
3. Declarations of Interest

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest\*** in an item of business:

- if it is not yet on the council's register, you **must** declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent;
- you may **choose** to declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest that is already in the register in the interests of openness and transparency.

In both the above cases, you **must** leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If you have a **personal** interest in an item of business **and** you intend to speak or vote on the item you **must** declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent but you **may** participate in the discussion and vote on the item.

**\*(a) Employment, etc** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.

**(b) Sponsorship** - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect of your expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of your election; including from a trade union.

**(c) Contracts** - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between you or your partner (or a body in which one of you has a beneficial interest) and the council.

**(d) Land** - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.

**(e) Licences**- Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.

**(f) Corporate tenancies** - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which you or your partner have a beneficial interest.

**(g) Securities** - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

This applies to all members present at the meeting.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting 1 - 12
5. Chair's Report
6. Items for Call In (if any)
7. Public Questions

For members of the public to ask questions relating to any subject on the meeting agenda under Procedure Rule 70.5. Alternatively, the Chair may opt to accept questions from the public during the discussion on each agenda item.

<b>B. Items for Decision/Discussion</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusion from School - Evidence and Conclusions	
a) New River College Ofsted Report	19 – 30
b) Concluding Discussion	31 – 42
2. The Effectiveness of Islington's Free School Meals Policy	43 - 52
3. Quarterly Review of Children's Services Performance (Q2 2018/19)	53 - 68
4. Work Programme	69 - 70

**C. Urgent non-exempt items (if any)**

Any non-exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.

**D. Exclusion of press and public**

To consider whether, in view of the nature of the remaining items on the agenda, it is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt or confidential information within the terms of the Access to Information Procedure Rules in the Constitution and, if so, whether to exclude the press and public during discussion thereof.

**E. Exempt items for Call In (if any)**

**F. Confidential/exempt items**

**G. Urgent exempt items (if any)**

Any exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.

The next meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee will be on 4 March 2019

**Please note that committee agendas, reports and minutes are available from the council's website: [www.democracy.islington.gov.uk](http://www.democracy.islington.gov.uk)**

This page is intentionally left blank

# Agenda Item 4

London Borough of Islington

## **Children's Services Scrutiny Committee - Thursday, 22 November 2018**

Minutes of the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee held at Committee Room 4, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on Thursday, 22 November 2018 at 7.00 pm.

**Present:**           **Councillors:**           Debono (Chair), Cutler (Vice-Chair), Bell-Bradford, Ismail, Ngongo and Woolf

**Co-opted Member:**   Mary Clement, Roman Catholic Diocese

### **Councillor Theresa Debono in the Chair**

#### **45       APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (ITEM NO. A1)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Woodbyrne.

It was also noted that Councillor Caluori, the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families, had submitted apologies for absence.

#### **46       DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (ITEM NO. A2)**

None.

#### **47       DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (ITEM NO. A3)**

None.

#### **48       MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (ITEM NO. A4)**

##### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2018 be agreed as a correct record and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

#### **49       CHAIR'S REPORT (ITEM NO. A5)**

The Chair advised that Committee members had visited the New River College Pupil Referral Unit to meet with staff and pupils and to hear their views on exclusion and related matters. The Chair thanked the staff and students for being open and honest, commenting that it was a productive visit.

#### **50       ITEMS FOR CALL IN (IF ANY) (ITEM NO. A6)**

None.

51 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS (ITEM NO. A7)**

None.

52 **PERMANENT AND FIXED PERIOD EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL - WITNESS EVIDENCE (ITEM NO. B1)**

The Committee received evidence from three head teachers on their approaches to permanent and fixed period exclusion from school.

a) Patrick Mildren, Head Teacher, Canonbury Primary School

The following main points were noted in the discussion:

- Canonbury Primary School was a two-form entry school with 471 pupils, including the Nursery School. The school had a low rate of permanent exclusion. Fixed term exclusions were issued on occasion.
- Exclusion was used as a last resort in instances when the safety of the school was compromised. Fixed term exclusions could be given for one, two, or three days, and all pupils underwent a period of reintegration on their return to school. Mr Mildren commented that it was important to work with both pupils and their parents on pupil behaviour issues.
- It was noted that a many pupils have emotional and social needs and schools need to be mindful of this when addressing behaviour issues.
- It was commented that excluded pupils tended to have high levels of need. Pupils with emotional needs may resort to physical violence or verbal abuse if they are in a heightened state.
- Canonbury School made use of the outreach service offered by New River College and thought that this was very effective in helping to prevent exclusions. The outreach support service assisted the school in developing support and interventions for pupils at risk of exclusion; it was commented that this benefitted both pupils and teachers.
- Some pupils at risk of exclusion had temporary placements at New River College, attending for two days a week. These pupils typically had a long history of challenging behavioural issues. These pupils were in Years 5 and 6; it was commented that behavioural needs tended to escalate for pupils aged 10 to 11.
- Mr Mildren believed that primary school children with high levels of need could be better supported by having access to different learning environments in school. It could be challenging to keep some pupils with social, emotional and behavioural needs in the classroom, however it was thought that these pupils would benefit from a "nurture hub" within the school where they could learn in a different environment with more intensive support from school staff. This could provide opportunities not available in the classroom, for example, pupils could learn through play, or make use of other techniques not able to be implemented for a whole class. It was acknowledged that schools had limited resources to provide such a space, however it was thought that

providing a variety of learning environments within school would help to keep pupils with high levels of need in mainstream education.

- Mr Mildren emphasised the importance of early intervention and providing the right support to pupils at the right time. It was thought that providing support to pupils with additional social, emotional and behavioural needs from a younger age would help to minimise the development of severe behavioural issues and would support young people in preparing for secondary school. Canonbury Primary School was aware that some former pupils were displaying challenging behaviour in secondary school; this prompted teaching staff to consider what else they could have done to support those young people.
- A member asked how Canonbury School ensured that the extreme behaviours of some pupils did not impact on others, particularly given that the school only used fixed term exclusion as a last resort. In response, it was advised that the school had adopted a behaviour policy which was intended to make children feel safe. The school sought to influence the behaviour of its pupils by reinforcing positive messages throughout the school. Mr Mildren also noted the importance of teaching assistants in the classroom. It was important for teaching assistants to have strong empathy skills to enable them to relate to pupils with additional needs. Focusing teaching assistant support on pupils with additional needs helped to ensure that the remainder of the class could learn without disruption.
- A member noted that some parents and young people reported negative experiences of pupil referral units and asked if pupil referral units were fit for purpose. In response, Mr Mildren commented that he could not speak for pupil referral units, but he recognised that some young people had needs that could not be met inside mainstream school. Although schools sought to teach through a variety of learning styles, some pupils did not cope in mainstream school and pupil referral units could be beneficial for these pupils. Canonbury School sought to provide successful interventions for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural needs, but there was a limit to what primary schools could achieve within their existing resources.
- Mr Mildren commented that primary schools were well placed to implement early intervention approaches, but were not always able to provide support to young people with extreme needs.
- A member noted that parents may need help in supporting children with challenging behaviours and asked if Canonbury School signposted the parents of pupils at risk of exclusion to early help services. In response it was advised that the school did signpost parents to services from time to time, but it was important for the school to build a positive relationship with parents to allow such conversations to take place. Mr Mildren commented that this was sometimes difficult. Some parents did not agree that their child had additional needs; for example, it was commented that some parents refused for their children to receive CAMHS support. It was important for schools to build a positive relationship with parents to allow honest discussions to take place, and

to work together with parents to address a young person's behaviour both inside and outside of school.

- A member asked if mental health provision for primary school children was adequate. In response, Mr Mildren commented that he would welcome an increased level of mental health support to primary schools. Canonbury Primary School paid extra money to the CAMHS service which effectively doubled the resource available to the school. Mr Mildren thought that CAMHS support was very valuable and benefitted both young people and teaching staff, however noted that if all schools made use of the service to the same extent, then the CAMHS service would not be sustainable. Canonbury School prioritised support for those with the greatest needs; the school also made use of CAMHS to support teachers in helping them to develop strategies for supporting pupils with mental health needs.
- Primary age pupils with mental health needs tended to have attachment issues. These pupils sometimes came to school unsettled, anxious and not ready to learn.
- A member asked why there was a disparity between the exclusion rates of different schools. In response, it was advised that each school had a different ethos and priorities. Canonbury Primary School focused on supporting pupils with challenging behaviours and worked flexibly to keep young people with additional needs in mainstream school. However, there was a limit to the support that could be provided, and each school worked in a slightly different context.
- Issuing multiple fixed term exclusions was not an effective method to manage behaviour. It was commented that excluded pupils feel a sense of rejection and exclusion does not address the root cause of a pupils' poor behaviour. It was commented that schools needed to have clear sanctions for poor behaviour, but should make use of a range of interventions, with a focus on addressing and improving behaviour. Canonbury School's behaviour policy included issuing 'red cards' to pupils, which resulted in holding a meeting with the child's parents and facilitating a restorative conversation. If pupils received three red cards in short succession then the school escalated interventions, holding more in depth conversations with parents on their child's behaviour. The school had a clear behaviour pathway which was communicated to parents and pupils.
- Following a question from a member of the public, it was commented that Canonbury School valued the support services available to young people with additional behavioural and learning needs, which included educational psychology, CAMHS, and outreach services from New River College and The Bridge special school. Mr Mildren noted that there were very strong partnerships in Islington which allowed schools to make use of external expertise; this was particularly effective in helping schools to develop their own provision.
- Mr Mildren advised that the school had excellent communication with New River College on the progress of pupils that were attending the pupil referral unit on a temporary placement. Representatives of the school visited New River College on a regular basis and commented that

their commitment to re-engaging pupils in mainstream education was impressive.

- A member of the Committee commented that it would be interesting to compare the CAMHS resource levels of high excluding and low excluding schools, suggesting that high excluding schools may not be making best use of the support services available.
- In conclusion, Mr Mildren thought that empowering teachers and head teachers to solve behaviour issues within their school would help to reduce the borough's exclusion rate. It was thought that developing different learning environments within schools, such as "nurture hubs", would help schools to manage challenging behaviours and would offer better support to young people at risk of exclusion.

b) Jamie Brownill, Head Teacher, Central Foundation Secondary School

The following main points were noted in the discussion:

- Central Foundation School is an all-boys secondary school with over 1,000 pupils. It was a relatively low-excluding school compared to others in the borough.
- In the previous year two pupils had been permanently excluded. No pupils had been referred to alternative provision.
- Central Foundation School emphasised the importance of pupils spending time in class; if pupils had high levels of attendance and were not excluded, there was no reason why they should not be successful. For that reason, Mr Brownhill had focused the school's systems and approaches on supporting pupils to stay in school.
- Behaviour was managed at Head Teacher level to ensure that the senior leadership team had direct oversight of behaviour in the classroom. The senior leadership team discussed pupil behaviour daily.
- On average, the school issued around 30 fixed term exclusion a year. This was a significant reduction in comparison to eight years ago, when the school issued 300 fixed term exclusions.
- The school had developed an 'inclusion centre' which allowed pupils to effectively serve a fixed period exclusion inside of school. In addressing pupil behaviour, the school also made use of therapeutic interventions, restorative justice approaches, and held meetings with parents.
- The school evaluated behaviour incidents to analyse where and when incidents took place. If a pattern was identified, the school would consider changing its processes or practices to prevent further incidents. For example, the school had recently moved from a whole-school lunch break to a split lunch break and this had almost eradicated lunchtime behaviour incidents. Mr Brownhill noted that schools constantly needed to adapt to meet the challenges they faced.
- Central Foundation School made use of 'attachment theory'; all young people should feel attached to the school, and teachers

needed to foster this sense of attachment by understanding that young people need to feel safe, secure and loved.

- Central Foundation School emphasised the importance of forgiveness. In staff interviews, teachers needed to demonstrate empathy and a willingness to forgive young people.
- The school did not exclude pupils for their first instance of disruptive behaviour.
- Central Foundation School delivered a standard academic curriculum, it did not offer vocational subjects as alternative classes for pupils that found academic subjects challenging. Instead, the school adapted how the curriculum was delivered, tailoring it to the needs of pupils.
- Central Foundation School only employed one teaching assistant as it chose to focus its resources on teachers. This resulted in pupils being taught in smaller classes which allowed more targeted support to be given.
- Central Foundation School made use of whole-school assemblies to communicate key messages to pupils.
- Mr Brownhill spoke of the importance of protecting pupils' learning in the classroom. All teachers had access to a button on their interactive whiteboard which could call another member of staff to the classroom to assist with behaviour incidents. Disruptive pupils could then be removed from the classroom and would spend the remainder of the lesson in the 'withdrawal room'. It was commented that many teachers never made use of this facility, however the technology empowered teachers and allowed them to deal with behaviour incidents without further disrupting their lesson.
- Mr Brownhill noted that the behaviour of pupils had become increasingly challenging in recent years; the number of violent incidents had increased and there was an increased pressure from parents to exclude pupils for violent incidents. It was also noted that teaching unions had concerns about pupils remaining in mainstream school after violent incidents; these concerns focused on the health and safety of school staff and pupils.
- It was commented that the sustained focus on school attainment and real term decreases in school funding were additional pressures on schools which may be a contributing factor to decisions to exclude in some schools. This was not the approach taken by Central Foundation School. Mr Brownhill emphasised the importance of schools having a clear moral purpose and a strong governing body and leadership team.
- A member commented that some excluded pupils felt let down by the education system and queried if this was justified. In response, it was commented that all schools worked in a challenging environment. Central Foundation School carried out case reviews after serious incidents to consolidate learning and assess if any of their processes should be amended. Although Central Foundation School had a strong governing body and relatively stable staffing arrangements, it was known that some schools had issues with

- recruitment, funding and leadership, and these issues could have a detrimental effect on pupil wellbeing if not addressed successfully.
- A member queried if the lack of specific funding to support ethnic minority pupils was having an impact on young people and teachers. In response, it was advised that Islington's schools had been affected by budget cuts in recent years and any cut to school budgets would undoubtedly have an impact on children from ethnic minority backgrounds. However, Central Foundation School had a particular issue with the attainment of White British pupils, which was comparatively lower than their peers.
  - A member asked if Mr Brownhill considered there to be adequate support services available for young people at risk of exclusion. In response, it was advised that he was aware of approximately ten young people in Central Foundation School with very challenging behaviour who were at risk of exclusion. The school was working with these young people to keep them in mainstream education and there were a range of services and interventions available, however it was considered that earlier intervention may have prevented their needs from escalating. Mr Brownhill commented that early intervention approaches were the most effective method of support; however, it was sometimes challenging to identify the young people in need of support at an early stage.
  - A member commented on the importance of kindness and forgiveness and how the ethos of a school and the vision of the head teacher would be a significant factor in whether a school decided to exclude pupils.

c) Nigel Smith, Head Teacher, New River College Pupil Referral Unit

The following main points were noted in the discussion:

- New River College was a consortium of three pupil referral units. The Primary PRU was for children aged 5 to 11, often with severe emotional needs. The Secondary PRU was for children in Key Stage 3 or 4 and was split over two sites. The Ethorne Road site was primarily for pupils in Key Stage 3 with complex social and emotional needs who were unable to attend mainstream school; the Lough Road site was primarily for pupils in Key Stage 4 who had been excluded and had very challenging behavioural issues. New River College also operated a Medical PRU for children who were too ill to attend mainstream school; these children may have complex mental health needs or long term medical conditions. All pupils had experienced trauma to some extent.
- Some parents and young people had a negative perception of pupil referral units. Mr Smith considered that this was often inaccurate, and although pupil referral units were challenging settings, the reality was that New River College was a nurturing and supportive school.

- Mr Smith said that no child at New River College was beyond help. Although the young people had complex needs and their behaviour could be challenging, they were a pleasure to work with.
- New River College took a personalised approach to working with children and young people, recognising their individual needs and challenges. This was informed by the information received from mainstream schools. Mr Smith commented that the information received from Islington Schools was generally very good, however information was sometimes lacking for pupils who resided in Islington but had attended schools outside of the borough.
- New River College had a strong induction process for new pupils which assessed their academic ability and social and emotional needs.
- New River College had developed a personal development tool which measured pupil progress against a range of indicators.
- Mr Smith commented on the importance of working positively with parents on their child's behaviour and attainment. It was commented that some parents also had complex needs and therefore it could be challenging to engage with them.
- New River College had established cookery clubs and gardening clubs that parents were encouraged to support.
- New River College had established a debating society for young people, which was considered to be a good avenue for young people to channel their emotions.
- Teaching and learning was crucial to New River College and Ofsted made no allowances for pupil referral units working with a challenging cohort of young people. New River College had a strong curriculum delivered by good quality teachers and this had achieved good academic results in recent years. The curriculum was skills-based with a particular focus on English and Maths. In the previous year the majority of pupils achieved a Grade 4 for GCSE English.
- In the previous year no New River College pupils had become NEET and for the past three years fewer than ten pupils had become NEET. New River College held a careers week every March and former pupils were invited to present on their journey since they had left New River College.
- New River College worked to challenge the negative perception of pupil referral units in the local community. It was commented that this perception impacts on young people and can be detrimental to their wellbeing.
- New River College worked closely with mainstream schools; its outreach service engaged with every school in the borough. Mr Smith also provided advice to schools on how to support young people at risk of exclusion; it was commented that approximately three head teachers a week contacted New River College for advice.
- Mr Smith considered that there was never a need to exclude a young person for persistent disruptive behaviour. If disruptive pupils had to leave their mainstream school, then it was more appropriate

for them to have a fresh start at another mainstream school under the Fair Access Protocol.

- New River College worked with their pupils to identify a pathway so they had clear aims and ambitions for the future. Some young people wanted to pursue vocational pathways and the school engaged with local employers to support this. For example, one young person wanted to develop catering skills and had started a job with Pret A Manger; another had started working as a painter / decorator.
- Some young people came from families with multiple complex needs, however did not meet the threshold for statutory intervention. Sometimes these families had been offered support from Early Help services, but had rejected this offer.
- New River College had one Special Educational Needs Coordinator who worked across all three PRUs.
- New River College received CAMHS support three days a week; the CAMHS worker was fully integrated into the college.
- Mr Smith commented that it would be helpful for a social worker to be based at the school. This would enhance the offer of support available to young people.
- Mr Smith commented that the schools that used the outreach service the most had very low levels of exclusion. However, it was also commented that the outreach service was already stretched and did not have the capacity to significantly increase its offer to schools.
- New River College was proud to be part of Islington's Community of Schools and was pleased to offer support to other schools.
- A member commented on the committee's visit to New River College, noting that some pupils felt a sense of rejection and loss following exclusion. They had lost friendships with their peers and some understood that their opportunities had been curtailed by their exclusion and by the limits of New River College's curriculum. Some young people regretted their previous behaviour.
- A member queried if 'zero tolerance' approaches to behaviour management, and a lack of understanding about child development, had contributed to the increase in the number of exclusions over recent years, and if New River College's practices were informed by a knowledge of child development. In response, it was commented that exclusion was a traumatic experience for young people who usually already had traumatic lives. New River College understood that the experience of exclusion stays with young people for their whole life; Mr Smith commented that he was excluded from school and could relate to young people's experiences. Young people who had been excluded felt a sense of rejection and were sometimes angry at their family, their school, and their community. All schools operated differently and Mr Smith did not want to criticise the decisions and approaches of mainstream schools, however it was accepted that financial and academic pressures encouraged schools to adopt behaviour policies and make decisions that may not

prioritise the wellbeing of children with challenging behaviour, and would not be appropriate if schools were operating in a different context.

- In response to a question, it was commented that some schools used the outreach service in a transformative way to develop the skills of teaching and non-teaching staff. This had been a positive experience for schools and had assisted them in adopting ways of working that seek to prevent exclusion and support pupils with complex needs and challenging behaviours. However, other schools engaged with the service to work with a particular child immediately before they were excluded. This was not considered to be a successful method of preventing exclusion.
- One school had used the outreach service to carry out a behaviour audit. This involved observing lessons and developing a staff training programme in response. Since the audit, the school had not permanently excluded a pupil for several years.
- Mr Smith noted that some schools in the borough excluded far more pupils than others. It was commented that the variation in the cohort was not significant enough to justify such a disparity.
- In response to a question on the work of the outreach service, it was commented that some mainstream schools were very easy to work with and welcomed the additional support offered to them, whereas others were more difficult to work with.
- New River College had an Art teacher and all pupils studying Art in the previous year attained GCSE Level 4 or above. In response to a question, it was advised that New River College made use of some art therapy approaches, however was not able to provide therapy sessions.
- A member of the public noted that some areas experienced problems with children in pupil referral units being groomed by gangs and asked if this was a known issue in Islington. In response, it was advised that all schools needed to be aware of grooming risks and New River College engaged positively with its Safer Schools Officer on such issues.

The Committee thanked Patrick Mildren, Jamie Brownhill and Nigel Smith for their attendance.

d) Briefing note – Government review of Exclusion and Alternative Provision

Candy Holder, Head of Pupil Services, introduced the briefing note which summarised the government's response to the Education Select Committee's review of Alternative Provision. It was noted that the government did not intend to strengthen the role of the independent appeals panel in the exclusion process.

**53**      **EXECUTIVE MEMBER UPDATE AND QUESTIONS (ITEM NO. B2)**

As Councillor Caluori was not present, it was advised that any questions from committee members would be responded to in writing.

**54**      **WORK PROGRAMME (ITEM NO. B3)**

Noted.

MEETING CLOSED AT 9.20 pm

Chair

This page is intentionally left blank

<b>SCRUTINY REVIEW INITIATION DOCUMENT (SID)</b>
<b>Review: Permanent and fixed period exclusion from school</b>
<b>Scrutiny Committee: Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Director leading the review: Mark Taylor, Director of Schools and Learning</b>
<b>Lead Officer: Candy Holder, Head of Pupil Services</b>
<p><b>Overall aim:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To examine the use and impact of fixed period and permanent exclusion from both primary and secondary school, and make recommendations that will enable more children and young people to remain in mainstream education.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objectives of the review:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To understand how the school exclusion process operates and the work undertaken at school and local authority level to prevent exclusions.</li> <li>• To review the support available to excluded pupils, and to scrutinise if this is effective.</li> <li>• To explore the reasons for exclusions, and the reasons why Islington schools have higher rates of exclusion than the Inner London average.</li> <li>• To evaluate the impact of permanent and fixed period exclusion from school for all stakeholders – the young person, their parents and family, the school, the Pupil Referral Unit and the Local Authority.</li> <li>• To assess the effectiveness of school based provision and work being done by schools to improve behaviour and reduce exclusion, including access to effective support services.</li> <li>• To examine the variability in readiness to exclude across Islington schools, and the perception by some parents whose children have been excluded that some schools are giving up on their children too soon and at too young an age.</li> <li>• To review alternative interventions and approaches to fixed period and permanent exclusion and evaluate their effectiveness, informed by national and local good practice in successfully reducing exclusion.</li> <li>• To evaluate provision for children and young people for whom mainstream education may not be appropriate.</li> <li>• To review how all Councils services and functions can be utilised to reduce exclusions.</li> <li>• To understand if and how the council can work with academies and Trust Boards on their exclusion practices.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Scope of the review:</b></p> <p>The review will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclusion trends/characteristic in Islington, including the different rates of exclusion between boys and girls, and the disproportionate representation of some minority ethnic groups; the interaction between these characteristics; why do certain groups appear more likely to be excluded?</li> <li>• If pupils eligible for free school meals or with special educational needs are more likely to be excluded than the remainder of the cohort</li> <li>• The effectiveness of exclusion in addressing disruptive behaviour, both for the excluded young person and across the school.</li> </ul>

- The factors which influence schools' decisions to exclude, and their interaction with other services whose interventions, in partnership with the school and the family, might otherwise have helped to avoid exclusion.
- The impact of support, monitoring, challenge and intervention mechanisms from the Local Authority / Academy sponsors on schools' exclusions practices.
- The role of governors and Trust boards/Chief Executives in endorsing school policies, providing scrutiny and challenge of exclusion decisions by schools.
- The extent to which permanently excluded children and young people are able to return to mainstream education, and the challenges this presents for all stakeholders.
- Examples of good practice in managing children identified as being at risk of exclusion (e.g. Islington Schools with zero exclusion), and in reducing exclusion rates (including between different groups of pupils).
- If there are any common factors among pupils who are excluded and those who are persistently absent.

**Type of evidence:**

The Committee will:

- Hear the views of individuals affected by the exclusion of a child from school and their real-life experiences and observations of the exclusion process
- Be fully briefed on the current exclusion process including arrangements for appeal
- Visit New River College (Pupil Referral Unit) - the main destination for permanently excluded children and young people - to meet staff and young people
- Observe a Head Teachers briefing (all Islington Head Teachers) and discuss their views
- Receive witness evidence from national advisers

It is proposed that witness evidence is taken from:

- Children and young people excluded from school and their families
- Representative Headteachers
- Peter Gray, Independent Expert (Government Adviser)
- Gabriella Di-Sciullo, Head of Admissions and Children Missing Education
- Nigel Smith, Executive Head of New River College
- Gill Sassienie, Principal Educational Psychologist
- Head of Early Help Service
- Representative from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

Written evidence will include:

- Annual report on Schools and Learning (June 2017)
- Department for Education (DfE) statistical release: permanent and fixed period exclusions from schools and exclusion appeals in England 2016/17 (July 2018)
- Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England; Statutory guidance for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion (DfE) (Sept 2017)
- Behaviour and discipline in schools; Advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE) (January 2016)
- 'They never give up on you' – Office of the Children's Commissioner School Exclusions Inquiry (2012)
- A Review of School Exclusion: terms of reference (May 2018) Edward Timpson for DfE (due to report to the Prime Minister by the end of 2018)

Additional information:

In carrying out the review the committee will consider equalities implications and resident impacts identified by witnesses. The Executive is required to have due regard to these, and any other relevant implications, when responding to the review recommendations.

## Witness Evidence Plan

<b>Committee Meeting – Monday 16 July 2018</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – Introductory Information</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutiny Initiation Document</li> </ul>	For the Committee to agree the aim, objectives and scope of the review.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Candy Holder, Head of Pupil Services</li> </ul>	Introductory presentation to include exclusions data; processes; the legislative framework; the roles and responsibilities of schools, the local authority, young people and their parents; and an overview of the impact that exclusions can have on young people, their families, schools, the Pupil Referral Unit, and the Local Authority.

<b>August Recess</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – Background Information</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written Evidence</li> </ul>	Written evidence will be circulated to members over the August recess. This will include background information that may be of interest to members; i.e. previous reviews carried out at national level, statutory guidance produced by the Department for Education, national statistics, and so on.

<b>Committee Meeting – Thursday 13 September 2018</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – The Council’s Role in Prevention and Support</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gill Sassienie, Principal Educational Psychologist</li> </ul>	The role of the educational psychology service in preventing exclusions and supporting pupils.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ruth Beecher, Head of Early Help Services</li> </ul>	The role of early help services in supporting pupils staying in school and preventing exclusion.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representative of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services</li> </ul>	The mental health support available to young people at risk of exclusion, and to those who have been excluded.

<b>Scrutiny Visit – Tuesday 2 October 2018</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – The views of parents</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus Group with parents of excluded pupils</li> </ul>	To discuss exclusion issues with parents, their experiences and views on how schools and support services operate, the impact of exclusion on the family, how they think services and processes could be improved to better support young people and prevent exclusions.

<b>Committee Meeting – Thursday 18 October 2018</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – The National Context</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peter Gray, Independent Expert and Government Adviser</li> </ul>	The national context and work underway across the country to prevent exclusion and support excluded pupils. To include best practice from other areas, and details of the government's Review of School Exclusion, due to conclude in late 2018.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gabriella Di-Sciullio, Head of Admissions and Children Missing from Education</li> </ul>	The exclusion appeals process.

<b>Scrutiny Visit – Wednesday 21 November 2018</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – The experiences of young people</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit to the New River College Pupil Referral Unit to meet excluded pupils and Nigel Smith, the Executive Head of New River College</li> </ul>	To talk to excluded young people about their experiences, to assess provision for excluded pupils, and to discuss the review with the Executive Head.

<b>Committee Meeting – Thursday 22 November 2018</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – The views of Head Teachers</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three Head Teachers to attend (ideally two secondary and one primary)</li> </ul>	To discuss their approach to exclusions and their views on processes and support.

<b>Committee Meeting – Thursday 10 January 2019</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – Any outstanding matters</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other information as requested by the Committee</li> </ul>	To consider any outstanding information requested by the Committee during the course of the review.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concluding Discussion</li> </ul>	For the committee to discuss their thoughts and conclusions on the evidence received, prior to developing recommendations.

<b>Committee Meeting – Monday 4 March 2019</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – Recommendations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Recommendations</li> </ul>	To agree a set of draft recommendations that will form the basis of the committee's report.

<b>Committee Meeting – Thursday 30 April 2019</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – Recommendations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Report</li> </ul>	To agree the final report, summarising all of the evidence received, and explaining the reasons for the recommendations. The report will then be submitted to the Executive.

This page is intentionally left blank

# New River College Secondary

Lough Road, London N7 8RH

## Inspection dates

7–8 November 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders at all levels, including members of the management committee, have high aspirations for every pupil. Their key aims are to re-engage pupils in their education so that they can contribute positively to society.
- Leaders have raised staff's expectations for what each pupil can achieve. There is now a collective drive to make sure that pupils realise their full potential, academically and personally.
- Additional leadership positions at senior and middle levels have strengthened the school's ability to secure rapid improvements in all areas of the school's work.
- The curriculum provides a personalised pathway for each pupil to achieve their best, aligned to their interests and needs.
- Teaching is good because leaders make sure that teachers are given effective training and support. Most teachers are highly receptive to the guidance they receive from leaders and act on this decisively.
- Pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress because assessments are used effectively to pitch work at the right level of challenge.
- Pupils receive intensive assistance from staff in lessons. However, there are occasions when pupils could work on their own.
- Pupils begin to make good progress as soon as they start school because of the thorough induction period. Assessments are used to set challenging targets for pupils academically and personally.
- Greater consistency in the quality of teaching results in less variable rates of progress for all pupils, irrespective of which site they attend. However, there remain some pockets of weaker progress in science and mathematics.
- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Regular and meticulous discussions on how well pupils are achieving secures the right support for their complex social, emotional and mental health needs. Pupils grow in confidence and acquire a renewed sense of well-being. Attendance rates have risen dramatically because pupils enjoy their education and appreciate the care they receive.
- Pupils are usually ready to learn. They conduct themselves appropriately in lessons and around the school. There is consistency across the two sites in how staff manage pupils' behaviour.
- Safeguarding is given the highest priority. Staff are vigilant and alert to any potential concerns. The school works closely with a range of agencies to secure pupils' safety and promote their well-being.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure consistently outstanding teaching and learning by ensuring that:
  - pupils' scientific skills and understanding are developed through investigative and practical activities when appropriate
  - pupils, including the most able, have more opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in problem-solving and relevant contexts.
  - pupils are encouraged at every opportunity to work independently when they can do so.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders across both sites work cohesively together and have secured the support of almost all staff in sharing their high aspirations for pupils. There is a whole-school commitment to providing the very best education and support for pupils in their personal growth.
- The appointment of additional senior and middle leaders has boosted the school's capacity to secure improvements at a fast rate. Key leaders work across the two sites, eliminating previous inequalities in the quality of teaching and the management of pupils' behaviour.
- Closer monitoring means that leaders know what is working well and what needs further attention. Leaders focus on the right priorities to secure further improvements in all key areas of the school's performance. Both leaders and staff are all held fully to account for their work.
- The leadership of teaching and learning is given the highest priority. Leaders have an accurate overview of the quality of teaching. Senior leaders are strong role models for middle leaders and all staff. They identify the staff's strengths and provide detailed information for staff to work on next to improve their performance.
- Almost all staff willingly accept this feedback and apply it successfully in their practice. Professional development addresses individual and school priorities very effectively. Senior and middle leaders implement a robust appraisal cycle. Weak teaching is no longer tolerated and is addressed robustly. As a result, the profile of teaching continues to improve, securing good and sometimes outstanding progress for all learners.
- Leaders are outward-looking and engage in partnerships with similar settings and with the local teaching alliance. Both teachers and leaders share good or better practice, thus strengthening the school's ability to continue to improve.
- Expertise within the school is used to provide valuable support for mainstream schools through outreach programmes, reducing permanent exclusions and improving reintegration rates across the local authority.
- A recent review of the curriculum means that a wider choice of academic and vocational subjects, with relevant qualifications, are offered to pupils. As a result, pupils follow a more personalised curriculum pathway. Pupils learn about subjects which interest them, and which are more suited to their needs and abilities. Learning is now clearly at the centre of the schools' work. Pupils enjoy their work and want to come to school. As a result, attendance rates are much improved.
- Achievement has risen notably over the last two years. This is particularly so in literacy. The school recognises the vital role pupils' reading, writing and communication skills have. Pupils are better able to access the wider curriculum and are more prepared for life after leaving the school. Both key stage 3 and key stage 4 pupils study a range of academic subjects, including English, mathematics and science, as well as vocational activities. Extra-curricular activities, including trips and visitors, enrich pupils' learning well.

- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), as well as effective careers guidance. Pupils learn to respect and tolerate differences. They know about democracy through studying the work of Parliament and discussing issues in the debating club. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered through a range of activities, including visits to different places of worship.
- Leaders have implemented sharper assessment procedures, including initial checks which pinpoint pupils' strengths and next steps academically and personally. This information forms an integral part of a very thorough induction process. The school's provision is tailored suitably to meet pupils' needs, informing which curriculum pathway pupils will follow.
- Aspirational targets are set and measured against national benchmarks. As a result, leaders know accurately whether pupils are achieving their full potential. Interventions are put in place to prevent any pupil falling behind.
- The pupil premium funding is used to enrich pupils' educational experiences well, including promoting pupils' literacy skills and increasing attendance rates. Recent strategies include personalised mentoring, and a greater analysis of attendance figures with subsequent targeted interventions and positive reinforcement. The sports premium has secured additional training for staff, including play leaders, who arrange structured activities at lunchtime.
- Those parents and carers who spoke to inspectors were highly appreciative of the school's work. They say that the school 'quickly turns their children around' and is very successful in reintegrating their children back into mainstream schools. Parents and carers were particularly grateful for the social and emotional support the school provides for their children.

### **Governance of the school**

- Members of the management committee are a committed group who share the leaders' drive to improve pupils' life chances.
- A restructuring of the committee means that members have greater clarity about their roles and responsibilities. Members gather their own information on the school's work, through regular visits and reports from leaders. There is more transparency and professional dialogue with senior leaders. As a result, members of the management committee are exceptionally well informed about the school's performance. Members understand the complex challenges the school faces and are mindful of providing leaders with support and challenge in equal measures.
- Members have a clear vision for the school's future and ensure that all the statutory requirements are met in full.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's safeguarding culture is clear, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Leaders make sure that all policies and procedures relating to safeguarding pupils are

up to date and reflect all the latest statutory guidance.

- Staff and governors receive appropriate training in all aspects of safeguarding. Regular safeguarding updates and daily debriefing meetings enable staff to explore issues that may have arisen during the day. This secures a rapid response to individual concerns, with suitable support put in place using both internal and external expertise from a range of agencies.
- The school has a good understanding of local risks and provides pupils with guidance on how to protect themselves from all potential dangers, including radicalisation, domestic violence, child sexual exploitation, peer-on-peer bullying, knife and gang crime. The school works closely with external agencies, including the police safer schools team, to protect pupils effectively.
- All the required checks to make sure staff are suitable to work with children are undertaken rigorously.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Clear behavioural expectations are evident in all lessons. Pupils usually have positive attitudes to their learning. Lessons usually proceed in a calm, purposeful and positive manner.
- The very small adult-to-pupil ratio means that staff know pupils' strengths and next steps precisely. Learning is tailored to meet the wide range of academic abilities and pupils' emotional and social needs.
- Teachers and learning assistants work seamlessly together to make sure that pupils stay on task. Nonetheless, there are times when staff do not stand back to enable those pupils who are confident and capable enough to complete tasks on their own.
- Teachers make good use of ongoing assessments and provide pupils with effective feedback about their progress. This is particularly strong in English, where pupils are given time to respond to guidance and practise their skills further.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and impart this effectively and clearly to pupils. Teachers highlight technical vocabulary to reinforce key concepts.
- Learning is exceptionally strong when teachers provide pupils with concrete and practical equipment for them to explore independently, particularly in mathematics. They constantly explain and revisit ideas to secure pupils' understanding. These teachers continually assess pupils' understanding and use pupils' misconceptions such as the differences between area and volume, to clarify ideas thoroughly. This is especially so for younger pupils.
- There are some occasions when pupils, particularly the most-able older pupils, are not always provided with activities which makes them think hard and to apply their mathematical skills in problem-solving and relevant activities.
- Pupils' literacy skills are promoted very effectively in all lessons. They are given time to read and to talk about their ideas and thoughts. Pupils read aloud in lessons with confidence and clarity.
- Learning is less strong in science when pupils are not given the opportunity to practise

key scientific enquiry skills in practical situations. Activities that younger pupils undertake when planning and performing tests, which promote higher-order skills such as predicting and evaluating, are not always built on well enough in key stage 4.

- Younger pupils, particularly those who have complex needs, sometimes make strong and sustained progress because staff provide excellent support and guidance to address their needs precisely. The work of therapists has a considerable impact on improving pupils' emotional and mental health, enabling these pupils to concentrate on their work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Staff reintroduce pupils to education in a nurturing environment exceptionally well. There are regular checks on pupils' welfare. These include daily updates and multi-agency meetings, involving school staff and a range of external professionals. Any concerns are flagged up immediately so that tailored support packages are put in place to help pupils and their parents and carers if required.
- Those pupils who have past or current trauma in their lives are mentored effectively to promote their mental resilience and personal independence. Staff look out for any potential talent or interests' pupils may have. This fosters pupils' enjoyment and mental well-being. Learning to play the drums or teaching rugby to younger pupils at the local primary school raises pupils' self-esteem and fosters key life skills. Pupils begin to believe in their own capabilities, growing in confidence and self-worth.
- Staff who work at the Elthorne site work closely with a wide range of professionals. The child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) works on-site at both settings and provides much needed mentoring and counselling for both staff and pupils.
- Staff have infinite patience with pupils and obviously care greatly about their mental and physical welfare. They form very strong relationships with pupils, either as a key worker or as part of a very unified team. There is a culture of mutual respect and trust which promotes pupils' self-awareness and sense of belonging.
- Pupils learn about healthy diets and build up their stamina and fitness by taking part in sporting activities, including coaching at Arsenal Football Club.
- A real strength of the school is the flexible approach to making sure pupils do not miss out on their education. Those pupils who are not able to come to the centre at Elthorne receive home tutoring, which is monitored closely by staff.
- A comprehensive programme for pupils' careers guidance and advice prepares pupils well for their next steps when they leave school. Visits to universities raise pupils' aspirations for their future. In 2018, every pupil went on to appropriate placements, including further education, employment or training and/or apprenticeships.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe within the community and online. Pupils learn about the consequences of knife and gun crime, how to deal with 'stop and search', the effects of misuse of drugs and what constitute effective relationships.

Pupils say that they feel very safe in school.

- Pupils understand all types of bullying and say that there is very little bullying in school. Records confirm this to be accurate.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- After a short settling in period, pupils make good progress in improving their behaviour for learning. Pupils are proud of their school and recently requested a school uniform.
- Leaders track and monitor behaviour effectively and set targets for pupils to work towards. Leaders have made sure staff across both sites use positive behaviour management strategies to promote positive attitudes and behaviour.
- Pupils know that if they disrupt the learning of others they will be removed from the lesson. Any inappropriate behaviour is quickly challenged and dealt with effectively. This is reducing the amount of low-level disruption. Staff are trained to pre-empt potentially disruptive behaviour and de-escalate this successfully. Staff have received training for physical intervention, which is only used as a last option.
- Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are recorded and analysed to identify triggers and to evaluate which interventions have a positive impact on pupils' behaviour. As a result, the number of fixed-term exclusions is declining. There have been no permanent exclusions for several years.
- Those pupils who sometimes exhibit challenging behaviours are helped to develop self-control, resilience and greater independence.
- Leaders follow up absences with rigour, including home visits and contacting the police if necessary. This, together with an improved curriculum and better teaching, has had a major impact on pupils' attitudes to their education and attendance rates. Most pupils attend school regularly.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- All pupils have skills and knowledge well below those expected for their age. This is the result of poor or non-attendance at mainstream schools, creating major gaps in pupils' learning.
- Improved initial assessments when pupils enter the school are used well to prioritise pupils' learning so that work builds steadily on what pupils know and can do. Over time, pupils catch up and make the progress they are capable of in English, mathematics and science, as well as in a wide range of other subjects.
- There are very few differences in the progress that different groups make. This applies to those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils, pupils with social, emotional, mental health, and behavioural difficulties, the most-able pupils, or girls and boys. Indeed, disadvantaged pupils make as much and sometimes more progress than other pupils because of targeted teaching and intervention programmes.
- Pupils' reading development has been a recent focus for improvement. Pupils are

regularly taught how to read unfamiliar words using their phonic knowledge. An online programme enables teachers to assess pupils' reading comprehension and provide them with books that are pitched at the right level of challenge. Pupils are beginning to reconnect with books and other reading materials. This engenders a love of reading, a growing ability to access the wider curriculum and prepares pupils for life after school.

- There has been a clear upward trend in standards over the last few years. In 2018, all Year 11 pupils achieved nationally recognised qualifications. Almost every pupil gained a GCSE with a quarter of pupils achieving national expectations or higher. English results were especially strong with over a third of pupils achieving the nationally expected grade or above.
- Pupils achieved well in art in 2018, when 100% of pupils achieved or exceeded their aspirational target grade. Those pupils who find learning difficult achieved well in a range of vocational and functional subjects. There was a significant improvement in the number of pupils gaining functional skills Level 1 and 2 in mathematics and English.
- Leaders ensure that those pupils who attend alternative provision make equally good progress. Their progress is checked carefully to ensure that potential underachievement is eliminated.
- The school's own information demonstrates strong progress, including in the core subjects. Inspection evidence confirms this to be the case. However, work in pupils' books demonstrates that some variability remains, across the key stages, in science and mathematics.

## School details

Unique reference number	100391
Local authority	Islington
Inspection number	10054347

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	40
Appropriate authority	Management committee
Chair	Rachel Tyndall
Executive headteacher	Nigel Smith
Telephone number	020 7607 6500
Website	<a href="http://www.newrivercollege.co.uk">www.newrivercollege.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:nigel.smith@nrc.islington.sch.uk">nigel.smith@nrc.islington.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	29 September 2016

## Information about this school

- New River College Secondary Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) is one of three PRUs which make up New River College. It is funded to take a maximum of 70 pupils. There are two main sites. The New River Secondary site is located at Lough Road. It has a satellite centre for pupils with social, emotional, mental health, and behavioural difficulties at Elthorne Road. The Primary PRU is located at Cloudsley Square. The Medical PRU offers provision at the Whittington Hospital and Elthorne Road and provides home schooling where necessary. All consortium PRUs have individual unique reference numbers (URNs).
- The executive headteacher is responsible for all PRUs in the consortium.
- Since the last full inspection, there have been several staffing changes, including at the leadership level. There is a new head of centre at the Lough Road site. A deputy headteacher for teaching and learning, and four heads of departments have been recruited. Special educational needs and behaviour leads have also been appointed.

Most of the appointments are internal promotions.

- The school caters for pupils from across Islington. All pupils have SEND. Approximately a quarter of pupils are supported by an education, health and care plan for their social, emotional and mental health needs. Most of these pupils attend the satellite centre at Elthorne Road. This site caters specifically for pupils with social, emotional, mental health and behavioural difficulties.
- An increasing number of pupils who attend the main site at Lough Road also have complex social, emotional and mental health needs, and additional learning difficulties. Almost a fifth of pupils are dual-registered.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well above average.
- There are more boys than girls on roll.
- The school uses alternative provision for some pupils. The providers are: Westminster Kingsway College, The Boxing Academy and Academy 21 (online learning).
- The school does not receive Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up funding.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team visited lessons in a range of subjects across both the primary and secondary campuses. School leaders accompanied inspectors to all the visits to classrooms. Inspectors also scrutinised a wide range of books, including looking at work with senior leaders, to evaluate the quality of pupils' learning over time.
- The inspection team held a range of meetings with senior and middle leaders to evaluate the impact of their work. Inspectors also held meetings with members of the management committee, including the chair, and a group of pupils. The lead inspector met with two representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors evaluated views about the school from meetings and telephone calls with several parents.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's surveys of pupils', parents' and staff views. There were no replies to Parent View, Ofsted's questionnaire for parents or to the pupil survey. Inspectors evaluated 34 replies to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of documentation provided by leaders, including: internal assessment information for pupils in all year groups; leaders' self-evaluation; the improvement plan; minutes of management committee meetings; attendance and behaviour information; a variety of school policies; the single central record of recruitment checks; resources and teaching materials for pupils on how to stay safe; and a wide range of other information relating to the safeguarding of pupils.

## Inspection team

Mary Hinds, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jason Hughes

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. [www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2018

# **Children's Services Scrutiny Committee Exclusion from School – Concluding Discussion**

## **Summary and points for consideration by the Committee**

'If you have a results driven culture or are not yet a confident school, then exclusion may be used more readily.' Peter Gray

# National picture: five features

Department for Education data shows a sharp rise in exclusions nationally, with a 15% increase in permanent exclusions in 2016/17 compared with 2015/16. Sitting behind these figures:

## 1. High and growing number of exclusions

- The national permanent exclusion rate rose from 0.08% of the school population in 2015/16 to 0.10% in 2016/17. (Islington rose from 0.12% to 0.14%, although 0.04% was accounted for by one school). Possible causes include cuts to school funding / funding for local authority services and perverse incentives of the accountability regime i.e. excluding students who threaten a schools' league table standing.

## 2. Persistent disruptive behaviour is still the main reason for permanent and fixed period exclusion

- Permanent exclusions under this category increased nationally by 19% last year (in Islington, this rose by 50%). Possible causes include the introduction of Progress 8 causing more to schools that poor behaviour of a minority will distract all pupils, and therefore affect overall progress scores.

## 3. The highest rates of exclusions are from academies

- The rate of permanent exclusions at secondary level from sponsored academies (0.32%) nationally was double that of LA maintained schools (0.18%). Possible causes include that sponsored academies were often previously failing schools, and 'zero tolerance' seen as a route to school improvement.

## 4. Exclusions peak in Year 10

- Over 50% of permanent and fixed period exclusions occurred in Year 9 or above. This seems to support links between exclusion and exam results

## 5. Nationally, disadvantaged students, those with SEND and certain ethnic minority groups are significantly more likely to be excluded.

## Exclusions scrutiny – some key points from witnesses

- Important role of Governors (in hearing exclusions as well as school policy)
- Behaviour policies and whether they address persistent disruptive behaviour effectively?
- More transparency around the cost of exclusion to all schools
- Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships could support local collaboration
- Is the role of the Local Authority sufficiently developed – as strategic lead as well as the ability to challenge
- Primary cluster options (Luton model?)
- Intervention and support for schools: does this focus well enough on capacity building, targeting intervention, and best use of available resources
- Use of language – re-engagement and inclusion (vs reintegration and exclusion)
- ‘All teachers are teachers of children with SEND’ – but is this well-enough understood
- Trauma informed practice – and recognising the trauma of exclusion

## Exclusions scrutiny – some key points from witnesses

- Support Services – traded vs a central model (or demand-led vs targeted) – does this help to get the right support to the right child at the right time
- Mainstream variability may result in inequality (i.e. a higher chance of being excluded in some schools)
- The need for early, holistic (e.g. whole school) intervention
- The importance of School Ethos – who sets this?
- Some exclusions are avoidable... are all exclusions avoidable? e.g. Hackney model – ‘No Need to Exclude’
- Challenge for schools: how to be consistent but also flexible
- Remember: in Islington, our current pattern is of a large number of exclusions across a small number of schools. **Officers expressed caution on developing borough-wide strategies on exclusion when the majority of exclusions were attributed to only a small number of schools.**

# **House of Commons Education Committee report (July 2018) report: 'Forgotten children: alternative provision and the scandal of ever increasing exclusions'.**

Recommendations put forwards as a '**A Bill of Rights for pupils facing exclusion**', as follows:

**Schools should not rush to exclude pupils:** (i.e. schools should be inclusive).

**Parents and pupils have a right to know how often schools resort to exclusion:** (i.e. schools should publish their exclusion rates termly)

**Parents deserve more information when their children are excluded:** (i.e. the process currently sees parents and pupils fighting a system that should be supporting them)

**Pupils and their parents should have someone in their corner:** (i.e. access to independent advocacy)

**Parents and pupils should be given accurate information about the range and type alternative provision that is available locally:** (i.e. all AP providers should be required to inform the local authority in which they are based - the local authority should then make the list available to schools and parents).

**Independent Review Panels should be able to direct a school to reinstate pupils:** legislation should be amended at the next opportunity so that this can happen.

# Five possible reasons for an increase in exclusions

## 1. A shift in behaviour management towards 'zero tolerance' policies

- A growing tendency for schools to discipline students for minor infractions, in what has come to be known as the 'zero tolerance' approach.
- This approach can be effective with children familiar with clear boundaries, and it can allow teachers to get on with teaching.
- But it is not effective with every child. A child consistently sent out of class, and receiving variable educational input for those periods, is unlikely to remain engaged with education.
- Young people may fall into four groups in terms of how they respond to boundaries set by behaviour policies: self-regulators, boundary responders, boundary hitters and pinball kids.
- An understanding of how a school's population divides between these groups might inform where boundaries are set.

# 'Zero tolerance' and levels of response

**Vulnerable to exclusion:**  
struggle to operate  
within boundaries and  
not troubled by  
consequences

**Boundary hitters:** can move from  
compliance to defiance, A more  
complex response to boundaries,  
but over time, learn to regulate  
within them

**Respond to boundaries:** capable of good  
behaviour with clear boundaries. Respond to  
consequences and avoid hitting boundaries most  
of the time

**Self Regulators:** light touch, high trust. Boundaries understood and  
respected without further need for enforcement

## Five possible reasons for an increase in exclusions

### 2. Funding and resource constraints faced by schools and support services

- A recent national survey of Head Teachers (NAHT, Sept 2018) reported that only 2% of members responding to a survey said that the top-up funding they received was sufficient to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Research from the Institute for Fiscal Studies shows an anticipated 4% decrease in spending per head on children's services by 2019/20, as numbers of children needing help are rising.
- Nationally there is a trend in making Teaching Assistants and other school support staff redundant to meet budgets.

### 3. Curriculum reform is making learning harder to access for some pupils

- A move towards a more 'linear' curriculum leading into exams and the decline in opportunities to study arts / vocational subjects, leading some young people to disengage from learning.
- Education Select Committee reported that 'creative and technical subjects, which a lower-ability child would find more accessible, have lost their validity and are disappearing from many schools'.

# Five possible reasons for an increase in exclusions

## 4. Perverse incentives caused by the accountability regime

- The impact of league tables, Progress 8 scores and Ofsted inspections on the rising exclusion rates.
- ‘There is no more egregious example of schools ‘gaming’ the system than excluding students whose continued presence in a school threatens its league table standings’ Julian Astle, Ideal School Exhibition
- Directors of Children’s Services have reported that Progress 8 has contributed to a rise in illegal exclusions of pupils from schools as poor behaviour of a minority could affecting overall progress scores.
- Head teachers report suspicions that some schools do not admit, in the first place, pupils that may affect progress and attainment scores down the line.

## 5. Atomisation of the school system

- Levels of exclusion vary widely from local authority to local authority, and from school to school.
- Generally, where the needs of students are managed well, the over-riding theme is of a whole community of schools coming together to collectively decide how to enable every child to thrive in education.
- Often, this sense of working as a community of educators is formalised (e.g. through Fair Access Protocols) to require all school leaders to be at the table to agree the best placement for every child.
- However, structural changes in the system have created incentives for schools to compete rather than collaborate.

## And a sixth possible cause....

### Is childhood becoming too difficult for some?

- There has been a steady rise in the numbers of children in care in the last nine years.
- Some link this to difficulties facing families such as rising in-work poverty, a lack of good quality housing, and rising levels of substance abuse; others cite the impact of cuts to public services on families that need support.
- Data shows that around a third of children are living in poverty.
- There are increasing numbers of children presenting with SEND, especially Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs, although it is difficult to determine whether we have got better at understanding and therefore diagnosing these needs or if they are more prevalent than in the past.

# Questions for the Committee to consider:

- The Committee heard that some parents of pupils had previously refused support from CAMHS, Early Help and other support services; the Committee also heard that some referrals were made too late.
  - Can the Council do more to encourage families to engage with support services?
  - Can the Council encourage schools to make referrals to support services at an earlier stage?
  - Can more be done to increase access to support services, without significantly increasing costs?
- The Committee heard that not all schools made best use of New River College's outreach service.
  - How can the Council encourage schools to make better use of this service?
- There is a significant disparity between the exclusion rates of schools in the borough.
  - How can the Council encourage high-excluding schools to reduce the number of exclusions?
  - Are there any practices of local schools that the Committee would be willing to endorse?
  - What is the best way to share and embed best practice among Islington's Community of Schools?
- Some young people and parents felt that they did not have a voice in the exclusions process.
  - How can parents and young people be empowered, whilst working within statutory processes?
  - Can the Council & Schools improve their communication with parents and young people around exclusion?
- The Committee heard about how the ethos and culture of schools influences their approach to behaviour management and exclusion. Islington Council only has limited influence over how schools operate.
  - Is the Council able to challenge the ethos and culture of high-excluding schools? How is this best achieved?
- Can Council services do anything else to support excluded pupils, their families, and those at risk of exclusion?

This page is intentionally left blank



**Report of: Corporate Director for Children, Employment and Skills**

Meeting of:	Date	Ward(s)
Children's Services Scrutiny Committee	10 January 2019	All

Delete as appropriate		Non-exempt
-----------------------	--	------------

## **SUBJECT: The effectiveness of Islington's Free School Meals policy**

### **1. Synopsis**

- 1.1 It has been 8 years since the council implemented Universal Free School Meals (UFSM) for all primary-aged pupils. This report focuses on how the original aims of the policy have been met which were to:
- to support children's diet;
  - to support children's learning; and
  - to ease the pressure on hard working families.
- 1.2 At the heart of the Council's Corporate Plan is the promotion of fairness for our residents. It is a clear vision to make Islington fairer and create a place where everyone, whatever their background, has the same opportunity to reach their potential and enjoy a good quality of life. Islington's UFSM policy sits at the heart of this aim.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 To consider how Islington's Universal Free School Meals policy can contribute to supporting children and families further and mitigate the emerging reality of food poverty.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 Food poverty and insecurity has become an increasingly urgent reality for many residents and their children. The proportion of children living in challenging financial circumstances is currently estimated to be 38% in Islington. Applied to the population aged 0-15 years, this indicates that Islington has over 14,000 children in Islington living in these circumstances and therefore at high risk of food poverty. The recent Food Poverty Needs Assessment found that financial problems were by far the most common

reason given for food poverty, exacerbated by rises by high non-food bills, particularly energy bills and transport costs.

- 3.2 UFSM is an important service to decrease the risk of food poverty. Therefore, it is important to view Islington's UFSM offer as part of a package of policies designed to support children and families and to deliver on the Council's commitment to our residents with the cost of living (Corporate Plan Priority: Jobs and Money). It has to work in tandem with other local policies designed to reduce or mitigate the impact of these challenges and ensure that all children have the best start in life.

## 4. Islington's Universal Free School Meals Policy

### School meal take-up

- 4.1 Islington's UFSM offer is different to the nationally funded offer. Islington fund UFSM for all nursery classes and Key Stage 2 primary school pupils. Approximately 90% of pupils live and attend a state-funded primary school in Islington. Under the Government's criteria for UFSM implemented in 2014, only children in reception and year 1 and 2 of primary school are entitled to free school meals. This is known as Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM).

As outlined below, Islington currently has positive results for the percentage of children enjoying a healthy free school meal at lunchtime.



**94%** of **infant school children** in Islington enjoy healthy free school meals at lunchtime compared to the London and national averages (89% and 86% respectively).

In September 2018, the average take up of a healthy free school meal at lunchtime for **all primary-aged children** across all primary schools was **84%**.



- 4.2 National research on the pilots for extending free school meals in England and Scotland found that there were significant increases in take-up amongst primary-aged children. This included take-up among those who were previously eligible and also for those who were entitled but not eligible. It could be suggested that by making FSM a universal offer removed the stigma often associated with free school meals which has affected increased take-up.
- 4.3 The percentage of parents registered for free school meals ensures that Islington schools also receive the maximum of funding to support their pupils. Islington's UFSM and resulting high registration rates has enabled additional funding to support pupils in school. By asking every parent to register for Islington's UFSM offer, children were identified who might not have registered but who were eligible for FSM. As a result, the borough has benefitted from an additional £500k pupil premium funding.
- 4.4 The 2018 Camden and Islington Food Poverty Needs Assessment found that some vulnerable groups of children are hidden and at high risk of food poverty such as those with no recourse to public funds. This is described as one of the benefits of Islington's UFSM offer. UFSM means that the children of

asylum seekers can now enjoy a healthy free school meal at lunchtime where previously, because the family had no recourse to public funding, it meant they were not eligible for free school meals.

#### 4.5 **Universal Credit and eligibility for free school meals**

The roll-out of Universal Credit (UC) is expected to be completed by 2022. Before the introduction of UC, children could receive free school meals if their family received benefits such as income support, jobseeker's allowance, employment and support allowance, and child tax credit.

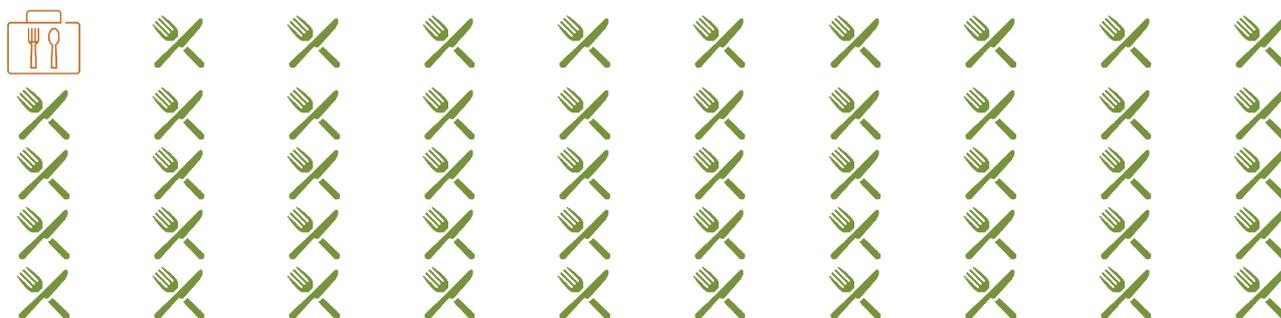
From April, pupils in Year 3 or above and in households receiving Universal Credit will be eligible for free school meals if their family earns below £7,400 per year, before benefits are taken into account. All infant school children will continue to receive free school meals in England. After the roll-out is complete, children who received free school meals during the roll-out will continue to receive them until they move to a new stage of school, such as from primary into secondary school.

#### **Diet and nutrition**

4.6 Good nutrition from an early age is important. As children grow, muscles and bones are being built and the brain is developing. This requires good nutritious food every day.

4.7 Findings from the 2017 Health Related Behaviours Questionnaire in Islington identified that 38% of Year 6 pupils ate at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables on the day before the survey compared with 29% nationally. 6% of primary school pupils said they didn't eat any portions of fruit or vegetables on the day before the survey, compared with 9% nationally.

4.8 As supported by external research, it can be suggested that UFSM has been a catalyst for efforts to improve healthy eating in school. In Islington, a school meal is supposed to provide a third of the nutrient requirement of the day. This means that school meals only make up 17% of the overall diet of a child across the whole school year which makes it challenging to reflect health outcomes related to FSM. However, there is strong evidence that increasing the take up of school meals improves the nutritional balance of food eaten during the day.



**1%** of home prepared food packed lunches meet food based standards compared to **99%** of school meals

4.9 Caterlink is contracted by Camden and Islington Councils to provide school meals. A small number of schools are outside of the contract and have their own arrangements. Appendix 1 details the enhanced food standards for the Camden and Islington schools catering contract. This is higher than the expectations set by the Department for Education. There are notable successes from embedding evidence-based standards for healthy meals provided through the contract. This includes:

- a significant reduction in sugar served in Caterlink school meals
- protein foods that contain good sources of iron. Iron is a common deficiency in children and can impact on brain development, tiredness and willingness to be physically active.

- the inclusion of two cooked vegetable options and 5 vegetable salads and 'nudging' children to select these by, for example, ensuring the salad bar is located before the servery so children help themselves to salad while queuing.

## Learning and attainment

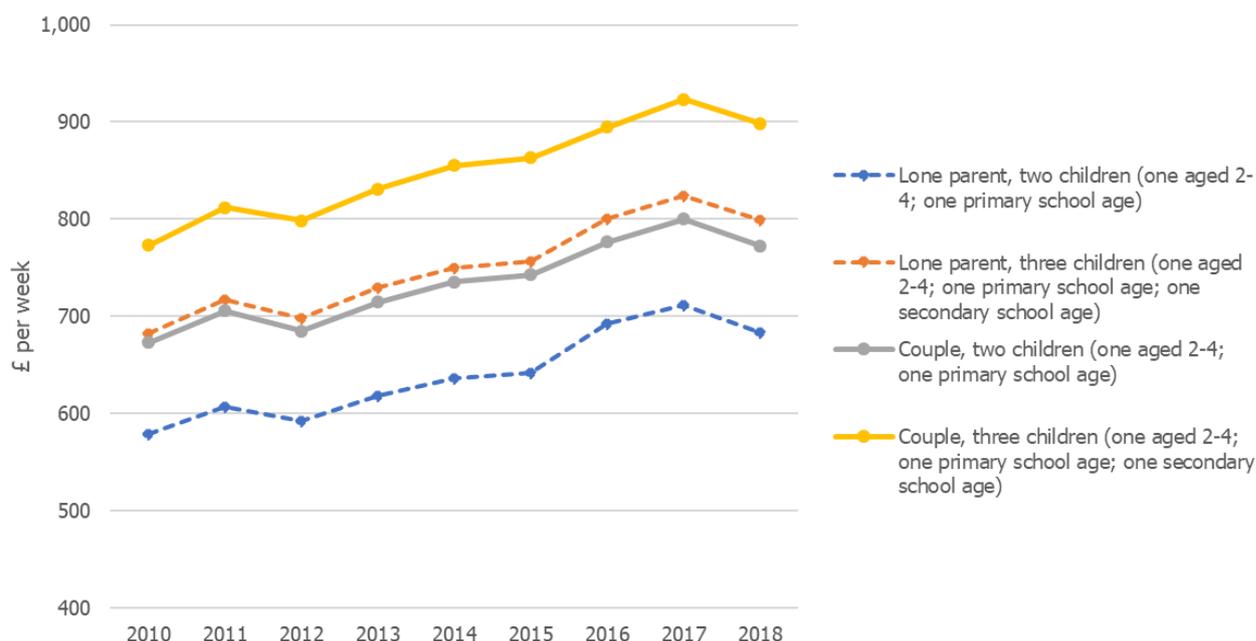
4.10 Food insecurity has major adverse impacts on schoolchildren such as concentration, social participation and aspirations. Public Health England conclude that there are promising associations between diet and academic attainment. However, it is difficult to attribute a causal link between diet and attainment because of the range of other factors in the school environment that also affect academic attainment. It also points to evidence that a whole-school approach to healthy school meals, universally implemented for all pupils, has shown improvements in academic attainment at Key Stages 1 and 2, especially for pupils with lower prior attainment. Between 2009 and 2012, pupils in the UFSM pilots in Newham and Durham were found to be up to two months ahead in maths and English.

## Easing the financial pressure for parents and carers

4.11 For families, supporting children to grow up has never been cheap. However, awareness of today's cost of bringing up children has increased in importance because of the influence it has on parental abilities to meet children's needs.

4.12 Since 2008, Loughborough University have regularly reported on how much income households in the UK need to afford an acceptable standard of living. The Minimum Income Standards calculator shows how much households need for a weekly budget and how much they need to earn in order to achieve this disposable income. Figure 1 shows the minimum weekly income required to raise children in several scenarios where at least one child attends primary school.

**Figure 1: Minimum budget required (includes rent and childcare), £ per week, 2010-2018**



4.13 The Fair Futures Commission found that that the challenges of raising children are affecting both low and middle-income families in London. These families are hit by their wages not growing at the same pace as high and rising living costs and reduced support from the state. The number of children with parents who work, earn a decent amount of money and are still struggling is growing. Some families will foot the entire financial cost of bringing up their children, with no direct help from the state. Because of the high cost of living, families who earn a decent wage sometimes have to move out of Islington. House prices are beyond the reach of the average family. In Islington, the average house

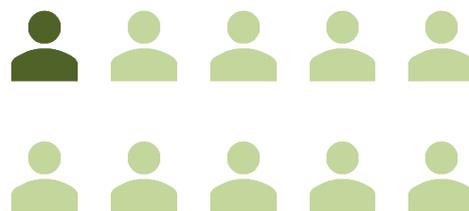
price in 2014 was £530k and the average private sector rent in Islington for 3 bedroom home was £2,383.

4.14 Where children are at risk of food poverty, especially those who live in low income families, parents will frequently cut back on fruit and vegetable intake, cut back on food shopping, and reducing the amount they eat to protect their children. In 2013, Ipsos MORI conducted a survey of child hunger for the Greater London Authority. The findings showed that 55% of parents across income groups reported their ability to afford food has got a lot or a little worse over the past year; 49% of parents in full-time work also reported this experience. This highlights potential future vulnerability. Similarly, the 2018 Child Poverty Action Group report, *Cost of A Child*, highlights that most parents would do everything in their power to avoid their children having to grow up below a minimum acceptable standard of living.

4.15 There are several benefits for parents related to easing the pressure on supporting their children. The 2018 national evaluation of UIFSM reported that parents who no longer had to make packed lunches reported a median weekly saving of £10, removed the stigma in claiming free meals, assisted with household budgets and allowed parents more time to support and spend with their children.

4.16

**1** in **10** children in London stated that their biggest meal of the day was their school lunch



Children at risk of food poverty are particularly vulnerable during the school holidays when school meals are not available. During Summer 2018, the council lightly tested the provision of at least one healthy meal per day for children whose parents may struggle to provide meals during the holiday. Across 4 venues including one library, Lunch Bunch offered a healthy meal for children aged 6–12 years living in Islington with parents earning £16,190 or less (based on national FSM criteria). The Lunch Bunch pilot project was generally viewed as a great initiative and one that most parents would allow their children to participate in again. Officers are currently reviewing how to shape the scheme further in time for the 2019 Easter holidays.

## 5. Implications

### 5.1 Financial implications:

The annual budget for UIFSM is £2,254k in primary schools.

### 5.2 Legal implications:

Local Authority maintained schools are subject to a variety of statutory obligations in relation to the provision (subject to prevailing eligibility requirements) of free school meals, and the standard and nutritional quality of those meals, under (inter alia) the Education Act 1996, Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, Children and Families Act 2014 and the Requirements for School Foods Regulations 2014, to which regard has been had in the formulation and review of this policy.

### 5.4 Resident Impact Assessment:

The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled

persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

A resident impact assessment was completed as part of the contract award for the School Meals Catering Contract. There are no negative impacts identified in the assessment and there are opportunities identified for advancing equality of opportunities and fostering good community relations. In addition the contract can help address inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage by ensuring all school children can receive a healthy nutritious meal every school day.

## 6. Reason for recommendations

- 6.1 The 2014 Cripplegate/NEF report, *Distant Neighbours*, stressed that the gap in Islington between the wealthiest and the rest is growing as the cost of living and slow wage growth negatively impact families. It predicts that Islington will become a starkly polarised and unequal borough. Through its corporate plan, Islington council is working to mitigate this both within the council and with external partners.
- 6.2 The national evaluation of UIFSM concluded that the policy's effectiveness "rests on policymakers attaching a high value to improving the living standards of households with infants who were not already eligible for FSM, and on potentially generating health and social benefits". This will become increasingly important in a local authority like Islington where low and middle income families with children continue to come under pressure and may do so for some time.

## Appendices

- Appendix 1: Enhanced food standards for school catering services

**Background papers:** None

Final report clearance:

### Signed by:

Carmel Littleton, Corporate Director of Children,  
Employment and Skills      2 January 2019

Report Author: Tania Townsend, Partnership Development & Strategy Manager

Tel: 020 7527 3080

Email: [tania.townsend@islington.gov.uk](mailto:tania.townsend@islington.gov.uk)

Financial Implications Author: Tim Partington, Head of Finance

Tel: 020 7527 1851

Email: [tim.partington@islington.gov.uk](mailto:tim.partington@islington.gov.uk)

Legal Implications Author: Julian Walshaw, Chief Corporate and Commercial Litigation Lawyer  
Tel: 020 7527 3176  
Email: [julian.walshaw@islington.gov.uk](mailto:julian.walshaw@islington.gov.uk)

**Appendix 1: Food-based standards for school lunches and Camden and Islington enhanced school food standards**

<b>Food group</b>	<b>Food-based standards for school lunches and Camden and Islington enhanced school food standards</b>
<b>Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates</b>	One or more portion of food from this group every day
	Three or more different starchy foods each week
	One or more wholegrain varieties of starchy food, other than bread, served with the main meal and the vegetarian option each week
	Starchy food cooked in fat or oil should not be provided more than twice a week in primary schools and secondary schools
	For every day that a starchy food cooked in fat or oil is provided, a starchy food not cooked in fat or oil should also be provided as an alternative choice with the main meal
	Bread with no added fat or oil must be available every day
	Wholemeal bread should be provided at least once a week
<b>Fruit and vegetables</b>	Two portions of vegetables and five different salads as an accompaniment available every day
	At least five different vegetables served each week
	Low sugar and salt baked beans served as a vegetable once a week only
	One or more portions of fruit available every day
	A dessert containing at least 50% of fruit two to three times each week
	At least five different fruits served each week
<b>Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins</b>	A portion of food from this group every day
	A portion of red meat and poultry three times a week
	A portion of red meat once or twice a week
	A portion of poultry at least once or twice a week
	A portion of fish at least once a week
	A portion of oily fish at least once every three weeks
	Tuna to be served no more than twice a week (this includes tuna pasta, tuna salad, tuna mayonnaise on jacket potato or in sandwiches)
	For vegetarians, a portion of non-dairy protein to be part of the meal four days a week. On the fifth day the protein may come from cheese

Food group	Food-based standards for school lunches and Camden and Islington enhanced school food standards
	For vegetarians, beans, lentils, pulses, and products made of these, should be served at least three times a week
	Baked beans are served
	Quorn as the protein source should not be served more than once a week
	Eggs as the protein source should not be served more than once a week
	Cheese as the protein source should not be served more than once a week
	A meat or poultry product (manufactured or homemade and meeting the legal requirements*) to be served no more than once each week in early years settings and primary schools, and twice each week in secondary schools  * The Products Containing Meat etc. (England) Regulations 2014
	Fish products (manufactured or homemade) no more than once each week in early year settings and primary schools, <i>across the day</i>  Meat alternative products (manufacture or homemade) no more than once each week in early years settings or primary schools, <i>across the day</i>
<b>Dairy and dairy alternatives</b>	A portion of food from this group every day: cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais, milk
	Lower fat milk and lactose reduced milk to be served as part of the school meal
	Skimmed milk will not be served or used as an ingredient in food for children under 5.
	Yoghurt: initially can contain a maximum of 4g of sugar per portion. By April 2019, yoghurt will be plain low fat yoghurt (no sugar) which may be served with fresh, tinned (in juice) or unsweetened stewed fruit (compote)
<b>Foods high in fat, sugar and/or salt</b>	No more than two portions of food that have been deep-fried, batter-coated, breadcrumb-coated, each week
	No more than one portions of food which include pastry, each week. This includes savoury and fruit flans, quiches, pasties. Use of wholemeal or half wholemeal /half white preferred in the making of the pastry
	No snacks are served, except nuts, seeds, vegetables and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fat
	Savoury crackers, oatcakes or breadsticks (less than 5g sugar / 100g and less than 1.5g salt / 100g) can be served at lunch with a fruit or vegetable and dairy food
	No confectionery, chocolate and chocolate-coated products

Food group	Food-based standards for school lunches and Camden and Islington enhanced school food standards
	Desserts, cakes and biscuits are allowed at lunchtime. They must not contain any confectionery
	Salt must not be available to add to food after it has been cooked
	<p>Condiments must be limited to sachets or portions of no more than 10 grams or one teaspoonful</p> <p>Condiments must be lower fat, saturated fat, sugar, and salt varieties.</p>
<b>Healthier drinks</b>	<p>Free, fresh drinking water is available at all times</p> <p>The only drinks permitted in primary schools are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plain water (still or carbonated)</li> <li>• Lower fat milk or lactose-reduced milk</li> </ul> <p>The only drinks permitted in secondary schools are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plain water (still or carbonated)</li> <li>• Lower fat milk or lactose-reduced milk</li> <li>• Fruit or vegetable juice (max 150mls)</li> <li>• Plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; plain fermented milk (such as yoghurt) drinks</li> <li>• No added sugar combinations of fruit or vegetable juice with plain water (still or carbonated)</li> <li>• Combinations of fruit juice and lower fat milk or plain low-fat yoghurt, plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium, cocoa and lower fat milk, flavoured lower fat milk</li> <li>• Tea, coffee, hot chocolate with a maximum of 5% sugar added and no artificial sweeteners</li> </ul> <p>Combination drinks are limited to a portion size of 330mls. They may contain added vitamins or minerals, but no more than 5% added sugars or honey or 150ml of fruit or vegetable juice. Fruit or vegetable juice combination drinks must be at least 45% fruit or vegetable juice</p>



Report of: Corporate Director of Children, Employment & Skills

Meeting of:	Date	Ward(s)
Children's Services Scrutiny Committee	10 January 2018	All

Delete as appropriate		Non-exempt
-----------------------	--	------------

### **SUBJECT: Children's Services Performance 2018/19: Quarter 2 Update**

#### **1. Synopsis**

- 1.1 This Quarter 2 performance report provides an update on progress against the relevant Corporate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Children Employment & Skills.
- 1.2 A Data Dashboard, showing performance against the KPIs, is included in a separate attachment. This report should be read alongside the dashboard for a full, rounded understanding of performance in each area.
- 1.3 As well as the Corporate KPIs, a wider basket of measures has been reported to Children's Services Scrutiny. However, as this basket of measures had been set over two years ago, and due to the improvements made since, performance against many of these were no longer a concern. Therefore, some of these measures have not been included in the latest report. On the other hand, some key measures that reflect the overall quality of services, such as inspection outcomes, are retained in the basket of measures used, even though performance remains strong in these areas. Measures relating to the number and rate of looked after children have also been added.

#### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 To consider Children's Services performance in Quarter 2 2018/19.

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The main body of this report is set out under the outcomes within the Corporate Plan for 2018-22. Only those KPIs where new data is available at the time of writing are discussed in this report, to avoid repetition from previous performance updates.

## **CES OBB Outcome: Creating a safe and cohesive borough for all**

### **1.1 – Corporate Indicator - Percentage of young people (aged 10-17) triaged that are diverted away from the criminal justice system**

80% of young people triaged in the first half of 2018/19 were diverted away from the criminal justice system. This is in line with performance during the whole of 2017/18, and an improvement on performance in the same six month period during last year.

The Targeted Youth Support (TYS) team has a primary focus on providing robust early intervention and prevention to young people and adolescents within the borough who are in need of support and help. Whilst maintaining the standard methods of engaging such cohorts of young people, such as through the duty system with CSCT and through detached work in area 'hotspots', other key strategies are being employed. For example, the schools offer has been enhanced, whereby a TYS lead has been allocated to be the conduit for most secondary schools in the borough and, as such, resources can be targeted more swiftly where necessary. In addition, staff are delivering more group work and targeted sessions in schools, particularly those which have higher levels of fixed-term exclusions. Work has also continued with the initiative, in conjunction with the Police, to offer support to young people (and their families) where a case has received a No Further Action outcome. When combined with the triage work, this is ensuring that more young people who are coming to notice are supported and diverted away from criminal activity and offending behaviour.

### **1.2 - Corporate Indicator - Number of first time entrants into Youth Justice System**

There were 25 first time entrants in the first half of the year, which is five below the number reported during the same period in 2017/18 (a 17% reduction).

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) report on the rate of first time entrants for each local authority, to allow comparisons to be made between different areas. Islington's latest reported rate was 401 per 100,000 10 to 17 year olds, for July 2017 to June 2018 financial year. This is a 6% drop compared to the same period during the previous year.

Improvements continue to be seen in Islington, for this indicator, at a time where almost all of our statistical neighbours and other inner city boroughs in London have seen marked increases. Some of the reasons for the amelioration was evidenced in the commentary for 1.1, but are also applicable to this indicator. The Triage service, which is offered through Targeted Youth Support being part of the duty service via CSCT, has helped ensure that young people are effectively screened and supported early on. The commissioned youth-orientated services which have been procured to assist with the youth crime reduction agenda are also likely to be contributing towards these reductions. All this activity has seen a marked decrease in young people entering the Criminal Justice System and the figures reached an all-time low in Quarter 2 of 9 young people.

### **1.3 - Corporate Indicator - Percentage of repeat young offenders (under 18s)**

Provisional data suggests out of the 44 young people in the cohort for 2018/19, 18 had reoffended as at the end of Q2 2018/19 (41%). This is a slightly higher percentage than what was reported at the end of Q2 in 2017/18.

The YJB report on two different measures of reoffending, based on a rolling cohort of young offenders in one quarter, and their levels of reoffending over the following 12 months. This means that the figures are eighteen months behind. The Corporate Indicator is based on a fixed cohort of young offenders in one quarter of the year, with their reoffending being reported cumulatively during the following year. Additionally, the YJB allow a significant time lag in their reporting, to allow for potential delays in the recording of outcomes, nationally. The latest data for the YJB reoffending 'binary' measure is for the October – December 2016 cohort of offenders, 51.3% of whom reoffended in the following 12 months. This compares to 44.4% reoffending across London and 40.4% across England as a whole. The Islington figure represents a slight increase compared to the previous quarter. In relation to the YJB 'frequency' measure, Islington still ranks highly out of our comparators.

The review of our top 25 most prolific offenders has assisted in driving the strategic response in relation to this area. For example, the Youth Offending Service has implemented Trauma Informed Practice in order to strengthen the quality of the assessment, planning and delivery of interventions to the cohort; we are analysing and reviewing issues relating to the fact that young BME people are over-represented in the YOS and prolific cohorts and we have strengthened our ETE offer by recruiting an educational psychologist and an employment advisor into the YOS. The offer of the Integrated Gangs Team (IGT) is also being used for the cohort and these young people are also offered a mentor from St Giles Trust or Safer London. We are also continuing to use the Youth Justice Board's 'live tracker' tool to identify, track and monitor the cohort and to identify trends and needs

Note – the comparison shown above is a snapshot at the end of the year. This measure actually gets refreshed during the year and is not totally reliable until some time after the data is reported (as the outcomes of offences are confirmed throughout the year).

It is recognised that with a low First Time Entrants rate and over 50% reduction in the YOS cohort that those young people known to the YOS are likely to be entrenched in offending and have a multitude of complexities.

#### **1.4 - Corporate Indicator - Number of custodial sentences for young offenders**

After a large drop in the number of custodial sentences between 2016/17 and 2017/18, there was an increase in Q1 of 2018/19, compared to the same period of 2017/18, with 11 young people sentenced to custody in the quarter receiving 12 custodial sentences. However, in the second quarter of the year, there were only three additional custodial sentences, bringing the total for the first half of the year to 15.

The YJB report on custodial sentences based on rates per 1,000 10-17 year olds during a rolling 12-month period, to allow comparisons to be made between different local authorities. The latest data, for October 2017 to September 2018, reports Islington's rate as 1.50 custodial sentences per 1,000 population, which is better than the previous quarter (1.63). Islington's rate remains higher than London (0.57) and England (0.31). The Islington rate was relatively high compared to our statistical neighbours based on this annual data, but when the performance is looked at on a quarterly basis Islington had the 14<sup>th</sup> lowest rate in London for Q2 2018/19.

The performance of Q1 was concerning and the young people and offence types have been analysed to assess whether there were options other than custody and whether there were any lessons learnt in terms of service delivery. Given the nature and volume of offences which the young people had been convicted of, the auditor was of the view that a custodial sentence was the only option for all 11 young people. The fact that Q2 only saw the imposition of three custodial sentences shows that inroads are still being made to keep the use of custody to a minimum and that the intensive work that has taken place to ensure this has been effective is still being undertaken. In recent times, we have had a number of young people sentenced to community penalties where custody was being considered by the courts. However, the quality of the Pre-Sentence Reports, the advocacy skills of the caseworker/s and the offer of the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme, as an alternative, has helped immensely. We are also now seeing the embedding of Trauma Informed Practice being utilised by officers which helps the courts to see more young people in a 'child first, offender second' way. We are also continuing to analyse the disproportionality issues that exist when it comes to the sentencing of young BME people who are more likely to receive custodial sentences, via a tracking tool, and by our presence at a multi-agency, cross borough YOS steering disproportionality group.

#### **1.5 - Number of children missing from care for 24+ hours**

There has been an increase in the number of children missing from care for more than 24 hours each month during the first quarter of 2018/19, rising from 8 in March to 13 in September 2018. The September total is higher than the same period in 2017/18 (9 children), but lower than the figure in June 2018 (14).

There has been an increase in the number of children missing from care for more than 24 hours each month during the first quarter of 2018/19, rising from 8 in March to 13 in September 2018. The September total is higher than the same period in 2017/18 (9 children), but lower than the figure in June 2018 (14). The data evidences that there has been a slight increase in the number of children missing from care for more than 24 hours during the first quarter of 2018/2019, with 55% of children who go missing from care returning

within less than 24 hours, and 74% returning within one day/overnight. Work has been completed with placements and supported accommodation providers and we are of the view that this has increased provider's knowledge of the missing process and likely impacted on the timeliness of children being reported missing from care.

Islington's demographic profile remains similar – in terms of the boys more likely to go missing than girls, and children aged 16 and 17yrs going missing more frequently.

Protection from harm whilst children are missing from care or from home, starts with a multi-agency response using Strategy meetings to ensure there is a robust safety plan in place. During quarter 1 and quarter 2, 24 missing strategy meetings were chaired independently by the Exploitation and Missing Team. The process regarding safeguarding missing children has continued to be embedded within Social Work teams, meaning strategy meetings do not always require an independent chair. The council and its partners have developed the missing person notifications and alerts system to support the child being found as quickly as possible.

All missing children are cross referenced to see if there are links to child sexual exploitation (CSE), gang affiliation, serious youth crime or exploitation. This ensures that risks are assessed at the earliest opportunity and safety plans are developed which are multi-agency. In Q1 and Q2, the data identifies that 21% of missing episodes were for children identified at risk of CSE and 40% of episodes were children identified as gangs at risk or gang nominal. This demonstrates a significant correlation between children who go missing from care and children who are at risk of exploitation. The Exploitation and Missing Team provide consultations to the social work teams and support with risk assessment and safety planning. The team also chair gangs, CSE and exploitation strategy meetings where required. In November 2018 the child's database system launched a flagging system for those young people who run 'County Lines'. This will enable further analysis and cross referencing between children who go missing from care and children who are identified as at risk of exploitation through County Lines. Q3 and Q4 data will provide further analysis in relation to this. Most children and young people stay in touch with a professional whilst being missing and once they return they are offered a 'Return Home Interview' by an independent person who explores why they went missing and what harm they may have come to whilst missing.

The Exploitation and Missing Team continue to provide training across the council and through the Islington Safeguarding Children Board which explores the link between children that go missing and risk of exploitation. There is continuous scrutiny and senior management oversight of children who do go missing with briefings provided every Friday.

## **CES OBB Outcome: Delivering an inclusive economy, supporting people into work and financial independence and helping them with the cost of living**

Corporate Indicators and associated targets relating to Employment, Skills and Culture have been agreed and will be reported on during 2018/19 and beyond. These will be reported to the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee. However, any of these measures that relate particularly to children and young people will also be reported to Children's Services Scrutiny.

### **2.3 - Corporate Indicator: Number of children completing the summer reading challenge**

The Summer Reading Challenge is a national initiative which is designed to get children to read six or more books from the library over the summer holidays. Children receive special rewards each time they finish a book and there's a certificate for everyone who completes the Challenge. These certificates are presented at an award ceremony which all libraries hold, usually during October half term. We have successfully promoted the Summer Reading Challenge and have worked with schools to ensure that we reach as many children and their families as possible. Library staff visit local schools to promote the scheme at assemblies, parents' mornings and summer fairs.

900 children took part in the Summer Reading in 2018. This was below the target of 1000. Colleagues across London have also reported that their completion numbers are down this year. This may have been related to the exceptional Summer weather this year, or the theme may not have been as popular or relevant to children as in previous years. However, although we didn't reach our target for completers over 70% of children joining actually read at least 1 book and 52% of starters completed the Challenge, which is our highest ever completion rate.

## **CES OBB Outcome: Making Islington the best place for all young people to grow up – where children and families can thrive and reach their potential**

Performance across many of these indicators should be considered in the context of the current priorities set out in the refreshed service plan for Learning and Schools. In line with the school led self-improving system, these have been shared with headteachers, leaders and governors in schools. Current provisional data indicates that these are the correct priorities and action across the priorities is now being taken.

- Narrowing the gap in attainment between Black-Caribbean pupils and the LBI average at KS2 and KS4 (KS2 gap in percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths. KS4 gap in Progress 8)
- Narrowing the gap in attainment between White British pupils eligible for FSM and the LBI average at KS2 and KS4. (KS2 gap in percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths. KS4 gap in Progress 8)
- Improving attainment and progress measures at every stage so that they are closer to, at, or above the inner London average (particularly for SEND pupils at KS4)
- Ensuring that all schools are good or outstanding
- Reducing the number of primary school children who are persistently absent and increasing attendance to be at or above the inner London average
- Reducing exclusions so that they are at or below statistical neighbours
- Continuing to secure high quality provision for children and young people with SEND – evidenced in the SEND self-evaluation
- Increasing the percentage of 2 year old places taken up by low income families, children with SEND or who are looked after
- Effectively supporting the Islington Community of Schools, so that it continues to develop as a school led self-improving system

### **3.2 - Corporate Indicator: Percentage of 2 year old places taken up by low income families, children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) or who are looked after**

This measure is based on the number of children in funded early education places compared to the number of eligible parents received from the DWP. Provisional data for the Autumn term suggests there were 630 2 year olds in funded places in the Autumn Term 2018/19. This is very slightly lower than the 641 in funded places during the previous term. However, the number of eligible parents is falling at a faster rate, so the overall proportion of places taken up has risen slightly, to 64%.

The last scrutiny report provided an analysis of why numbers of funded 2 year olds taking up a place has fallen and outlined some of the key findings from the DFE's Natcen report into the low take up in London. Further information has since been made available by the GLA. The findings are based on a target group analysis and focused parent groups. General low awareness of and confusion about the offer continues to be the main barrier to take up, together with cultural barriers within certain groups.

We are reshaping our communications strategy to take into account the key learning points from both reports. This will include making much greater use of social media, particularly Facebook, and simplifying and clarifying the message. A process mapping task has been carried out to tighten and make consistent how and when families are contacted with information about the offer and the statistical analysis of take up will now allow Bright Start area teams to target housing estates where take up is low. Given that there was a drop in take up in Islington which coincided with the introduction of the online portal, we have introduced an assisted application process for families needing such support.

Given that this is such a high priority for the service, plans to introduce a golden ticket approach are being explored. This involves giving a place to all children who appear on the eligible list which we receive from the DWP. It makes the process simpler as families do not have to check their eligibility through the portal and has been highly successful in increasing take up where it has been implemented in other boroughs. To overcome some of the cultural barriers, we are also developing our community offer on the estates to engage families with children age 1 -2 years, so that discussions about the benefits of good quality early learning can be had with families over a longer period of time.

### **3.4 – Corporate Indicator: Percentage of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile**

Published data confirms that 71.1% of Islington pupils achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD) in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP), up from 69.9% in 2016/17. Comparator data has now been published, showing the London average rose from 73.0% to 73.8% over the same period, and the national average rose from 70.7% to 71.5%. The Islington figure rose by more than our comparators in 2017/18, and we have narrowed the gap between the borough and the London and England averages.

The GLD is the proxy indicator used to measure children's development and learning at age 5. A summary of Islington results were included in the last scrutiny report. The publication of national statistical release confirms that the direction of travel is positive and we are continually closing on the national and London averages. However, the rate of improvement slowed slightly, meaning that we have not completely closed the gap with the national average.

Breaking down the cohort by Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility we find that the proportion of Islington pupils not eligible for FSM gaining GLD was higher than the national average in 2018 (75% in Islington, 74% nationally). Similarly, the proportion of pupils eligible for FSM in the borough gaining GLD, at 61%, was 4 percentage points higher than England for this group (57%). The reason why Islington's performance for these subgroups is better than the national equivalents but the borough average is lower than that for England is due to Islington having a greater proportion of pupils eligible for FSM. We are in line with the London and statistical neighbour GLD scores for NFSM children but slightly below them for FSM children.

A similar pattern can be seen when Islington scores are broken by other groups (EAL, SEN) with Islington above the national but either in line with or below the London and statistical neighbour averages. The Islington GLD score for EAL children was 68% compared with 66% nationally. 30% of children receiving SEN support achieved the GLD compared with 28% nationally.

A higher proportion of children in Islington with an EHCP (9%) achieve the GLD compared with the national average (5%), that of London (5%) and statistical neighbours (4.5%).

### **3.6 – Corporate Indicator - Percentage of primary school children who are persistently absent and**

### **3.7 – Corporate Indicator - Percentage of secondary school children who are persistently absent**

Data for the Autumn and Spring terms of 2017/18 shows that the persistent absence rate for Islington primary schools was 11.4%. This compares to a rate of 9.6% in the same period during 2016/17.

Absence data is collected during the School Census following the end of each term, so there is always a time lag in the reporting of absence.

Published data is now available for the same period. This shows that the persistent absence rate for primary schools across London and England also rose compared to the same period in 2016/17 (from 9.0% to 9.4% for London, and from 8.7% to 9.6% for England overall), although the Islington rate rose faster than our comparators.

Data for the Autumn and Spring terms of 2017/18 shows that the persistent absence rate for Islington secondary schools was 13.6%. This is the same rate as in the same period during 2016/17.

Published data shows that the persistent absence rate for secondary schools across England as a whole rose from 12.8% in the Autumn and Spring terms of 2016/17 to 13.6% in 2017/18, putting Islington at the national average. The London rate rose from 11.4% to 11.8%.

PA still remains high compared with other LAs, particularly at primary level. Illness remains the highest reason for absence in our primary schools. We are working closely with Islington Clinical Commissioning Group, Public Health, and School Nurse Team to develop strategies to help support schools tackle illness related absence.

Our strategy for tackling PA at primary schools includes ensuring that:

- Parents meet their responsibilities for their child to attend school regularly through improved information and positive reinforcement from the earliest stages
- All schools have effective leadership and management of attendance in place, a culture of good attendance, strong relationships with parents, early intervention and rigorous governance (supported by good data and high quality analysis)
- Good attendance is seen as everyone's business, with all agencies ensuring that good school attendance is a key outcome as well as a safeguarding matter.
- The Local Authority continues to challenge and support schools to ensure measures taken to improve attendance are effective including prosecution, through full and effective use of legal powers

We are working with targeted schools (i.e. those with highest persistent absence) to develop action plans, and to consider legal action where other interventions have failed to secure improved attendance.

### **3.14 – Number of children in Alternative Provision**

The number of pupils in Alternative Provision (AP) at the end of Q2 2018/19 was 59 pupils. This KPI has been amended for 2018/19 to now look at all pupils in Alternative Provision, including AP directly commissioned by schools. Previously, the figure was based on those pupils in Alternative Provision that was managed and commissioned through the Alternative Provision Team based at New River College (NRC), so historical data is not comparable. 59 is a drop on the 83 in Alternative Provision at the end of June. Based on trends for the previous measure, we would expect a gradual increase in the numbers of pupils in Alternative Provision throughout each academic year, before a drop as pupils leave at the end of Year 11.

From September 2018, schools are responsible for monitoring the attendance, progress and outcomes for any student placed on AP. Schools still have the option to purchase the services of NRC to broker placements, including the undertaking of a risk assessment, but can choose to do this themselves. AP provision and processes around it continues to be a focus in the secondary headteacher briefings. Headteachers support the premise that only in exceptional circumstances should children and young people not be provided for in a main stream setting.

Local and national data confirms that mainstream schooling offers the best outcomes and life chances for most students. Islington schools are therefore committed to only placing students on AP in exceptional circumstances. To this end, the Secondary Securing Education Board will continue to monitor the number of students attending AP. All of our Secondary schools have identified a contact person to facilitate the sharing of data in relation to students attending AP. This information is collected on a monthly basis prior to the Securing Education Board meetings and the LA pupil database updated accordingly in line with GDPR requirements.

### **3.15 – Corporate Indicator: Average Attainment 8 Score**

The published provisional Attainment 8 figure for Islington schools for 2017/18 is 46.2, an increase on the 2016/17 average of 45.6. Provisional comparator data shows the average score across London rose by a smaller margin, from 48.9 to 49.2, whilst the national average fell slightly, from 44.6 to 44.3. The Inner London average also fell, from 48.2 to 48.1.

Attainment 8 measures achievement across 8 qualifications.

### **3.16 – Corporate Indicator: Average Progress 8 Score**

The published provisional Progress 8 figure for Islington schools for 2017/18 is 0.15, an increase on the 2016/17 provisional average of 0.14. Provisional comparator data shows the average score across London stayed at 0.22 in 2017/18, whilst the national average score fell from -0.03 to -0.08.

Progress 8 captures the progress a pupil makes from the end of key stage 2 to the end of key stage 4. It compares pupils' Attainment 8 scores with the average Attainment 8 score of all pupils nationally who had a similar starting point (or 'prior attainment'), based on their assessment results from the end of primary school.

Significant changes in curriculum and in assessment and accountability measures continue to impact on GCSE assessments nationally. Challenges for schools will continue over the next year or so with the system gradually coming to terms with the ongoing changes. This makes year on year comparison difficult for the time being. In spite of this, Islington secondary pupils have continued to performed very well in relation to Attainment 8 and Progress 8 and have performed strongly in other measures.

### **3.18 –Corporate Equalities Indicator: Narrowing the gap in attainment between Black-Caribbean (BCRB) pupils and the LBI average at KS4 (gap in Progress 8 between BCRB pupil and LBI average)**

and

### **3.19 –Corporate Equalities Indicator: Narrowing the gap in attainment between White British pupils eligible for Free School Meals and the LBI average at KS4 (gap in Progress 8 between White-British FSM pupils and LBI average)**

Based on provisional results, the average Progress 8 score for Islington's Black-Caribbean pupils in 2017/18 was -0.28, a fall from -0.09 in the revised 2016/17 results. This meant the gap between Islington's Black-Caribbean pupils and the borough average has widened to 0.43 points, from 0.22 points in 2016/17.

The average Progress 8 score for Islington's White-British pupils who were eligible for Free School Meals in 2017/18 was -0.64 in the provisional 2017/18 results, a fall from -0.51 in the revised 2016/17 results. This meant the gap between Islington's White-British Free School Meals-eligible pupils and the borough average has widened to 0.79 points, from 0.64 points in 2016/17.

It is disappointing that the progress gaps for both groups of pupils have increased in this year's set of results. However this re affirms the need for this to be a key priority. Work around closing this gap is made more challenging because of more GCSE subjects moving over to the 9-1 grading system, and because of DfE calculations of Progress and Attainment 8 which give more weight to the higher grades and less weight to the lower grades. The Attainment 8 score of all Islington FSM pupils has decreased in this year's results, however that of Black Caribbean and White UK FSM pupils has decreased more than other ethnic groups. This is a persistent national trend. Whilst the new assessment regime has several positive aspects (focus on progress and attainment across eight subjects, for example) it does also have the potential to polarise results and make it more difficult for disadvantaged students to achieve. Whilst we battle to improve the achievement of these two groups of students, it is important to recognise that the system is potentially making it harder. Our efforts must therefore be redoubled and strategic.

Thus far we have focused on challenging and engaging schools on initiatives to improve engagement and outcomes for these two groups. This work will continue so that schools are engaged in a sustained programme of improvement. There are five main directions for our work in this year. Firstly, we have established a strategic 'Plan on a Page' document that identifies clear priorities and actions for moving forward and an Equalities Reference Group with representation from community and schools has been established to review progress of the plan on a half termly basis. Through this group we are also systematically identifying effective practice that school leaders think supports their school to 'buck the trend' on progress and attainment for these groups. Secondly, equalities is the theme of the Deputy Heads Conference in February. This includes sessions on cultural competency to address issues such as institutional racism and unconscious bias. Thirdly, the Islington Community of Schools intend to establish within their workstream on partnerships a strand to support the achievement of these groups of pupils. Fourthly, successful school based working parties, enrichment and support initiatives from last year are being encouraged and supported to continue – the focus of this work is on improving progress and attainment. Finally, academic research begun last year into the engagement and achievement of White British Disadvantaged pupils continues, with fieldwork scheduled to start in two schools in January.

The underachievement of these two groups of pupils is a complex and persistent problem which has existed at both borough and national level for many years. It will need joined up and sustained thinking and relentless effort to make progress. Children, Employment & Skills are committed to doing this.

### **3.24 – Corporate Indicator: Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within the previous 12 months**

This indicator relates to children who have had a social care assessment and intervention which has resulted in their case being closed and who have then been referred again within 12 months of the case closure. Our auditing of these cases suggests that the majority of these children relate to children living with domestic abuse and where either the level of risk has apparently diminished or where the family no longer wants social work intervention and the needs are not so great as to warrant statutory child protection processes being instigated. Audit of the cases when they are referred is indicative of new incidents of domestic abuse or an escalation of the original concerns.

For the last few years our re-referral rate has remained fairly constant at about 20%, which has been similar to the national average. However the proportion of re-referrals within the last 12 months has reduced from 16.8% at the end of 2017/18 to 15.1% at the end of Q2 2018/19. The reduction in the re-referral rate may be an early indication that the Motivational Practice approach is now having a sustainable and longer term impact on the wellbeing of children and their families.

### **3.25 – Corporate Indicator: Percentage of children who become the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time**

The proportion of children who became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time increased from 15.7% in 2017/18 to 17.6% at the end of Q2 2018/19. This was due to a particularly high proportion of new plans in April involving children who had previously been the subject of a plan (25%). The cumulative total for the year has fallen since April.

Comparator data for 2017/18 has now been published. The proportion of children who became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time was higher in Islington than the London average, but lower than the national average. Islington's rate was the 30<sup>th</sup> lowest out of the 149 local authorities who had a figure published.

A study has been undertaken of all repeat plans in 2017/18 which was presented to the September Safeguarding Children Board. The study found that in the vast majority of cases there was sufficient reason to make a subsequent child protection plan. This is supported by the fact over half of children subject to repeat plans were also escalated to legal proceedings or alternative care or living situations sought. Domestic violence and abuse is the main reason repeat plans are made. Previous plans often show evidence of safety planning, advocacy and educational work with women and their children. The most common vulnerability in such interventions is the inability to engage with male perpetrators as well as engaging women and children in services to help them recover from the abuse. This tallies up with data we were already aware of in terms of repeat DVA referrals to Children's Social Care, which in turn has led to the development of an innovative new service to help families affected by domestic violence and abuse: The Keel Project. It will be important that the child protection conference process links in with this new initiative.

### **3.27 - Placement stability - short term - Proportion of looked after children with 3 or more placements over the course of the year**

Provisional data shows that only 20 out of Islington's 320 looked after children had had 3 or more placements during the year 2018/19, as at the end of the second quarter. The proportion of all looked after children who have had 3 or more placements is 6.3%, which is lower than at the same point in 2017/18 (6.8%, relating to 24 out of 351 children).

### **3.28 - Placement stability - long term - Percentage of children who have been looked after for more than 2.5 years who have been looked after in the same placement for at least 2 years or placed for adoption**

Provisional data shows that at the end of Q2 2018/19, 62.2% of Islington's looked after children who had been looked after long term were in stable placements. This is lower than performance as at the end of the first

quarter of the year, and lower than at the same time during 2017/18. However, it is in line with performance at the end of 2017/18.

A robust programme of work is being developed to train and support carers to better manage the challenges and complexities of adolescents in their care. There are also a number of measures now in place to pick up concerns about placement stability at an earlier stage, with the aim of avoiding break down.

### **3.30 – Number of looked after children**

and

### **3.31 – Rate of looked after children**

At the end of Q2 2018/19 there were 320 children looked after by Islington. The number of looked after children has been generally falling since December 2017. The last time the number of children looked after by Islington has been at this level was during the summer of 2014.

The Islington rate of Looked After Children fell in 2017/18 to 82 per 10,000 under 18 residents. Although Islington remains above the rates of our comparators, the national rate increased, so Islington is narrowing the gap with the national rate.

## **CES OBB Outcome: Continuing to be a well-run council, making a difference despite reduced resources**

### **6.3 - Percentage of good and outstanding Islington schools**

Ofsted have made a change to the way they report inspection outcomes at a local authority level for 2018/19. They are now including, for schools that have converted to academies or free schools, the last inspection outcome under the school's previous registration. For Islington, this has meant the 'inadequate' inspection outcomes for three schools have re-entered the dataset used by Ofsted.

The proportion of schools judged good or better stood at 92.5% at the end of September 2018, the same level as at the end of Q1. There have been 2 short inspections since the end of Q1, in which both schools retained their previous inspection outcomes (one Good – St Joan of Arc - and one Outstanding – Richard Cloudesley) and no full inspections. Over the same period, the proportion of schools judged good or outstanding has fallen slightly across London and the country as a whole. Islington has retained the rank of 23<sup>rd</sup> in the country in terms of school inspection results and Islington remains in the top quartile, nationally.

The breakdowns by school phase are:

- 100% of nursery schools (3/3)
- 95.6% of primary schools (43/45)
- 80% of secondary schools (8/10)
- 100% of special schools (5/5)
- 75% of Pupil Referral Units (3/4)

#### **4. Implications**

##### **4.1 Financial implications:**

No implications

##### **4.2 Legal Implications:**

No implications

##### **4.3 Environmental Implications**

No implications

##### **4.4 Resident Impact Assessment:**

The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

A Resident Impact Assessment has not been completed because this report is reporting on performance only - no recommendations for actions or decisions are made.

#### **5. Reason for recommendations**

5.1 Not applicable

#### **Appendices: Appendix A – Data Dashboard**

Final report clearance:

##### **Signed by:**

Carmel Littleton

Corporate Director of Children, Employment and Skills

2 January 2019

Date:

Report Co-ordinator: Adam White  
Tel: 020 7527 2657  
Email: [adam.white@islington.gov.uk](mailto:adam.white@islington.gov.uk)

With contributions from various managers within Children, Employment and Skills

This page is intentionally left blank

## Appendix A - Data Dashboard

CS PI No.	Corporate Indicator?	Indicator	Current Figure (Period covered)	Previous Figure (Period covered)	Figure at end of previous year	Direction of travel	London	England	National quartile
<b>CES OBB Outcome: Creating a safe and cohesive borough for all</b>									
1.1	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Percentage of young people (aged 10-17) triaged that are diverted away from the criminal justice system	<b>80% (Q1&amp;2 2018/19 FY provisional)</b>	78% (2017/18 FY Q1&2)	80% (2017/18 FY)	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a
1.2	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Number of first time entrants into Youth Justice System	<b>25 (Q1&amp;2 2018/19 FY provisional)</b>	30 (2017/18 FY Q1&2)	60 (2017/18 FY)	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a
1.3	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Percentage of repeat young offenders (under 18s)	<b>41% (Q1&amp;2 2018/19 FY provisional)</b>	39% (2017/18 FY Q1&2)	54% (2017/18 FY)	↑	YJB measure on reoffending uses a different cohort so is not comparable		
1.4	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Number of custodial sentences for young offenders	<b>15 (Q1&amp;2 2018/19 provisional)</b>	7 (2017/18 FY Q1&2)	17 (2017/18 FY)	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a
1.5	x	Number of children missing from care for 24+ hours	<b>13 (September 2018)</b>	9 (Sept 2017)	8 (March 2018)	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>CES OBB Outcome: Delivering an inclusive economy, supporting people into work and financial independence and helping them with the cost of living</b>									
2.3	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Number of children completing the summer reading challenge	<b>900 (2018)</b>	New indicator	New indicator	-	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>CES OBB Outcome: Making Islington the best place for all young people to grow up – where children and families can thrive and reach their potential</b>									
3.2	x	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Percentage of 2 year old places taken up by low income families, children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) or who are looked after	<b>64% (Autumn term 2018/19 AY provisional)</b>	63% (Summer term 2017/18 AY)	63% (Summer term 2017/18 AY)	↔	61% (January 2018)	72% (January 2018)	2nd from bottom
3.4	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Percentage of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile	<b>71.1% (2017/18 AY)</b>	69.9% (2016/17 AY)	69.9% (2016/17 AY)	↑	73.8% (2017/18 AY)	71.5% (2017/18 AY)	2nd from bottom
3.6	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Percentage of primary school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance)	<b>11.4% (Autumn &amp; Spring terms 2017/18)</b>	9.6% (Autumn & Spring terms 2016/17)	9.4% (2016/17 AY)	↑	9.4% (Autumn & Spring terms 2017/18)	9.6% (Autumn & Spring terms 2017/18)	Bottom
3.7	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Percentage of secondary school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance)	<b>13.6% (Autumn &amp; Spring terms 2017/18)</b>	13.6% (Autumn & Spring terms 2016/17)	14.6% (2016/17 AY)	↔	11.8% (Autumn & Spring terms 2017/18)	13.6% (Autumn & Spring terms 2017/18)	2nd from top
3.14	x	Number of children in Alternative Provision	<b>59 (Q2 2018/19 FY)</b>	83 (Q1 2018/19 FY)	Not comparable	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.15	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Average Attainment 8 score	<b>46.2 (2017/18 AY provisional)</b>	45.6 (2016/17 AY)	45.6 (2016/17 AY)	↑	49.2 (2017/18 AY provisional)	44.3 (2017/18 AY provisional)	2nd from top

CS PI No.	Corporate Indicator?	Indicator	Current Figure (Period covered)	Previous Figure (Period covered)	Figure at end of previous year	Direction of travel	London	England	National quartile
3.16	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Average Progress 8 Score	<b>0.15</b> (2017/18 AY provisional)	0.13	0.13	↑	0.22 (2017/18 AY provisional)	-0.08 (2017/18 AY provisional)	Top
3.18	✓	<b>Corporate Equalities Indicator:</b> Narrowing the gap in attainment between Black-Caribbean (BCRB) pupils and the LBI average at KS4 (gap in Progress 8 between BCRB pupil and LBI average)	<b>BCRB = -0.28</b> <b>Gap = 0.43</b> (2017/18 provisional)	BCRB = -0.09 Gap = 0.22 (2016/17)	BCRB = -0.09 Gap = 0.22 (2016/17)	↑	Not available below National	BCRB = -0.23, Gap = 0.20 (2016/17 AY)	n/a
3.19	✓	<b>Corporate Equalities Indicator:</b> Narrowing the gap in attainment between White British pupils eligible for Free School Meals and the LBI average at KS4 (gap in Progress 8 between White-British FSM pupils and LBI average)	<b>White British FSM pupils = -0.64</b> <b>Gap = 0.79</b> (2016/17)	White British FSM pupils = -0.51 Gap = 0.64 (2016/17)	White British FSM pupils = -0.51 Gap = 0.64 (2016/17)	↑	Not available	White British FSM pupils = -0.72 Gap = 0.69 (2016/17 AY - revised)	n/a
3.24	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within the previous 12 months	<b>15.1%</b> (2018/19 Q2 provisional)	15.4% (2018/19 Q1 provisional)	16.8% (2017/18 FY)	↓	16.7% (2017/18 FY)	21.9% (2017/18 FY)	2nd from top
3.25	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Percentage of children who become the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	<b>17.6%</b> (2018/19 Q2 provisional)	20.9% (2018/19 Q1 provisional)	15.7% (2017/18 FY)	↓	14.9% (2017/18 FY)	20.2% (2017/18 FY)	Top
3.27	x	Placement stability - short term - Proportion of looked after children with 3 or more placements over the course of the year	<b>6.3%</b> (2018/19 Q2 provisional)	6.8% (Q2 2017/18)	12.2% (2017/18 FY provisional)	↓	10% (2015/16 FY)	10% (2015/16 FY)	2nd from bottom
3.28	x	Placement stability - long term - Percentage of children who have been looked after for more than 2.5 years who have been looked after in the same placement for at least 2 years or placed for adoption	<b>62.2%</b> (2018/19 Q2 provisional)	71.3% (Q2 2017/18)	62.8% (2017/18 FY provisional)	↓	68% (2015/16 FY)	68% (2015/16 FY)	Bottom
3.30	x	Number of Looked After Children	<b>320</b> (2018/19 Q2)	<b>322</b> (2018/19 Q1)	339 (2017/18 FY)	↓	Not comparable	Not comparable	n/a
3.31	x	Rate of Looked After Children	<b>TBC</b>	83 (2016/17 FY)	83 (2016/17 FY)	TBC	50 (2016/17 FY)	62 (2016/17 FY)	2nd from bottom
<b>CES OBB Outcome: Ensuring our residents can lead healthy and independent lives</b>									
<b>CES OBB Outcome: Making Islington a welcoming and attractive borough and creating a healthy environment for all</b>									
<b>CES OBB Outcome: Continuing to be a well-run council, making a difference despite reduced resources</b>									
6.3	x	Percentage of good and outstanding Islington schools (all phases)	<b>92.5%</b> (Q2 2018/19 FY)	92.5% (Q1 2018/19 FY)	95.3% (Q4 2017/18 FY - not directly comparable)	↔	91.8% (Q2 2018/19 FY)	85.5% (Q2 2018/19 FY)	Top

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19

#### **Tuesday 26 June 2018**

1. Membership, Terms of Reference, Dates of Meetings
2. Executive Member Annual Presentation
3. Child Protection Annual Report
4. Education Annual Report
5. Scrutiny Topics and Work Programme 2018/19

#### **Monday 16 July 2018**

1. Permanent and fixed period exclusion from school  
– Scrutiny Initiation Document and Introductory Briefing
2. Post-16 Education Employment and Training Review 2016/17 – 12 Month Report Back
3. Quarterly Review of Children's Services Performance (Q4 2017/18)
4. Review of Work Programme

#### **Thursday 13 September 2018**

1. Permanent and fixed period exclusion from school – Witness Evidence
2. Support for children with special educational needs and disabilities
3. Review of Work Programme

#### **Thursday 18 October 2018**

1. Permanent and fixed period exclusion from school – Witness Evidence
2. SACRE Annual Report
3. Quarterly Review of Children's Services Performance (Q1 2018/19)
4. Review of Work Programme

#### **Thursday 22 November 2018**

1. Executive Member Update and Questions
2. Permanent and fixed period exclusion from school – Witness Evidence
3. Review of Work Programme

#### **Thursday 10 January 2019**

1. Permanent and fixed period exclusion from school – Witness Evidence and Conclusions
2. The effectiveness of Islington Council's Free School Meals Policy
3. Quarterly Review of Children's Services Performance (Q2 2018/19)
4. Review of Work Programme

#### **Monday 4 March 2019**

1. Permanent and fixed period exclusion from school – Draft Recommendations
2. Islington Safeguarding Children Board: Annual Report
3. The Children's Services Response to Prevent – Update
4. Implementation of the Fair Futures Commission recommendations

#### **Thursday 30 April 2019**

1. Executive Member Update and Questions
2. Education Annual Report
3. The role of Islington's supplementary schools
4. Quarterly Review of Children's Services Performance (Q3 2018/19)
5. Permanent and fixed period exclusion from school – Final Report

---

### **WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20**

#### **Thursday 13 June 2019**

1. Membership, Terms of Reference, Dates of Meetings
2. Child Protection Annual Report
3. Scrutiny Topics and Work Programme 2019/20